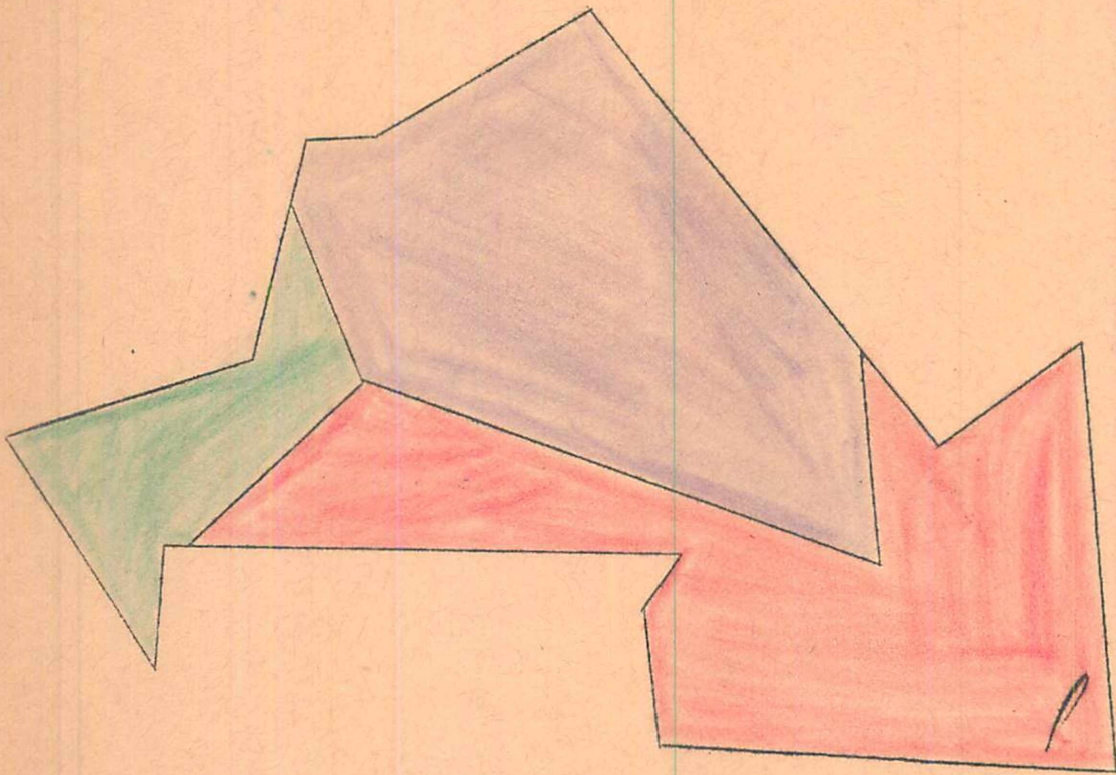


vague

2



THE GARISH FANZINE

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO



THE COLORS? Oh, you've noticed? Briefly, I have long wished to do a fanzine up with colored lettering, fancy tri-color layouts, etc. The initial cost of ink and pads--about \$8--however, has prevented me from doing so. Last week, however, an idea came upon me, and after haggling over advantages--price (initial cost is 15¢), flexibility, availability-- and disadvantages--flashiness, long hours of hard work--I decided in favor of hand-coloring various sections of this, and possibly future, issues.

I am an experimenter. Future issues may well boast such things as spatter-paint designs, silk-screen work, blue-print illustrations, and several pages of ditto work each issue. It occurred to me that this flashiness is that which is generally considered in the same sentence with the California crudzines of the early-mid fifties. If this is true, then I can only say that I'd rather publish a bright, interesting, guffawing crudzine than an overly-serious, too-literate, DULL member of the Top-10. There will still be serious discussion, but if I can't have a little fun in the lettercolumn on the side, I may not HAVE a lettercolumn, and fie on John Hitchcock! Fans are invited to argue about current topics, but be reminded that replies are likely to be sercon or zany, possibly both.

YOU KNOW, this "Focal-Point of Eighth Faandom" began as a joke with lastish's cover and slogans on letters, and now has me perfectly convinced that VAGUE is an Eighth Faandom zine. Because no one called me down for remarks to that effect in Fanjack Two, I am putting forth the theory--putting it forth as FACT--that Eighth Fandom began slightly before the Solacon and has now reached its peak (how long it will be able to hold this peak is something I do not venture). If you're skeptical, look around you; there's proof everywhere..

Fans who started their publishing career at that time--Bob Lichtman, Don Durward, myself--have fast become publishers of the best new zines around. I say this not from conceit. Ted White can be quoted as saying that I covered in one season his fan career for several years. I say the same about Lichtman and Durward. There are fans like Michael Deckinger who were still publishing crud in their tenth issue or so. On the other side of the scale, Lichtman's PSI-PHI has become one of the Better Fanzines in four short issues, and Durward's QUIBOTIC, were it not for spelling and typos, would be fast nearing this point. Bob Leman, something of a carry-over from 7th Transition, made a Name for himself with his first fanzine.

Things are fine on the writing end, too. Leslie Nirenberg is fast becoming a top humorist, Leman is a veritable Giant of Intellect, and old (tired?) fans like Terry Carr have had their best year's in years. So confident am I that I have correctly predicted the new fandom that I have taken to filing any good, new zine that comes in on a special shelf headed "EIGHTH FANDOM".

If, indeed, I am correct, it would be well to attempt to present an orderly, concise picture of the era. I mentioned my Eighth Fandom file: the fanzines in that file are those which have sprung up--or, at the very least, changed drastically--since a little before the Solacon until the present. The prime contenders for the focal-point of Eighth Fandom (henceforth known as 8F), if indeed it will have one, are represented in this file. They are so vastly different from the neat, orderly fanzines of the past that certain fans (we won't mention names, but their initials stand for John Magnus and John Hitchcock...) have taken to terming them crud. And, I suppose they are, by the standards of Quandry, Opus, "-". 8F fanzines are sociable, informal, and chatty, usually running to long letter columns and relatively little serconishness or scientifictionistness. Come, let us look at these fanzines.

The artless, layout-less Devil's Motor-Beat represented one of the most humorous trip reports to make the scene in quite a while; an article on the Nunnery which was one of the best pieces of the year concerned with a phase of New York fandom (one can't be funny about Belle Dietz, y'know). ++ Dick Eney's FANCYCLOPEDIA II is definitely the most worthwhile single publication to come out in the past five years. But rather than follow the stiff format of the original, Eney mixed some of his own fabulous humor into the volume. Now, FANCY is not only as complete as a Worldbook Encyclopedia, but it is also not .100000% as boring! ++ Probably the first 8F publication, THE INCOMPLEAT BURBEE, was published several months before 8F started. This is part of the general overlap between it and 7th Transition. Nearly 100 pages of some truly fabulous 5th Fandom material. ++ Following through on the "single publication" theme, I feel safe in saying that there has never been a Christmas card like MERETRITIOUS which arrived at this house on the 24th of December from LA. ++ George Jennings, after several false starts (I should talk...), finally began publication of NOMAD, a 14-16 page tri-weekly which absolutely shouts the spirit of 8F: frequency, informality, and discussion, liberally mixed with fan-visits of various types. So far, only two issues have appeared, with the third already hopelessly late; but I have no doubts that George will get back on schedule and once again wax interestingly every couple weeks or so. ++ Fabulous, clubby camaraderie went on the upswing again, when, precisely within the era I have called 8F, SHAGGY was revived. ++ Goojie Publications, although irregular, continues to produce consistently high-quality material. ++ My own VAGUE, although I have no delusions of focal-pointtry, is definitely an 8F fanzine, given over to a combination of serious discussion, humor, and complete lack of restrictions as to appearance, art, etc. (the type-critturs, and my homemade colored pages are excellent examples of the informal format; I do what I want, not necessarily what the readers want. Fortunately, the readers do not seem to object to this practice). ++ Smoke is Anglo-fandom's claim to fame, focal-point-of-Eighth-Fandom-wise. ++ TWIG ILLUSTRATED is the black-sheep, totally different from any other new fanzine. It does not suffer because of this... ++ With the third issue, QUIXOTIC shows definite promise, especially in the more humorous pieces. ++ The promise shown June '59 by PSI-PHI number three (the cartoon strip, Caughran's piece, Harry Warner, and Rog Ebert) was fulfilled nicely in September, although the cartoon strip was missing. Leslie Nirenberg takes top honors, but the letter column is fast becoming an important item. ++ WRR has more of that same informality, and is absolutely brilliant in places. ++ VOID made a beautiful try, and will try again.

Remnants of the past aren't lagging, either. Terry Carr's Innuendo keeps getting better and better; Gregg Calkins' OOPS is actually coming out 4 or 5 times a year; Lynn Hickman is improving his Argassy.

So much for the fanzines. Now, what of the fans themselves? Fans who began their publishing career and who are now reasonably active fans include: Bob Lichtman, Bill Sarill, Ted Pauls, Don Durward, Leslie Nirenberg, and J. Les Piper for art, whoever he may be. Pauls is presently the most active publisher in the world.

One of the following zines, unless a new giant suddenly rises, will become the closest thing to a focal-point SF will ever have: Shaggy, Wrr, Nomad, Void, Psi-Phi. This should, I believe, happen before the beginning of 1961. Now then, which one of you can get good enough in that period of time to take over leadership of the whole of fandom?

IF YOU HAVE NOT YET READ THE COLUMN "Of Mice, Men, and Other Things" by Jim Aletaster, do so now. "Jim Aletaster" is, of course, an obvious pseudonym--the writer wishes to remain anonymous because he is no longer an active fan, and has lately turned down so many requests for material that it would seem unbearably rude to contribute to VAGUE. He tells the story of why he is contributing as a part of the column itself, which should be a regular thing (until, of course, the writer once again tires of writing...). Guesses as to his/her identity are not particularly encouraged, but feel free if you must let curiosity rule your better judgement.

Comments on the column will be passed on to the writer if not printed, and answers will be directed either through me or through several West Coast fans, depending entirely upon where the commentor resides.

--Ted Pauls

(- -) "Eric Bentcliffe is a Good
(o) Man--vote for him for TAFF!"
(---)

(O O) "Is LeeH still pubbing Fa-
(=) pa, Walt?"

((o o)) "Stop popping my bra strap!"
((+))
((=))

(- -) "Ron! Come down outta that
(+) gaddamn tree and type the
(===) Fanac stencils!"

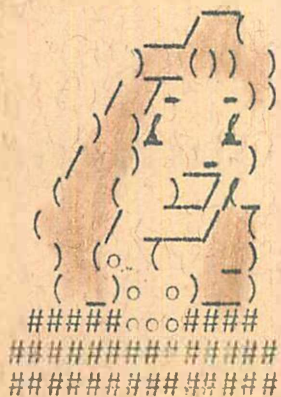
JIM ALETASTER:

★ of mice, men, AND other things

Since mid-March of 1959, I have been receiving the entire output of Ted Pauls' with nought but silence in return. This morning, I got a postcard from him which said, basically, that I had been loafing around on his mailing list for too long, and that if I wished to continue receiving his publications, he would appreciate at least a semi-regular column. Now, I have been cut from some of the best mailing lists in fandom, and to be perfectly frank, I didn't consider his "Dhog" to be worth a letter of comment or much of anything else. The two issues of Fanjack which I received were an improvement, and I may possibly have succumbed to my conscience at that time and have written a letter, but it so happened that I was away for two weeks just after Fanjack number one, and naturally had no time for letters. But this morning I received not only the card, but a copy of VAGUE #1.

Why I am attempting to keep up a regular column for VAGUE every two weeks when I cannot find the time to contribute to better fanzines every six months, I do not know. I hasten to add that I do consider the issue of VAGUE I have at hand a healthy example of the beginnings of a fine fanzine, but it certainly cannot be measured against such giants as OOPSLA!, A BAS, HYPHEN, SPECTRE (now deceased), etc. It is probably because of the activity, rather than the quality, that I strive to keep up an almost surely self-destructive schedule. Because Pauls is bringing out VAGUE once every two weeks, I am going to contribute every two weeks--eventually, of course, the contributions from me will slow then stop for as long as a year before I get together the necessary ambition to begin again, if ever. This is something Pauls will have to bear...

Incidentally, Ted, those type-critturs you use were quite famous back a couple years ago. Among others, Walt Liebscher was noted for his work in this field. But he went much further than your reasonably simple faces with things like the girl to the right of this paragraph, which, I rather suspect, he stumbled on by accident. I don't know, offhand, where or when this appeared, but I do remember learning the proper method of executing it; that was during a period when I was fairly active and had the idea of becoming more proficient at it than Walt. Looking back now, I remember doing dozens of sheets of the things, but using relatively few. If I ever decide to re-enter fandom actively, I may start the fad again. But for now, I'll just be content to sit back and watch you.



1. (o o) "I'm a flop!"
(+)
(-)
2. (o o) "When the first issue came
(+) out, I did an imitation of
(-) the Ivory Birdbath crew..."
3. (v v) "A perfectly good
(+) imitation!"
(o)
4. (v v) "There was Andy Young..."
(+)
(---)
5. ((o o)) "...Jean Young..."
((-))
((---))
()
()
()
6. (o o) "...and Larry Stark III."
(-)
8. (v v) "It was the best imi-
(o) tation I've ever done."
(---)
9. (- -) "So what happened...?"
(o)
(-)
10. (è'è) "Bill Sarill moves into the
(-) birdbath on purpose to make
(=) it incomplete!"
11. /////
(o o)
(*)
() "And Fitzroy walks off with the show
((---)) just because he can imitate a BNF
like Tucker with a 'hang-dog expres-
sion'"
12. *****
(.)
(+) "It's a cruel, cruel world..."
(===)

BILL SARILL

No comment on Numerical Fandoms. I want to keep out of the mess until another Speer or Silverberg comes along--and, frankly, I don't think you're either.

(s'matter of fact, I ain't. But don't tell any of those poor, misguided readers of mine...)

I sympathize with Eney. Fanjack, and, before it, Dhog, is for me mildly pleasant, mildly interesting, and partly boring. "Good for quick reading, entertaining, like, but not much meat to it," as Ted White once said about a piece of mine--and I think the same comment applies to Fanjack. Fanjack is about as easy to comment on as is Fargo; what can I say?

(I disagree. Fanjack couldn't have been all that uninteresting, considering the letters that came in on it. Ted White wrote five pages of comment on the first two issues (I may yet get his letter on #3...), Magnus three, Hitchcock five, Pavlat two, Calkins 1 $\frac{1}{2}$, GMCarr three. These are some of the longest and most controversial--I stress controversial--letters I have ever received on any publication. Surely when Magnus writes his first published letter in years, Hitchcock writes two in four days, and Calkins abandons his calculus, there MUST be some interest. Somewhere. True, these people were picking a bone with the editor, but that, I believe, is one of the main keys to controversy. So far I haven't received any letters on VAGUE 1 (well, most of the copies are still unmailed...), but I'll wager that letters on it will be every bit as long and interesting.)

Do you have a subconscious desire to be an arsonist, by the way?

(I resent the implication. I DO NOT light fires. As Hitchcock will tell you, I merely FAN any fires that I should happen to find. There is no law against FANNING fires!)

The comments JeanY had to make about Magnus were interesting. JeanY has been telling me about her contacts in fandom--she was, at various times, very close to Harness, Magnus, and Hitchcock. Harness and Magnus, and of course Andy, she met at Oberlin. Magnus later came to stay with the Youngs for some time, but JeanY says that even though she had once practically loved the guy, she somehow could not stand him when they were living together. Magnus has always been a rather temperamental, emotional fellow. Now, of course, after the Ted White-Perambulator incident, Magnus is apparently almost anti-fan (at least, that's what I've heard).

I can't quite see how you get so goshwow over JeanY's purple prose passages. They're nice, I mean, but...

(I'm Arty...)

I am at work publishing THE BEST OF BRANDON, which is mainly a collection of the best stories, satires, whatnots of Carl Joshua Brandon. (Obvious, obvious) All illos by Dave Rike, introduction by Terry Carr, paper by ABDick, elbow grease by me (mimeo'ing by Stark?). Around 40 or 50 pages. Price: maybe like 75¢. Prepublication price: 50¢. Copies will be numbered. (This has been a free plug. Copyright 1960, not liable to investigation by the Television Code.)

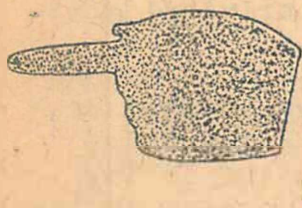
I am now a new inhabitant of the Ivory Birdbath--that makes a total of four fans in close proximity; make it five and we'll have reached Critical Mass.

HARRY WARNER JR.

One thing occurs to me as a result of the third Fanjack: the need for a moratorium in fandom on the use of "focal-point". The term might have been useful once, when people were pretty much agreed on what it was supposed to mean and used it in the accepted sense. But the term has been kicked around so much in the past six months or so that it's an absolutely meaningless phrase by now. Some individuals continue to use it in the original sense, a publication that was the very embodiment of a fandom, others like me are arguing that there hasn't been any such thing since Fantasy Magazine, while various individuals appear to use the term simply as a synonym for a well-liked fanzine or even in the sense that would make any fanzine a focal-point if it has a half-dozen readers.

You're probably going to hear from some people about your claim that Fanjack is better than the editorial and letter sections of Cry. You're really comparing two different kinds of fan publications to begin with, and you're also contradicting yourself in your earlier remarks about keeping disputes off the emotional plane: that slam at Cry seems to arise from your experience with the magazine.

(Sad, but true. Just like I can't help but inject little digs at Leslie Grubber, I must often force myself to keep Cry out of a bad light. This is probably a sign of immaturity, but if so, I have much company in my childishness. Let he who digs not cast the first letter...)



DISJOINTED QUOTATIONS

FEATURING:

Bill Sarill, 11 Beuna Vista Park, Cambridge 40, Mass.
Harry Warner Jr., 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Md.
Ted White, 107 Christopher St., New York 14, New York
Ron Ellik, #6, 1909 Francisco St., Berkeley 9, Calif.
Marion Bradley, Box 158, Rochester, Texas
Rick Sneary, 2962 Santa Ana, South Gate, California

There should be some way in which you can demonstrate more clearly where you are talking and where someone else is emitting words. The distinction in the indentation system is inconvenient because it does not throw itself strongly at the eye. A small indentation for all your remarks, not just the first line of each of your paragraphs, or a vertical line drawn down the line where you are quoting, or some ingenious new bracketing device, or a different typeface if you have access to more than one typewriter would be possibilities. Whatever you do, you should get the use of double quotes firmly fixed in your mind, because you're misusing them by omitting them at the end of each quoted paragraph that precedes some of your remarks. They're omitted at the end of a paragraph in proper usage only when the next paragraph will be a continuation of direct quotation from the same individual. When the next paragraph will be the statements of another person or material that isn't direct quotes, " must follow the last word of a paragraph. It should also be there at the end of a direct quotation if there's nothing that follows that direct quotation, like the end of an article or story.

(By the time you receive this publication, my non-use of any quotes whatsoever will already be established. Too, I hope you find no difficulty with these brackets.)

The book review was good, although some of the pains that you obviously took to make it good are spoiled by little carelessnesses. For instance, you should spell the word lying, not lieing, and I don't think haggard was the adjective you were really trying to think of in describing the appearance of the girls on the cover. I don't quite see why you should complain about "unusual obsession for describing criminal activities" in books about juvenile delinquency; it would be unusual if a book about juvenile delinquency could somehow be written without describing the things that cause the young people to fall into that category, whether the language was the kind the layman understands or the technical terminology that the psychiatrist prefers. A book about ways in which juvenile delinquency might be prevented or a study of the environmental factors from which juvenile delinquency arises would indeed be liable to criticism for "unusual obsession" if it described the criminal activities; not a book about juvenile delinquency itself.

(The gretch you quoted is basically the same thing I have against crud like Mickey Spillane--no one can spend twenty four hours a day doing naught but cutting up people, kicking police officers in the groin, and raping poor, under-privileged girls. There must be something in between. But the usual run of books do not bother with this, much in the same way as as much action as possible must be crammed into a half-hour television western.)

TED E. WHITE

To your comments on those snippets of my letter... I don't think Bill Evans' reviews had any "cute" quality to them, particularly not any striven-for such quality. Just because I didn't come out and flatly state "I don't think Bill Evans' style is 'cute'" does not mean I think it is 'cute'. I don't concede points by over-locking them; that's the GMCarr way. This style of Bill's is rather close to his style of speech and it seems quite natural. He does it less for effect, I am sure, than because it comes naturally.

(That you "do not concede a point by over-looking it" is not precisely what I had in mind, and is of course subject to ridicule, but I'll overlook that for the time being. You were taking my individual points concerning the Evans portion of SpecReview in order and cutting them down (don't read anything into the phrase "cutting them down" that I didn't intend--I can't think of better phraseology offhand). You skipped that point, so I quite naturally assumed that it was skipped because there was no reason to cut it down--in other words, that you agreed with it, and therefore could not take exception.)

Now as to relative qualifications, you have completely misunderstood me. I said that you were unqualified to criticize Evans' style on the basis of your own inability to appreciate style, and construct it. I think your analogy is all wet. Bill has been reading science fiction--thoroughly--since before either of us was born, and he is aware of plot types, and relative story quality. You, on the other hand, have only just begun to find out about style at all, and your writing still shows this. My main point was that from point of view of style, the example of Evans' writing was vastly superior to your reworded example.

(A point I conceded before and do so again now. But the fact still remains that one loses the thread of a review if one must wade through as many as three parenthetical inserts in one sentence. It is annoying as well. One usually reads a book review to discover whether or not he/she will enjoy the book, or, if the person has already read the book, to see how many opinions the reviewer puts forth that he/she agrees with. At least, this is why I read a book review--you may well have other reasons, but presently I can't seem to bring any to mind. If the reader is interested in style, he can read fiction, essays, articles, et al. Fannishly, if a person thrives style, he can read some of Bill's articles which are good. Magazine reviews, unfortunately, require more thought and reworking that Bill put into his; by your own admission, you were fairly sure the reviews were first draft. More on this when I come to that portion of your letter.)

Now as to your absurd comparison of Evans' "sparkling" (I hope you realize that you're quoting from yourself here...) style to a baby's actions ("more interesting") and your drab rewrite to "A man in his early twenties" ("more mature, intelligent, and orderly"), this is simply an example of raw egotism. If you want to carry it out more fully, then you would be forced to admit that a dry-as-bones dissertation on story values (such as abound in text-books on literature) is "better" than one which is in itself intrinsically interesting, and enjoyable to read. Maybe so, but not for me. The damon knight approach is based on the enjoyably informative approach, and I prefer it to scholarly treatatase. The fact remains, however, that what Evans wrote (being factually the same in content) was no less "mature" or "intelligent", and only slightly less, if at all, "orderly". It had the added attraction of interest. The matter of orderliness lay primarily, I imagine, in the fact that Bill's reviews were first draft. Anyone--you or him--could better group the facts on a second draft. You had them there to play with until you came up with the best order at your leisure; Bill created them onto paper. He had the innate orderliness of mind (which I know is a characteristic of his) to get everything down, and into approximate order, cold. That for me shows considerable more "maturity". And if I wanted to be nasty about it, I could compare your own reviews for "maturity, intelligence, and orderliness"...

(Finally, in the third paragraph of the third letter, we get to the

crux of the matter: that Ted White reads book reviews not only for information, but because he enjoys them (or at least, likes to enjoy them) and that Ted Pauls reads book--or as in this case mag--reviews solely for the information he gets out of them. Which one of these reasons is correct, I do not know, although I suspect that the majority opinion is with Ted White. In much the same way as "the best books on writing are usually the dullest" (Harry Warner Jr., Rumble) I believe that the best reviews are usually the dullest.

(The other point in this paragraph comes directly from lack of knowledge. I did not know that Bill's review was probably first draft--I thought it was the best he could do! And I believe that a book review should be the best the reviewer can do, or, for that matter, a magazine, movie, fanzine, or play review. If, as you say, he was writing his review out of his head, then my opinion of it must of course be amended. I'll say that as a first draft review, it was fine--but of course it cannot--should not--be compared to Pavlat's better thought-out one. If Bill can do this well on a first draft, then obviously his second or third draft work will be superior to most other second or third draft work. But I still maintain that book, magazine, or any other kind of reviews shouldn't be written first-draft-only.)

In your analogy you imply directly that Bill's reviews (like "the actions of a six month old baby") have no quality other than the sparkle of interest for an onlooker, and that somehow this obviates the other qualities cited above. This is sheer nonsense. You twisted Bill's style of reviewing and my comments on them entirely out of context to reality. Frankly, this is insulting to Bill, and to any intelligent reader. It also indirectly insults your own intelligence for making the comparison.

Hitchcock's letter should be correlated with your comment after the first paragraph of Pavlat's letter. John has a very distorted view of current-day fandom, largely based on misinformation and a small degree of contact with fandom. I noticed as early as two summers ago, when he and Magnus planned a monthly fanzine together, that they really weren't up--Hitchcock least of all--on what was happening. John thinks it is still 1957 or 1958. There's this ridiculous bit, "there seem to be less printed fanzines, don't there?" I haven't seen an American printed fanzine in over ten years, and the last important type-set zines were SLANT, OPERATION FANTAST, and SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW--all British. If John means offset or photo-offset, that's another story. I guess he hasn't seen Dick Ellington's zines (he has), Lynn Hickman's, Bruce Pelz's, or Gregg Trend's, if he thinks offset isn't being used--it is being used more now than ever before in fannish history. If he is referring to the lithoed zines like FANTASTIC WORLDS or the last several PSYCHOTICS, well, there is AMRA (a borderline case), NEW FRONTIERS, IN* SIDE, among others...about the same number and type as previously.

Sean's plain about "formatlessnesses" is also absurd. The period he remembers fondly had its share of loose, chatty zines--remember Larry Anderson's zines, SCINTILLA among them?--which first sprang up (in their then-current incarnation) after SMUG came out. Today's crudzines have more format than yesterday's leaders (specifically, Keasler's zines; OPUS and FANVARIETY), which only proves that format, as John thinks of it, is relatively unimportant. So CRY has undignified headings, a chatty contents page, etc...so what? It also is now printing some of the best material appearing in fandom (??). And CRY is also unique in its informality of format (which I'll admit I don't care for either...); look at the other members of the "top ten"...

When John says that the "fanzines of today have a marked tendency to be considered, polished, and dull", I can't disagree--from his point of view--but I will say that he is quite wrong in asserting this as a dogmatic, objective fact. The fact is that these fanzines (what few he may read, and he certainly can't be reading many, since almost all of fandom is unaware of him or thinks he's gaffiated), are dull--to an outsider. They always are. This is due to no defect on their part, but is strictly up to the beholder. If you aren't involved in fandom, the doings of people you never heard of may very well seem dull. But only because they aren't happening to you, John Hitchcock!

As to this "sociability" vs "creativity" charge, it too is equally ridiculous. There isn't today extent the degree of "sociability" there was in 7th Fandom, nor that in the Bay Area a few years back. "The fan magazines of old have become more like long disconnected letters." Can we say this of CRY, HYPHEN, OCPS, INN, A BAS, FANAC, YANDRO, SHAGGY, or even my very own slumbering VOID? No--and what fanzines can we say this of? I wish John would name me a couple. I want to know which of the zines he has seen are the "dull", the "sociable", the "long disconnected letter type". I want to know specifically which faneds "seem to want to have a good, beery time, and publish for the hell of it." In other words, I "unsociably" want John to put his facts where his mouth is. He's made a lot of very dogmatic statements here about a fandom which we have been led to believe he is not participating in and knows little about. Where the hell does he get off disclaiming at great length on the relative merits, values, or characteristics of current-day fandom? John Hitchcock has received few fanzines in the last three years--and among them my GAMBITS and VOIDS which hardly met any of the specifics he stated for fandom today. I want to see a little less emotional blather and a few more solid pieces of evidence. You can prove anything with generalizations...

(←Later, on VAGUE 1...→)

Omigod! Another title! Well, VAGUE (the zine, not the title, though I like the title too) is about the best yet in the current DHOG/FANJACK/VAGUE series.

To finish off this question of the relative worth of fandoms... Magnus says, "Raeburn was a neofan during the period in question." (The fact that he wasn't was immaterial...) However, both Magnus (who came into fandom in 1952) and Hitchcock (1953) were neofans during "the period in question." And today they have withdrawn to a large extent.

Now, it has already been established that for each reader, the "golden era" of science fiction usually falls between the first one or two years of his wholesale discovery of it. The "Sense of Wonder Syndrome," I call it. Extend this thinking to fandom, and you'll get my point. To anyone now Out Of It and looking backwards, those first years of discovery (especially for Magnus, who made a big hit right off) are going to be Golden Years, and the specific passing of that era is to be lamented. This pretty adequately explains the reactions of both Johns.

And a postscript to the entire argument: Magnus' Point 2.: "Pauls' mailing list is made up of fans who made their names years ago. New fans haven't been able to create any similar interest in each other."--this is flatly absurd. I point to the CRY lettercol and numerous other zines in which the "younger contingent" sports itself. Paah, why go on? When people are Out Of It, they are Out Of It. Their opinions on things

which are in are absolutely worthless. Like LIFE and the Beatniks, if you know what I mean...

RON ELLIK

Let me describe, in pithy detail, a few hours from the life of a fan--a member of fandom--from the Golden Years of 1950-53. Just so I can speak accurately, let's pick the end of that era--say, November of 1953--and let the fan be me.

This fan (who will remain nameless) has just spent the first few hours of daylight Saturday morning cutting stencils with a brand, spanking new Underwood portable. The stencils are VELLAM films, but he threw away the films and cursed the dropped o's because he didn't know any **** Better. He wasn't to find out his fantastic goof until over a year later, reading a FAPA mailing.

He has compiled, over the past weeks, approximately 30 cut stencils, with holes for artwork. Now that they are finished, he spends another hour painfully--dedicatedly--copying the artwork onto stencil with a ballpoint pen, an ABDick ball stylus, an old drawing plate and no mimeo-scope--using the dining room table for a background. It locked it, too. The magazine (which will remain nameless) is complete. A quick phone-call reassures him that Balint is indeed at home and expecting him, so he loads the stencils and two pounds of ink into the apple-box which rides on the L-rack of his bicycle and pedals ten miles (ten flat miles--there is only one hill in Long Beach, called Signal Hill, and the route went around it--but still ten miles; that is approximately an hour's worth of bicycling) across the city to Golden Avenue. On the way, he stops in downtown Long Beach and buys, with his last cent, five or six reams of cheap paper.

He and Balint spend the entire afternoon, and much of the evening, coaxing 125 copies of lousy reproduction from Li'l Dammit, a \$25 Montgomery Ward mimeograph which turned out letter-perfect copy most of the time, but not for Balint's. The paper had to be hand-fed, and pre-counted; also, Li'l Dammit was a closed cylinder mimeograph which was inked by painting the drum with a 1" paint-brush dipped in ink. Evenness of repro counted on skill with the brush. When the mimeographing (which sometimes required two or three Saturdays spent in this manner, with stops for talk and to read VEGA, and the old, original MAD, and eat supper--a heaven-sent rest--and to write fan-material for other zines) was over, or at least suspended, this young fan would bicycle home again, sometimes very late at night. It was a cold trip, and tiring.

If--I mean when--the magazine was completed, this young fan would spend most of a day assembling it off the two beds in his and his brother's room. He would spend another day addressing copies. On a third day he would spend every cent he could scrape up for about a hundred 3¢ stamps, because his 20# paper ran over the 2¢ limit--those were the good old days, when postage was 2¢ and overseas fmz cost 3¢. Then he would mail it out, and wait for letters and reviews. These letters (and subs) and reviews would come in, I assure you, and they would help him with the third issue.

Now, to jump six years into the future: I spent last month (and part of this) sorting my fanzine collection. In the process, I ran across my incomplete file of a 1953-54 fanzine which featured reprints of fan fic-

tion. Some of the above incidents ran through my head, and I felt a twinge of nostalgia such as Hitchcock must feel when he thinks about the period 1950-53 in fandom. Under the influence of that nostalgia, I opened the second issue of that fanzine of yester-year.-

Ted, you wouldn't believe it. Nostalgia couldn't help; lying to myself couldn't help; blinking my eyes and flipping pages fast couldn't help; nothing could drive from my mind the impossibly blunt conviction that I was holding in my hands the biggest pile of unadulterated crap I had ever seen.

I beg John Hitchcock to reconsider, I beg him, on bended knee almost, to look carefully at the output of 1960 fandom (and not to call it 8th Fandom--that's a term I dislike) and to read it with affaciation for the output of newcomers, with admiration for the progress his contemporaries have made, and with never a glance behind him. I most especially beg him (and you, too, and your readers) not to dig into musty old files and read again that sweetly-remember, published-in-sweat, dedicated, nostalgic, lousy fanzine (which will remain nameless).

Yes, Hitchcock, we were dedicated--we were also producing some of the most miserable (read "dedicated") material I have ever seen. MOTE, CON-FAB, and certain issues of GRUE and FANTASTA matched the chattiness and formatlessness of most of today's fanzines. PSYCHOTIC, most GRUEs, the 53-55 INSIDES, and others matched the top-notch quality of much of today's output. SFTimes was FANTASY TIMES then, and much the same as it is now; "-" was the same; SKHK was the same (it started appearing irregularly in 52-3, and got worse in frequency after the 7th Annish); the N3F was the same. But a lot of new (read "good") things have appeared, and most of the old-timers are remarkably better--and what did we get rid of?

We got rid of Warren A. Freiberg, PJVorzimer, O.W.Mosher III, George Wetzel (he was a frequent contributor to my fmz, if I remember, and does not appear in general-fandom at all anymore), Norman Browne in his uglier moments, and, I sometimes pray, for good, a certain Long Beach fan and his reprint fanzine, both of whom shall remain nameless.

MARION BRADLEY

You are going to hate me forever for this; from your photograph, I simply CANNOT believe you are seventeen. If I told you how old you LOOK, you would not only cut me off your mailing list, you would probably expunge my name from the sacred writings, forge letters swearing eternal love from me to George Wetzel, burn me in effigy on the steps of the Tucker Hotel, and put my portrait on the target range of the National Archery Association. So I won't say that you look about thirteen. However, when you are forty or thereabout, I'll tell you that you look about twenty-five, and your resentment will turn to Admiration when you understand my Sterling Qualities. Age is a peculiar thing. I still remember, when I was thirteen, being asked by a passer-by if my small cousin, age five, were my son! Poul Anderson is no kid; but he looks considerably younger than I do!

(You're right, of course. I have always looked, both in features and size, three to four years younger than I actually am. Until the age of 15 or so, I was still able to ride buses, attend movies, etc. at half-price. In fact, I went to New York with my parents when I was 14, and

the manager informed my father that he needn't pay for since, since I was "obviously 11 or 12". I may still be able to get away with something like this, only I'm growing now. When I was about half-past 15, authenticated figures showed my height at 4" 11½'--now, considerably less than two years later, I'm 5" 7'. This isn't tall, of course, but it's a step in the right direction.→)

Incidentally, I approve of your habit of including little thises and thats with Fanjack, but this might get out of hand. So far we've had ration points, beer labels, photographs of the editor (which makes more sense than anything else...in fact, I'm already dickering with a friend to make up 65 pictures of me for my next Fapazine)(←send me one, please→) and, no doubt, the next, or Valentine issue will feature a candy heart or some such thing stuck to the title page. Will you include a tastefully decorated Easter Egg with your April issue?

(←You've only skimmed the top for enclosures. Besides the things which are mailed as part of the fanzine itself on all copies, I make it a point to enclose something with every copy. Photographs, crackpot religious pamphlets (Boggs and I once kept one of these going back and forth for several months--I enclosed it in a DHOG, he returned it in a letter on that issue, I sent it back with the next batch, he returned it; I sent...), playing cards, covers torn from one's own fanzine, quote-cards, etc. And now that I'm mailing first class, there is no limit to the things I'll be able to enclose. Maybe you'll even have that Easter Egg...→)

Your energy and persistence are incredible...I don't think anyone's produced at this rate since Art Rapp quit Spacewarp and Redd Boggs and Bob Stein gave up Tympani. Keep this up and you'll be getting Hugos or something...see, I am milder, much milder. I am going to manage a snarl for the repetitive insistence on "Creeping Pumblishm." Fandom has enough damn-nonsense catch words, and everyone who comes along thinks he has to make up a new one. Brsfplsk! And I can remember when "Pass the Xeno" was funny!

(←Marion Bradley fights Creeping Pumblishm! Do you? Actually, I didn't invent the damned word--JeanY did. It is the embodiment of all the "Down With..." clubs in the world, with an ectoplasmic nature thrown in to boot. Like, do you not dig?→)

RICK SNEARY

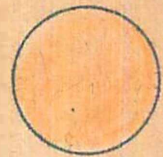
The picture of yourself should help some people believe in you. I mean, that if the "picture-you" isn't really a fan, he has to be at least the same person Durward, and Donaho, etc. met. He would be, by now, so well-known that he would no doubt demand the right to do a little fan-ac on his own. The difference would be noted, and it would be all in the soup. But then, let me repeat, I've never thought you were Ted White. You came to his defense too often and White would have known better. No, I thought you might be Sylvia... I'm not surprised by the picture--I expect by now to have correspondants look different than I pictured them. I'd sort of imagined you as being darker complected; rather than so blond. But don't you think three staplers border on vulgar ostentation?

(←Well, two of them don't work... I think it's time I cleared up this question as to my existence. Ask any of the following people; they

have all seen me at least once: Ted White, Sylvia White, John Magnus, John Hitchcock, Bill Rickhardt, Bob Pavlat, Bill Berg, Phyllis Berg, Franklin Kerkhof, Dick Eney, Ron Parker, Joanne Magnus, Larry Shaw, Noreen Shaw, Nick Falasca, Algis Budrys, Jean Young, Andy Young, Larry Stark, Bill Donaho, Tim Prael, Dave Kyle, Ruth Kyle, Hans Santesson, Marian Cox, Dick Wingate. Is that enough? And of course Durward, who you have already mentioned.)

(* *) "This is a token of esteem for you
(+) people who dig white space."
(---)

FANZINE
REVIEWS
BY JOHN
HITCHCOCK



CAMBER #11, Alan Dodd, 77 Stanstead Road, Hoddesdon, Herts., England; no schedule mentioned, mimeo'd, 15¢, 40 pp.

This consists principally of (1) long, rambling reports on various sf and such-like films and (2) even more rambling sputterings at Werner von Braun, as hero of new Hollywood autobiography. The latter is made up of excerpts from London journalists and letters to the editors of British papers, interspersed with snappy remarks from Dodd. Every word of it is anti-von Braun, which might not be such a bad idea, but its length, ramblingness, and thrown-together-ness destroys any punch; and if it weren't for the facts behind the stew, it would be just a bit ridiculous. If you're terribly interested in sf films and (mostly) related pseudo-B stuff, you could get interested in CAMBER.

WALDO #1, Eric Bentcliffe, 47 Aldis Street, Great Moor, Stockport, Cheshire, England; irregular, mimeo'd, OMPA zine w/outside distribution to Interested Parties, 20 pp.

Waldo has an unstudiedly well-executed appearance, with a light, thoroughly enjoyable style of writing. It's almost a one-man job, but still doesn't wind up reading like a letter-substitute --perhaps the slant toward OMPA accounts for this. Main contents are an excellent history of LaSFaS (Liverpool) with sketches of the 'Pudlians'. Also EB's travels in Italy, the sort of subject that's resulted in more unentertaining verbiage than than anything short of a two-year old convention report. Bentcliffe, bless him, makes it fun. The British usually seem able to master the light vein of writing, and EB has long been a top-notch producer of fanzines (viz Triode). I swear he's even gotten better. The best fanzine in the pile, this, and the only really good real fanzine this time around. And it's for OMPA yet! I just wish it were a Triode.

YANDRO #83, Robert and Juanita Coulson, Route 3, Wabash, Indiana; monthly, mimeo'd, 15¢, 12/\$1.50, 28 pp.

Bob Tucker's Doric Column; fanzine reviews which aren't bad, but use a 1-10 rating system for something that varies in several dimensions; fan-wrote fiction ballast; two page long poems, one of which (Genius) has a few creditable points, the other being more ballast; fairly interesting letter column; editorials--Yandro is an institution. It doesn't stream forth with originality, nor does it strike you artistically with its appearance. With Tucker it offers, as usual, some of the best writing in American fandom. Like Peon, another long-liver, now gone, it stands outside the frothy mainstream of current fandom, and doesn't lose because of it. Peon, though, was a first rate zine in quality, on nearly everyone's top-ten list. I doubt if the Coulsons will ever match that. Quality ranges from very good to mediocre, consistency and regularity is outstanding for today's

chickenscratches

standards, and the atmosphere is just as friendly as in Triple-A faandom.

WRR Volume 2, Number 3, Blotto Otto Pfeifer, 24304 59th West, Montlake Terrace, Washington; dittoed, 20 pp. Co-editor, Wally Weber.

The only thing I liked in this fanzine besides the editors was one of the headings. Really, WRR is awful in a friendly sort of way. It's not intended to be good, of course. It's just something done by a couple fellows bent on having fun and hoping the fans they mail it to will have fun reading it. From what I saw of them here, I rather like its two producers. The only thing to do, then, is to view WRR as their vehicle and not as a separate object d'art in itself.

FANACHRONISM #2, Dean A. Grennell, 402 Maple Avenue, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin; sporadic, Gestetnered, one sheet.

Dag, who, according to Ted White, was the Grand Focus of Seventh Fandom, is as fabulous as ever. The only thing wrong is that this is the first thing from Old Lakebottom in several months. Fandom would be a much brighter place with, say, four or five Grues (Gree?) a year.

GAMBIT #33-34, Ted E. White, 107 Christopher Street, New York 14, New York; sporadic, mimeo'd, two and four pages respectively.

Both GAMBITs are colored by Ted's defensive grotchings at H.P. Sander-son, apparently in an attempt to resurrect the good White name. A well-chosen sneer would have done just as well. Although these parts are un-pleasant reading (for nearly everybody, I suspect), a well thought out thesis on Nth Fandoms and Focal Points arises from them (There are other conversational squibs here and there, but this is the Main Issue.) For "8th" Fandom's Focal Point, Ted suggests...

FANAC #49-51, Terry Carr and Rom Ellick, 1906 Grove Street, Berkeley 4, and 1909 Francisco Street #6, Berkeley 9, respectively, California; 4/25¢, 9/50¢, bi-weekly, mimeo'd, four pages.

...and in a limited way, Fanac is our current Focal Point. That is, for keeping up with just about everything that goes on in fandom, Fanac has "its finger on fandom's pulse"(TEW). But new concepts and the trends they sometimes start aren't unveiled in Fanac, nor is it much of a focus for personalities. The Focal Points of old served these functions as well. They also set editorial standards, and indeed standards in any dimension of fandom, thanks to their creative outpouring. One might say that in Fanac fandom has half a Focal Point. Where's the rest of it?

HOBGOBLIN #2-4, Terry Carr, address above; rider with Fanac, mimeo'd, 4, 2, and 2 pages.

Now Terry Carr could easily himself provide 1960 fandom with a Focal Point, replete with creative inspiration. But his energies are divided all over the place, and it seems to be a fanzine, not a person, that makes a Focal Point. If Carr could combine Fanac, Hobgoblin, and Innuendo (one of the best fanzines around, but like most few and far be-

tween), it's conceivable he could change the nature of fandom. (And if Fanac builds up its stock of riders, Hobgoblin definitely included, that Bundle could be a full-blooded focal point!) One reason Fanac should definitely be had, if any VAGUE readers don't get it already, is Hobby. Carr is a good reviewer and one of fandom's finest writers now active, one of the few fen who grew up in fandom. It shows in Hobgoblin.

--John Hitchcock



FIRST CLASS MAIL

FROM: Ted Pauls
144B Meridene Drive
Baltimore 12, Maryland

READ THIS:

You are rather firmly entrenched on the mailing list. No sweat, like.

We trade.

You have a contribution herein.

You have a letter herein.

Your fanzine is reviewed herein.

FOR ONE OF THESE REASONS, THIS IS YOUR LAST ISSUE:

You have not written in some time, and I suggest you do so immediately.

Your fanzine, supposedly a trade, doesn't arrive.

You say nothing of any importance whatever

to,

Rick Sneary
2962 Santa Ana
South Gate, California

WASHINGTON IN 1963

Eric Bentcliffe for TAFF

Cast a negative vote for Sandy Sanderson...