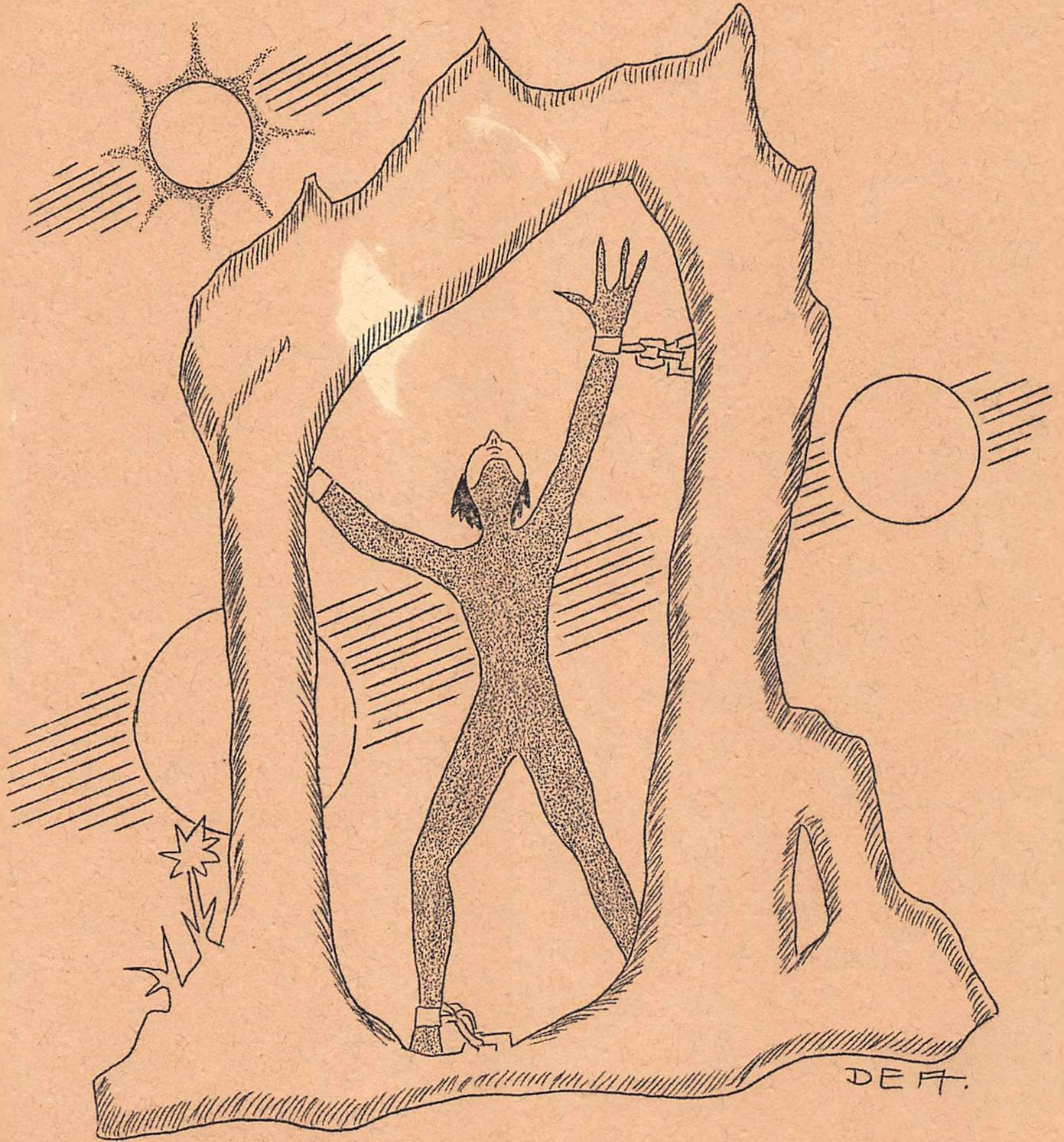


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Did you know there is an original soundtrack lp record of "Dark Shadows"?



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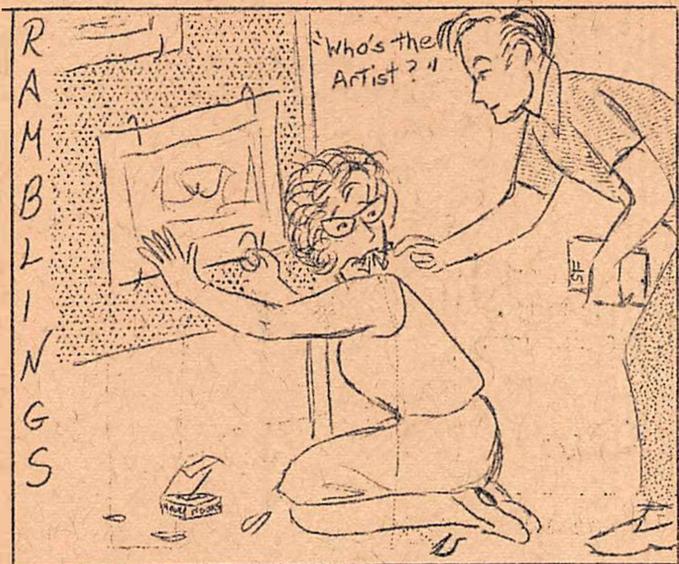
"Masked Marvels" reprinted from Scithers' Cultzine and Thompsons' COMIC ART: both previous publications some years back.

"To My Library" copyright 1969 by L. Sprague de Camp.

If you're interested in different Christmas Cards, ask for a catalog from Simboutique, Inc., Suite 802, 222 Lafayette St., New York, N.Y. 10012. (If you're hip, the name tells you what kind of different; if you're not you probably wouldn't want them anyway. But they have some nice cards - not to mention a sexy vice-president.)

Last couple of issues have been bad about having copies returned. Due to delays in delivery, a copy is mailed before an address change and arrives afterward. Okay; I can live with that. But please let me know when you move, because otherwise I just take your card out of the file and wait until you do inquire. No matter what your local postmaster tells you, the post office will not forward third class mail. It will not even tell me what your new address is unless I pay an extra 10¢ postage due on each return, which I am not about to do. If you want your copies, it's up to you.

RSC



We had intended to get this issue out a bit earlier, but perhaps in an excess of recuperation from StLouiscon, we didn't make it. Cons are necessarily judged by what happens to the individual at the con, and how he or she feels there -- if you're sick the whole time, understandably it won't go down as one of your favorite occasions. But for us it was a good con. Like a sports event juju axiom, it started out badly, then got steadily better. We heard several of the arrivals-by-air complaining about the miasma of orangish smog blanketing the Midwest. Believe me, it was pretty sad driving through it, too, and no pressurized cabins to filter it out. Whatever it was, it covered the entire area and we drove through it both going to

St. Louis and coming back.

I don't intend to make this a full scale con report, but there are some observations I would like to make, beyond merely saying that I enjoyed myself extremely.

One thing that was interesting about St. Louiscon was the proportion of younger people there. I heard some growls from older fans about "hippies" and other terms uttered in tones of scorn...almost in the same voice you might expect from the old desert rat muttering about "whippersnappers". This strikes me as ironic and a bit peculiar. The attire, whatever their opinions, is young and of the present, and fandom can't get rid of it without banning the younger fans. And weren't some of these same older fans the ones who were moaning about a dying fandom? Just a few years back they were quite concerned and wondering where the "new blood" was going to come from, and wasn't it terrible that fandom was dying. Now the new blood's here, and some of them are complaining that the type and factor aren't what they had in mind. Science fiction fandom, above all, should be a genre that should welcome the new and young -- some of the incoming flow will be freakish, faddish, or temporary. But much of it will be a permanent addition to the field. It just doesn't seem kosher fannish, to me, to object to youth on a blanket basis.

The youngest fan party I attended was undoubtedly the Minneapolis party. It was great. They were even kind enough to listen politely to a few fannish reminiscences from an old codger like me. My big regret is that I didn't get all the names down in my mind, because these are young people I'd like to keep in touch with. Nate Bucklin and Jim...?....that's terrible. But it seemed a time for personalities rather than names, and that's the way I prefer it. I didn't even get the name of the guy playing the great steel string guitar and doing some marvelous bluegrass. I first discovered the Minneapolis suite after the masquerade and "The Spur", and I wish I'd joined them earlier; after the rock concert ended, I went up to one of the party rooms somebody had given me and while there inquired about various other potential parties, including Minneapolis -- and a drunken elderly fan slurrily assured me I wouldn't like it up there at all because it was "very juvenile". As a contrast to being cornered by someone I didn't know and being forced to listen to whatever alcohol hath wrought, I considered Minneapolis a dandy choice. I suspect that first night Jock Root and I were the only ones in the folk/filk singing room over 20..25?..30, certainly. But I didn't feel out of place, and I hope I wasn't. Minneapolis has a good buncha people, make no mistake.

The youth orientation of the con brought up another problem, and I suppose in our culture it actually is a problem: marijuana. I was offered some hash myself and politely declined, on the same basis that I decline several other things like most alcohol, tobacco, and unknown quantities of antihistamines and whatnot: I have very very odd reactions to some things (like passing out from novocaine and being adrenalin jolted by phenobarbital), and aside from the legal aspect a con did not seem the place to experiment, possibly go into some severe reaction and foul up an enjoyable

time for myself and others. The legal aspect is sticky, and it makes a non-user a trifle nervous when he or she's at a party and some people light up; you may approve or feel that marijuana should be legalized, but it hasn't been, and you're fully aware that in a raid you'll be swept along with everybody else.

Comes to the basics of it though, I tried to avoid drunks and found users very polite and inoffensive. At least they aren't prone to corner you by an elevator (which you become convinced will never appear) and breathe all over you and launch into diatribes over imagined slurs or recount supposedly humorous anecdotes until you are ready to push them down the elevator shaft -- if you could only get the verdammt door open.

The food situation turned out to be better for us than at almost any con we've attended. We had a portable ice chest, and very early I stocked up on fruit, bread, and cheese and lunchmeat at the deli across the street. It stood us in very good stead, and I only had to give business to the Tack(y) room once. I was one of the lucky ones and got good service at the drug store lunch counter, too. And twice I ate at a Chinese restaurant a block or so from the hotel and thought the food good to excellent. All in all a good con for eats.

The art show, too, was great. It always is, of course, but I don't get to see it every year and I much appreciate the opportunity to see who new is coming along and ogle new developments in technique. I hope all the fans, especially the new comers, who enjoyed the art show appreciate it too, particularly the fact that without the Trimbles there would be no art show. It's an established tradition now, and more or less taken for granted, and some people even feel the leniency to gripe loudly about features of display or management. But I watched the art show grow from no more than an idea, heard the objections and criticisms that sprang up before the thing was even born, and fully realize that if Bjo hadn't stepped in and been willing to shoulder all that work (and let nobody kid you about the wear and tear on muscles and nervous system!) the art show would never have gotten off paper. I went to the con with every intention of helping all I could, but discovered most of it had already been done before we even arrived, and this is the earliest we've ever made a con! (Whatever happened to the three-day Worldcon?) Bjo, at Boston I'll make a special effort to get there even earlier -- just hand me the drapery hooks and point me in the right direction.

One last observation. This is the first time in seventeen years of worldcon going I've ever danced during the music provided after the masquerade. Some of the previous music was listenable, but this was overwhelming and impossible not to dance to if you're the sort like me who danced before I could walk very well. I got over to one side out of the young set's way and really enjoyed myself. "The Spur" were quite a fine group, and Hank and Lesleigh deserve some sort of electronic plaque for picking them (going by the in-charge-ofs in the program book). Thank you. And may all of your feedbacks be beautifully controlled.

JWC

A COLUMN byBruce E. Coulson

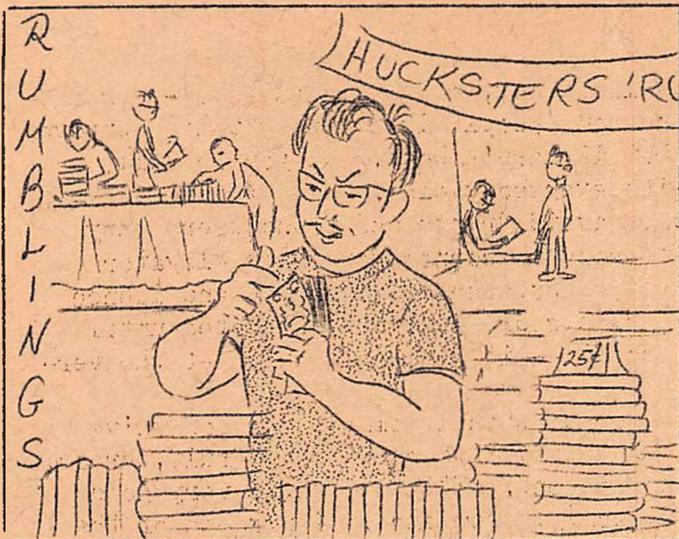
My first Worldcon didn't impress me much. The only speakers that impressed me (of what I heard) were: Harry Stubbs, Bruce Pelz, and Dick Lupoff. I think the con committee did a very good job on the registration and all.

According to some fans, the bellboys were snotty, but the maids were very helpful. From personal experience I can say the maids were very good. I don't know anything about the bellboys.

The movies that were shown were all right.

The end of the masquerade ball was the funniest thing I've ever seen! The person playing Charlie Brown did so expertly. I just wished that they had cleaned up the remains of the rock band earlier. I missed the movies that night!

BEC



Young, Larry Herndon, Don Fitch, Terry Ballard, David Gerrold, Fred Haskell, Anne McCaffrey; possibly others (if I neglected you, sorry.) And of course there were the talks, in the Huckster Room and at parties, with older friends; the Thompsons, Ben Solon, the various Couches, Bob Gaines, Phyllis Eisenstein (Phyllis and I were trying to explain fandom to a couple of non-fan readers), Tucker, Lee Hoffman...hell, there were about 1500 people there and I must have talked to at least a third of them. This is what conventions are about, as far as I'm concerned, and I agree with a remark of Maggie Thompson's that it was nice this year to be able to talk to old friends without feeling the necessity to dash off to meet new people. (Of course, that's because we took an extra day, rather than a credit to convention planning, but it still makes it a good con.) We mostly stayed out of the "exclusive" parties (partly from conviction and partly because nobody told us about them) but we did attend one that was ultra-exclusive...the Couches were hosts, and when I ran into Hank and Lesleigh Luttrell on the way over and mentioned that Lesleigh's parents were having a small party, Hank said "They are? They didn't invite us." (I mentioned this to Leigh and she looked thoughtful a minute and then laughed and said "I guess we didn't.")

 The ultimate in fan status is to have a Worldcon Committee member run a couple of errands for you during the convention.

 This time I got into the "pro party" by being Juanita's husband. We didn't stay terribly long, but I can report to any curious fans that the pro party is just as hot, overcrowded, and uninspiring as the average fan party, and the quality of conversation - as opposed to the subject matter - is about the same. At least I did get to meet Don Bensen there, and he told me that Berkley was interested in an idea for a novel I had sent him, more or less as a joke, a couple of weeks before. (Which helps make this a "business expense" on my income tax - of course the fact that I made a small profit off the con is more important there.) But the idea of mixing with the stimulating conversation of professionals is mostly garbage. (Not that this was a bad party; it was about average.) Which reminds me of a story I probably shouldn't tell, but will anyway. The SFWA maintained a "press room" at the hotel; I don't know if it did the organization any good, but at least the newspaper coverage of the con was far more favorable than I'm used to. Apparently some of the pros spent most of their time there; Chelsea Quinn Yarbro mentioned to a fellow professional something to the effect that it was wonderful to have a sanctuary away from the fans. Unfortunately, the fellow professional she was talking to was Don Thompson. (Newly appointed pros have this problem in impressing people in fandom....I recall at a Midwestcon some easily impressed fan saying how "gracious" Dannie Plachta was. Well, why shouldn't he be - Juanita has sold more wordage than he has, and she's gracious, isn't she?)

I saw very little of the daytime program, being busy raking in money. The masquerade was certainly notable for its examples of authentic performances. Earlier, somebody was "Emma Peel", and as she was walking down the runway, Dick Schultz made

Of course, the big item in recent fan activity was the Worldcon in St. Louis. Juanita, Bruce and I all went, and it was an outstanding success for all of us, however you may have felt about it. I took up residence in the Huckster Room, because it's the best place to meet people; this time, for a change, I also sold enough old books and magazines to pay our expenses. I think this was an all-time high for first meetings with correspondents; Joanne Burger, Alexis and Doll Gilliland, Don Bensen, Stuart Stinson, Bob Margroff, Dave Burton, Thea Auler, Sam Russell, Joyce Muskat, Janet Megson, Mike Dobson, Chris Cochran, Joanne Swenski, Don Hutchison, Richard Labonte, Jim

like a villain, dashing up and attacking so Emma could drop him with a bit of judo. Dick's plop down to the runway was convincing enough, but not half as convincing as when, after hitting the runway, he rolled off the edge of it, hitting the floor with a magnificent crash. Dick was somewhat shook, but game to try it again when Emma was called back as one of the finalists. (This time he stayed on the runway, as planned.) The big authenticity ploy, though, came as the finalists trooped on stage to receive prizes. Rick Norwood was costumed as Charlie Brown, trying vainly to get a kite aloft. At this final appearance, he simply walked up on stage, carrying the by now disintegrating kite gingerly. Somehow, though, he got his feet tangled in the kite string and did a back flip through the giant movie screen at the back of the stage, tearing a six-foot rent in it and then struggled up and appeared to be trying ineffectually to make repairs while the audience screamed "Let it go! You've done enough damage, Charlie Brown!" Harlan Ellison, fast on the uptake as ever, informed the audience a few minutes later that the hotel authorities were talking about \$250 damages and we should all pony up because the Con Committee was running very low on profits right then. The fans donated a total of \$480 (according to one semi-official report), causing a hotel bartender standing next to Leigh Couch to say "Lady, I've been working in this hotel 15 years and I never saw anything like that before!" (The bartender, interested in these curious creatures who would pay good cash to help out a con committee, asked Leigh questions, and was particularly interested in the fact that the fans, as opposed to most conventioners, had paid their own ways to St. Louis. He pondered the information awhile and finally decided: "You people must really like each other!") It just struck me that this last is an answer to Leo Kelley's complaint in DOUBLE BILL that fans and professionals spend too much time excoriating one another over trifles. Not that they don't; but when you come right down to it, science fiction fans like each other better as individuals than members of almost any other group you care to name. And fan arguments don't last; at this con I even saw Sam Moskowitz and Don Wollheim chuckling over some mutual amusement.

Harlan Ellison managed to lose much of his store of good will at the banquet; this was the first banquet I've seen where there was a real possibility of the guests lynching the toastmaster to the nearest chandelier. It started innocently enough; Harlan decided that the money collected for the screen over and above the amount required to make the repairs should be donated to the Clarion Writer's Workshop. (Several people have since mentioned that this is a pet charity of Harlan's, but at the time I didn't know that and it makes no real difference.) Fans, led by Elliott Shorter, objected on the grounds that it was their donation and they should say how it was spent. Harlan, exhibiting his well-known knowledge of human nature, promptly called them tinhorns and cheapskates. Ray Fisher grabbed the mike and calmed things down, but then made the mistake of handing the mike back to Harlan, who couldn't resist more remarks on the subject, which further inflamed his opponents. Eventually Guest of Honor Jack Gaughan got things permanently settled. A little tact could have got Harlan his donation; bull-headedness assured that the money would be spent elsewhere; namely, on a special fund for future con emergencies, overseen by Joe Hensley. (At the beginning, I didn't particularly care where the money went; after listening to Harlan instruct fandom on its sins for awhile I was ready to march up and demand my dollar donation back.)

Hugo winners, for the record: STAND ON ZANZIBAR by Brunner, Best Novel; "Nightwings" by Silverberg, Best Novella; "The Sharing of Flesh" by Anderson, Best Novelet; "The Beast That Shouted Love At The Heart of the World" by Ellison, Best Short Story; Jack Gaughan, Best Pro Artist; F&SF, Best Pro Magazine; "2001", Best Drama; S F REVIEW, Best Fanzine; Harry Warner, Jr., Best Fan Writer; Vaughn Bodé, Best Fan Artist. Special Hugo to the astronauts for the "best moon landing ever".

With all the people I saw, I didn't see Richard Delap, who had earlier said "see you in St. Louis" and Wayne Finch, who hadn't said anything and may even have been avoiding me, but who was on the committee and someone I was interested in meeting.

Little item from the March 1969 THE CRISIS that I've been meaning to quote. The Board of Directors of the NAACP has endorsed the efforts of the Catholics in Northern Ireland "to gain their civil rights". Yes, indeed. Britain doesn't need to feel a bit inferior to the United States.....

RSC

GOLDEN

MEMOTES

BORED OF THE RINGS, by the Harvard Lampoon (Signet, \$1.00) Keeping up the quality of a parody that runs 160 pages is quite a job. This doesn't entirely succeed; at times it descends to the quality of an average MAD movie parody. But it also has some lovely items. ("This is indeed a queer river," said Bromosel, as the water lapped at his thighs. "The very air was alive with the whizzing of poisoned boomerangs.") Overall, it's an excellent job, recommended for Ring addicts with a sense of humor - and particularly recommended for those few souls who can't stand Tolkien's book.

CONAN, by Robert E. Howard, L. Sprague de Camp, and Lin Carter (Lancer, 75¢)

CONAN OF CIMMERIA, by Robert E. Howard, L. Sprague de Camp, and Lin Carter (Lancer, 95¢)

CONAN THE FREEBOOTER, by Robert E. Howard and L. Sprague de Camp (Lancer, 75¢)

CONAN THE WANDERER, by Howard, de Camp, and Carter (Lancer, 95¢)

CONAN THE AVENGER, by Howard, de Camp, and Björn Nyberg (Lancer, 60¢)

CONAN OF THE ISLES, by L. Sprague de Camp and Lin Carter (Lancer, 60¢)

Not all are new, but I missed getting a few at the newsstand and picked them up at the Worldcon. By experiment, I found that two Conan books in a row was all that I could stand; I'd have to go read something else for awhile and recharge my Sense of Wonder. The books - and indeed, the different authors - are pretty even (one might say monotonous) in quality. Weakest author of the bunch is Nyberg, whose novel (THE AVENGER) becomes unintentionally funny all too often. "...tokens from the long-dead realms of forgotten legendry, when priests and wizards ruled with awful terror, dragging maidens screaming to dark caverns where ghastly rituals were performed, or beheading thousands of prisoners in the public squares until rivers of bubbling blood filled the gutters. Conan shivered. Much evil was concentrated here." However, Howard himself is guilty of the following: "I am Belit, queen of the Black Coast. O tiger of the North, you are cold as the snowy mountains which bred you. Take me and crush me with your fierce love! Go with me to the ends of the earth and the ends of the sea! I am a queen by fire and steel and slaughter -- be thou my king!" (Of course, from the way Belit keeps being mentioned as one of Conan's major loves after appearing in just this one story - "Queen of the Black Coast", in OF CIMMERIA - apparently this is the sort of stuff Howard's adolescent readers lapped up.) Thing is, Nyberg keeps on being ridiculous, and generally Howard doesn't. However, OF THE ISLES, a full novel designed to be the final (hopefully?) book in the series, is the best of the lot. Compared to some other sword and sorcery I've read; Conan comes off quite well. There are no major plot or background errors, and the writing is generally competent. But it doesn't particularly stir me.

FLAME WINDS, by Norvell W. Page (Berkley, 60¢) Here, from the pages of UNKNOWN, is one that does stir me somewhat. Prester John has an air about him that Conan somehow lacks. Otherwise the books are quite similar. Hardened sorcerists may object to the explanations of some of the sorcery as instant hypnosis and similar pseudoscience, but it made it all the more real to me, and easier to believe. (I have considerable difficulty in believing Conan's battles with ever-more-irresistable monsters and demons - including a tyrannosaur in the Nyberg novel and a couple of gods here and there - but illusions can conceivably be shattered.) Recommended.

STAND ON ZANZIBAR, by John Brunner (Ballantine, \$1.65) Not too bad a price for 650 pages. I just reviewed the hardcover two issues back, so I won't go over it all again. It won a Hugo, and deservedly. It could be the best science fiction novel of the 1960s (I'd have to think that over a bit, but it would be in the running.) If you've been putting off reading it, get busy.

THE MEN IN THE JUNGLE, by Norman Spinrad (Avon, 95¢) I'd read several lengthy fanzine reviews of this before getting the book. Now that I've read the book, I wonder what all the shouting was about. Spinrad himself said (in SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW, I believe) that he wanted to depict the horror and brutality of war. If so, he failed, because he forgot (or never knew) that horrors are most effective in small, detailed doses. Simply adding to the quantity of the atrocities leads to boredom, not horror, and MEN comes perilously close to being an abysmally dull book. It doesn't quite make it, however, for the same reason that BUG JACK BARRON didn't quite become ridiculous. Underneath that patina of over-writing, Spinrad is a good story-teller, and the effects show. The Brotherhood of Pain may be emotional hogwash, but the machinations of Bart Fraden remain interesting. (Now that I stop to think of it, Spinrad's idea of emotion is quite similar to Robert E. Howard's, though they are working on different emotions. Let's hope Spinrad eventually grows out of it.)

MASQUE WORLD, by Alex Panshin (Ace, 60¢) The third in the Villiers series. A fascinating example of writing, in that Alex manages to keep you reading while nothing whatsoever happens in the entire novel. (Or at least, he kept me reading; I even enjoyed it mildly.) Part of the secret, perhaps, is that it is fairly obvious from the start that nothing in particular is going to happen, so the reader isn't disappointed. I've heard that the series is building toward a grand blazing finale; if so, this section was one bringing out character and background. As a single novel it's not particularly outstanding, but worth an hour or so of your time if you have it to spare.

BLACK EASTER, by James Blish (Dell, 75¢) Another interesting sample of writing, because despite the 160 pages, it is styled like a short story, final punchline and all. (And I suspect that in the rough draft at least it was a short story.) The actual story has been padded with all kinds of arcane lore; rather surprisingly, very little geographical or political background is given and the case of characters remains small enough to have been handled in a short story or at best a novelet. Yet, despite structural defects, it succeeds fairly well; it's not a great novel by a long shot, but it's not a bad one. (Though I suppose if you aren't particularly interested in arcane lore, you might consider it bloody awful.)

THE SHAPE OF SPACE, by Larry Niven (Ballantine, 75¢) Twelve short stories, all originally published in the magazines. "The Warriors" says that Peace can be overdone - which of course I agree with. "Safe At Any Speed" is a short-short that tries - I believe - to be amusing and fails utterly. "How The Heroes Die" is a problem in villainy and (somewhat) in physics. "At the Bottom of A Hole" is a slightly disguised treatise on the benefits of space travel. "Bordered In Black" is about one of the possible risks of space travel, spiced up with the supposed horrors of cannibalism and the real horror of absolute nothing. "Like Banquo's Ghost" is another try at showing human reaction to a superior alien technology; not very successful. "One Face" is classic 1940-ASF engineering fiction. About average for the type. "The Meddler" is another humorous story; this one succeeds. "Dry Run" is a character study. I didn't care much for it - it didn't say anything to me - but I could be prejudiced. "Convergent Series" is another demon outwitted; demons have a hard life in fantasy. "The Deadlier Weapon" is also humor; this one definitely my type. (I have a sadistic streak.) "Death By Ecstasy" is a novelet; a gangster story of the future. Not bad. Overall - about average science fiction.

CALLING CAPTAIN FUTURE, by Edmond Hamilton (Popular Library, 60¢) Two more in the GALAXY MISSION, by Edmond Hamilton (Popular Library, 60¢) series that the author isn't getting paid for. (If I'd known Popular would have the gall to advertise these in the Convention Program Book, I'd have taken out an ad myself, suggesting that fans boycott Popular. If you want to buy these, pick them up second hand.)

MISSION OF GRAVITY, by Hal Clement (Pyramid, 75¢) One of the genuine classics of science fiction. Clement has invented a really alien planet and alien characters, and imbued the characters with interest for the human reader. It's been around since 1953, but if you haven't, by all means get this.

BRAN MAK MORN, by Robert E. Howard (Dell, 60¢) Howard is scrupulous about providing names and backgrounds appropriate for the locale, but otherwise one of his heroes is much like another. This includes "The Lost Race" (Roman is captured by the Picts and then freed because he befriended a Pict chief), "Men Of The Shadows" (Roman mercenary is captured by the Picts and forced to listen to their tribal history, which is at least a novel form of torture), "Kings of the Night" (which was also, I believe in Lancer's KING KULL, since Kull appears in it; you get two kings for the price of one. I'm not positive, because I made the error of loaning my copy of KULL, but I'm reasonably sure.) "Worms of the Earth" (which I recently read somewhere - Lowndes mag? - Bran recoils from using the depths of evil against Rome), "Fragment" (precisely that - 4 pages of the beginning of a story), "The Night of the Wolf" (a three-sided conflict and a moderately interesting story) and "The Dark Man" (which takes place long after Bran has been deified). Plus "A Song Of The Race"; two pages of verse. Few of the stories actually involve Bran Mak Morn, and unlike Lancer, Dell hasn't employed a staff of writers to revise them so that they will. They do all concern the Picts, or Howard's version of same. If you like blood and guts, the book is readable, but it isn't exceptionally good. Not even top-flight Howard.

TOO MANY MAGICIANS, by Randall Garrett (Curtis, 75¢) Somehow this impressed me more in book form than it did when I read the serial in ANALOG. It's a little of everything; alternate universe in which Richard I had some sense beat into him instead of dying, and begat a stable line of British rulers, alternate universe in which the laws of magic have replaced the laws of science, locked-room murder mystery, and a puzzle to discover who the characters are in "real life". (Someone at the con said the Marquis was supposed to be Nero Wolfe; I would have said Mycroft Holmes, myself, but I'm no expert on detective novels.) However, you can ignore the other identities of the various characters and still have a vastly entertaining novel.

THE PLANET BUYER, by Cordwainer Smith (Pyramid, 60¢) Reprint; in GALAXY as "The Boy Who Bought Old Earth", and in a Pyramid edition in 1964. Smith is a strong stylist; if you like his style you love his books, and if you don't like his style you're pretty indifferent to him. (I don't like his style.) His stuff is original, and his "Instrumentality" series holds together under scrutiny - partly because he is careful to not tell you very much about it.) Nice exotic backgrounds.

PLAYER PIANO, by Kurt Vonnegut (Avon, 95¢) This, I believe, is Vonnegut's first novel, written shortly after the time he spent doing bad science fiction shorts for the SATURDAY EVENING POST. Unlike his later works, it is quite solidly and conservatively structured. Since it's about the evil effects of technology on the human spirit, it is as readable today as it was when first published in 1952. Maybe more so. And, though the plotting is considerably tighter than in his later novels, it contains the elements of satire that he is noted for.

THE PALACE OF ETERNITY, by Bob Shaw (Ace, 75¢) This is a lovely book about the evils of war, the necessity for protest, etc, right up to the end. Shaw can get the reader more aware of the horror of military activity in a few sentences than Spinrad did in a whole book. And the ending, judged as propaganda (or "on a deeper level" as my more literate acquaintances would say) is fitting and a proper climax. Unfortunately on the basic story level, the ending invalidates the entire book, since it does not depend on any action of the hero's, and since the character it does depend on could have performed the act at any time (the act was voluntary and the knowledge was there all along, apparently). There is no logical reason why any of the events in the book should have taken place; Shaw slaughters whole planets to no purpose whatsoever.

BREAKTHROUGH, by Richard Cowper (Ballantine, 75¢) This has been out awhile; I was put off by the atrocious cover blurb and the fact that most stf by authors I've never heard of is terrible. This is the exception that tests the rule. (Did you know that "exception that proves the rule" is another mistranslation?) Quite simple plot; hero runs into a man working on an ESP fellowship and, thru the latter, a girl who first makes fabulous test scores and later proves able to read his mind. It's the characterization and the way it's told that makes the book. Quite readable, really.

SECRET OF THE SUNLESS WORLD, by Carroll M. Capps (Dell, 50¢) Or by C. C. MacApp, depending on whether you believe the cover or the title page - actually I believe Capps is the real name and MacApp the pseudonym. The story is a quite adequate space-adventure; hero is conscripted by one set of aliens to act as their secret agent in prying a sane scientist and a mad thief out of a thieves' planet; complicated by thieves who have their own desires, universe-conquering aliens, and still another batch of aliens who are sort of "elder gods" of the area. Never gives you any feelings of reality, but it's competent action.

JIREL OF JOIRY, by C. L. Moore (Paperback Library, 60¢) I was glad to see this, having read only one Jirel story previously and sort of enjoyed it. It didn't live up to expectations, however; 5 of the stories in one book is too much. Individually, the stories of a female warrior in a sword-and-armor background are good enough, though not really top quality. Together, they are too much of a muchness. (They do manage to convey a feminine point of view, which is extremely rare in this genre.)

SIX GATES FROM LIMBO, by J. T. McIntosh (Avon, 75¢) I get the impression that the author is trying desperately to portray real people and real emotions, and not succeeding too well. They are present, but sort of awkward and angular and overwrought, and totally unsympathetic. This is about decisions and emotional dependence, and it isn't really worth 75¢ to read about people making obvious decisions and then spending page after page justifying them.

THE SILVER STALLION, by James Branch Cabell (Ballantine, 95¢) I had been urged to try reading Cabell, by Jim Hall and others, off and on for several years, and never did. I think I've been missing something. This is both satire and bawdy humor, and some of it, unlike most bawdy humor, is actually funny. Some of it is startlingly up to date, and I can see why it created such an uproar in 1926. ("...they raised the Hymn of the Star-Spangled Buttock in the while that the two ewers containing the blood of the children were placed upon his altar.") This is not a novel, but a prologue and nine stories with a common background. Too much of the humor is concentrated on marriage; the jokes are as old as the institution and considerably more feeble. But the stories of Gonfal, Coth, Guivric, and above all Ninzian contain humor, interest, and charm. Recommended, and I'm looking forward to Ballantine's promised publication of FIGURES OF EARTH. I may even pick up a copy of JURGEN somewhere, though God knows when I'd have time to read it if I did.

THE LOST CONTINENT, by Edgar Rice Burroughs (Ace, 60¢) Reprint of a fairly recent Ace title. Actually not too bad a book, considering the author.

FOOTPRINTS ON THE MOON (Associated Press, \$5.00) Over 200 9x12 pages, and lord knows how many color photos. The history of the "space race". Mostly US photos, of course, but there are also quite a few Russian photos, and photos of all the early Russian astronauts. The text is dramatic, informative, and occasionally humorous. ("Researchers...also laid pigs on their backs...and dropped them in dummy spacecraft to see how well creatures with backbones could survive impacts...To everyone's delight, the pigs got up and slowly walked away.") It's a beautiful book, and a fascinating reminder of our space exploits. Unlike most photo books, all photos here are in color, making it a tremendous bargain at the price.

GHOSTS AND HAUNTINGS, by Dennis Bardens (Ace, 75¢) A British ghost book. Bardens is a moderately good writer; the result is a moderately good book if you care for that sort of thing.

HERE AND HEREAFTER, by Ruth Montgomery (Fawcett, 75¢) Occult books are getting expensive. This one tries to convince the reader of reincarnation. (I think it's the name of the theory that bothers me; who wants to appear in a cup of condensed milk?) The author begins with a batch of Biblical parallels, which cut no ice with me. The author is apparently a medium, and writes like one, both in style and in the desperate desire to use anything that she thinks will corroborate her theory. ("...seems entirely too real to be shrugged off as a flight of fancy." She obviously wouldn't admit to a flight of fancy if she was a stewardess on one.) Garbage.

THE FRANKENSCEIENCE MONSTER, by Forrest J. Ackerman (Ace, 95¢) This is a filmography of Boris Karloff. I would have much preferred a biography to this hodgepodge of tributes and reprinted articles, but at least most of the facts are there. (Some of them, indeed, are there several times.) There are 24 photos, and lists of his films and tv appearances, together with the character he played in each. There are also 43 - if I counted right - separate tributes and articles by various people, including all the "big names" in the field (all of whom say the proper, conventional, and expected things. All very flowery and I get the impression they could do pretty much the same thing if called upon to eulogize a pet dog.) The articles have much more variety, but some of them do present an air of "I know Karloff personally and aren't you envious!" Actually, it's a rather nice tribute; it's just that it's a rather bad book. But horror movie fans will want it anyway.

JUDY GARLAND, by Brad Steiger (Ace, 95¢) Ace seems to have started a Eulogy Series. This is a much better book; unfortunately it's about a much less interesting person. Less interesting to me, at any rate; any Garland fans in the crowd? Where Ackerman relies on personal memory (he says he only had 14 days to do the book, which if true excuses the format), Steiger did research and then spent some time writing the results.

RUN TO DAYLIGHT, by Vince Lombardi (Tempo, 75¢) Since I'm a Packer fan and since Jerry Kramer's book was so great, I was delighted to see this on our local news stand (along with 14 other pro football books, just in time for "the season"). The delight was premature. Lombardi gives the impression of being unable to think except in play diagrams, and of having no sense of humor whatsoever. The book might give a high school coach some insights into his work, but as entertainment it's a dud. (But I now better understand various comments of sympathy for Lombardi's wife; the man must be hell to live with.)

THE CONSPIRACY OF PONTIAC, by Francis Parkman (Collier, \$1.50) I suppose if you're not a dedicated history buff you wouldn't appreciate 475 pages and appendices on Pontiac's rebellion. But I enjoyed them, and was somewhat surprised to find the easy readability of a book first published in 1851. And I have a quote for anyone who thinks atrocities against the Indians were all the fault of the United States. (No, Ethel, I've never forgiven Ian Peters) "Could it not be contrived to send the Small Pox among those disaffected tribes of Indians? We must on this occasion use every stratagem in our power to reduce them." This is from a letter from that paragon of warriors, Lord Jeffrey Amherst, to his mercenary subordinate, Colonel Bouquet. Parkman comments: "There is no direct evidence that Bouquet carried into effect the shameful plan of infecting the Indians though, a few months after, the smallpox was known to have made havoc of the tribes of the Ohio." Coincidence, of course.

AGINCOURT, by Christopher Hibbert (Pan, 5/0) Fair stood the wind for France, and all that. This account spends very little time on the slaughter, but considerable on the campaign which led up to it. Readable; not outstanding.

THE BATTLE OF MATAPAN, by S.W.C. Pack (Pan, 5/0) Somewhat more interesting account, because the battle itself has been largely ignored in general histories of World War II. (I explained to Juanita that this was a battle in which the British destroyed an Italian fleet and she said "So?") Admittedly it's hard to talk up an action against the Italians as a great battle of the world, but presumably in 1941 the Italian combat efficiency wasn't so well known. It was also the first battle in which carrier aircraft played an important part and can be studied as a primitive sample of things to come. As a writer, Pack is no Alan Moorehead, but he's adequate.

THUNDER ON THE MOUNTAIN, by Giff Cheshire (Curtis, 60¢) This has been around a while but might still be available; some paperbacks stay on our newsstand for months. Anyway, this details one of the great epics of U.S. history; the fighting retreat of Chief Joseph and his Nez Percé, 1700 miles across Wyoming, Idaho and Montana, outwitting and outfighting two armies led by veterans of the Civil War, and finally halted a few miles short of their Canadian goal. An epic; and also a major tragedy.

THE MASKED MARVELS OF MOLLUSC-ON-THE-MARSH

OR,

A SONG FOR TWO UNSUNG HEROES

by G. H. SCITHERS

Picture, if you will, a quiet evening at the Masked Heroes Club. Wonder Woman is knitting in a corner and exchanging gossip with Miss Fury. The Spirit and Batman are arguing a fine point on footprints and their identification. Ebony and Captain Marvel Junior are toasting marshmallows over Toro, who is obligingly blazing in the great fireplace. Off in a corner, Spiderman and some of Daredevil's pals are planning a small rumble.

But there are two figures missing--two as bold & heroic--as adventurous--as daringly costumed as any here--even more so. And that, of course, was the trouble.

Donald Kipling Jote, you see, had the misfortune to live in the real world, where Krypton is merely a rare and rather uninteresting gas, where searchlights piercing the sky only serve to call housewives to supermarket openings, and where a dash in a somethingmobile to a secret hideout would more than likely get you caught in a traffic jam. Don, however, was not one to let petty details like that discourage him from his chosen avocation: to be a masked hero, comic book style.

Don was one of these bouncily enthusiastic chaps of enormous energy and inexhaustible enthusiasm. People like this are usually about five and a half feet tall--if that--and can be suppressed by main force if they get out of hand; Don was over six feet tall, about two feet wide at the shoulders, built like one of the figures on the pediment of the Parthenon (one of his enthusiasms was weight-lifting) and the overall effect was pretty overwhelming.

The difficulties in the way of being a real-life masked marvel are pretty overwhelming, too--can you imagine Batman, for example, trying to fight his way through a New York rush hour in hot pursuit of a malefactor? Or, for that matter, trying to fight his way through a bunch of Los Angeles autograph hunters? But Don, though he didn't live in Metropolis or Gotham City, didn't live in New York or Chicago, either; his home was in the quiet town of Mollusc-on-the-Marsh, formerly named Oyster Bay but renamed in a fit of pique by a Democratic town administration after the defeat of Alton B. Parker by Teddy Roosevelt back in '04. And while the incidence of crime--and the chances to thwart it--were nowhere near that of a bigger city, the opportunity to make a fast getaway were vastly better, for Mollusc-on-the-marsh was periodically beset by the thickest, most impenetrable fogs on the Atlantic or the Pacific Coast. And since Don was an excellent swimmer and lived in a houseboat, and since the town hugged the bay, the getaway problem was essentially solved.

Costumes were another problem entirely.

Don wrestled with tights, sweaters, and various kinds of two-way elastic cloth for weeks before enlisting the help of Sandy Cho--a small, dark, wiry muscled youth with a temperament that was a perfect foil for Don's. Sandy considered the problem hopeless from the beginning--in the first place, there simply doesn't seem to be any material that will display a would-be hero's deltoids, pectorals, latissimi dorsi, external obliques, and all the other muscular paraphernalia sported by weight lifters, comic book heroes, and other bold & heroic types, to anywhere near the degree so artfully shown by the comic book illustrators. And in the second place, the nearest ap-



proach Sandy managed to discover was uncomfortably hot when worn under street clothes. And as for taking off one and putting on the other in a hurry--have you ever tried to change clothes in a 'phone booth? Don was all for practicing just that, until Sandy reminded him that every phone booth in town had all-glass walls, and...

Actually, the problem more or less solved itself. One foggy evening, when Don and Sandy were heading home from work, they discovered a gas station hold up in progress. They both got a severe case of buck fever--it was their first case--Don promptly stripped off his outer clothing, and kept right on stripping until his costume was off too; Sandy stopped when he had his outer clothing off, forgetting that he hadn't put anything on under it that morning. Anyway, the arrival of the pair in a state of complete undress so unnerved the holdup men that they leapt into their getaway car and got--and skidded into the town's lone police car three blocks down the street. As for Don and Sandy, it was the gas station attendant, Old Bardolf, who pointed out their--ah, condition--with a long quavering finger and the question, "Who in the bloody blue blazes are you?"

Don took one, horrified look down,

yelped, "I'm nude!" and fled.

Old Bardolf watched him go, closely followed by Sandy, and said, "Looks like he's got the NaKid with him, too."

The names stuck, too: Nude Man and the NaKid. The pair weren't particularly happy about it--Don, because he didn't think the names sounded bold & heroic enough, and Sandy, because he disliked puns. And they stuck, even though the pair attended their second and third cases--a hub-cap theft and an oyster-bed poaching--wearing silk capes and red shorts. In the general excitement of getting caught, the hub-cap-thieves and the oyster-poachers failed to take careful notes, and simply reported to the police--and the local newspaper--that they'd been caught by a couple of naked nuts.

But on the fourth case--Don and Sandy had been wandering towards home one evening when they heard a faint scream. Instantly, they dived into an alley, stripped to their cloaks and shorts, and dashed to the rescue. They were a bit disappointed to discover that it was Old Miss Magillicuddy chasing a fox who had somehow gotten into her hen coop, and that if anything needed rescuing, it was the fox. Worse was to come: when the pair burst into the hen coop, Miss Magillicuddy, (who was ninety if she was a day and usually had trouble recognizing people at three feet in broad daylight) took one look and screeched: "Aha--pants! You're not Nude Man and NaKid--Imposters!!!" Whereupon she chased the trio--Don, Sandy, and the fox--all the way to the waterfront, brandishing a hoe.

After that unsettling experience, Don and Sandy decided to reduce their costume to just cloaks. For, as Sandy remarked as they pulled themselves, dripping wet, aboard their houseboat,

"A goddess capricious is fame,
You may strive to make noted your name;
But she either neglects you
Or coolly selects you

For laurels distinct from your aim." As for the fox, he swam home

to the woods and, for all anybody knows, lived happily ever after.

As you may have gathered, the pattern of crime in Mollusc-on-the-marsh was distinctly different from such legendary centers of disorder as New York, Chicago, Gotham City, or Metropolis. Instead of excitingly famous crimes as International-Jewel-Ring-Thievery, Death-Ray-Plan-Larceny, Airplane-Hijacking, Treason, and Using The Mails To Defraud; evildoing in Mollusc-on-the-Marsh ran more to stealing hubcaps, poaching oysters out of season, borrowing motorboats without permission, and a gas station robbery was about as wicked as things usually got.

The matter of finding crime was a bit different, too. The Chief of Police considered himself quite able to cope with civic sin, and the Sheriff of Oyster Bay County (Republican administration back in '04, and Bull Moose in '12) was equally confident in his ability to take care of rural wickedness. Neither would have arranged any sort of signals to call for help from the unDressed Duo, even if they'd been asked, and Sandy managed to persuade Don not to ask. Instead, since they both worked as linemen for the Mollusc Traction & Telephone (Democratic ownership), they simply tapped the police phone and ran a line to the houseboat. And then, since the pair's modus operandi depended on limited visibility conditions in order to make their escape after thwarting whatever evil came to hand, their operations were pretty well limited to moonless nights and dense fogs. However, since crime seemed to flourish at such times, things came out about even, particularly since the local Police had a fixation on racing to the scene of a crime in a radio-patrol car, and in the sort of fogs they had, you could walk considerably faster than you could drive.

One might wonder how Don and Sandy managed to remain unidenti-

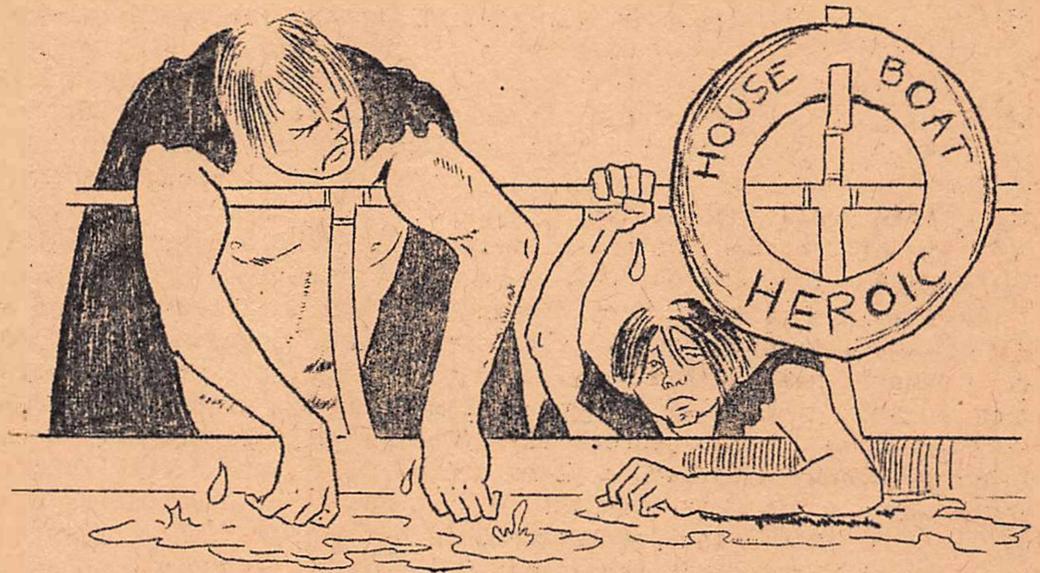
fied in such a small town as Mollusc-on-the-marsh.

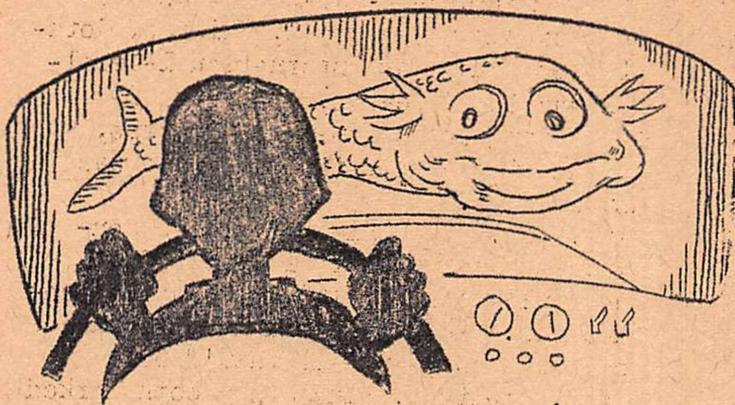
The older residents--oyster fishermen, shopowners, and the like, assumed the unDressed Duo were a couple of nuts from the artist colony at the north end of town. The artists assumed they were a couple of nuts from the hippie

colony at the south end of town. The hippies assumed they were a couple of nuts from the scattering of grey-flannel suit types who lived along the west edge of town and commuted to the City. And the grey-flannel types assumed they were a couple of juvenile delinquents from the City.

It was the grey-flannel types that provided the pair with some of their most useful moments, too. In heavy fogs, the grey-flannel men--and occasionally their wives--had an annoyingly lemming-like tendency to turn right instead of left on Water Street and drive straight into the bay. Don and Sandy became quite adept at rescuing people from cars that had fallen into the water, although they were very nearly baffled by a Volkswagen that almost floated out to sea before they gave chase in a rowboat.

It was shortly after the Volkswagen incident that the pair got their first chance



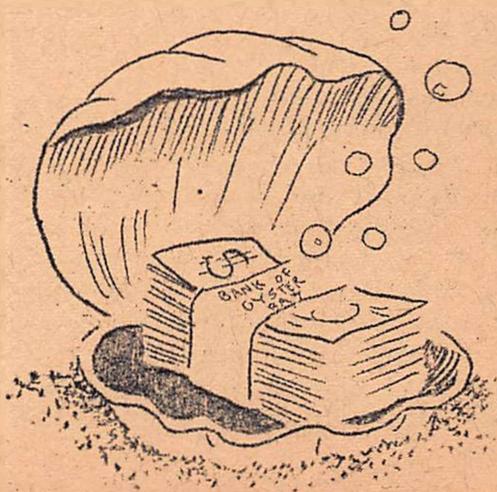


at thwarting something really worth-while: the burglary of the (Republican owned) Bank of Oyster Bay. The burglars had thoughtfully chosen the foggiest night in months for their nefarious deed: even more thoughtfully they had taken the precaution of disabling the bank's alarm signal to the Police station by cutting the phone cable in the alley behind the bank. This last also disabled half the phones in town, which naturally brought Donald and Sandy to the scene in their roles of telephone

linemen. They found the burglary well under way when they arrived; the burglars fled in their waiting car, turned the wrong way on Water Street, and drove off the Water Street Wharf with a splash. Don and Sandy gave chase, rescued the burglars (predictably, the driver of the getaway car turned out to be a grey-flannel type who had teamed up with a couple of hippies in order to raise a mortgage), and had just brought up the last of the money from the sunken car when the police finally arrived. The police were so startled by the sight of money and burglars, tied in wet bundles and stacked neatly on the wharf, that they drove off the end of the wharf and had to be rescued, too. The whole episode didn't exactly endear the undressed Duo to the policemen, and all the money circulating in town for the next couple of weeks tended to smell of seaweed, which was acutely embarrassing to the bank.

It was about this time that Don, in another of his bursts of enthusiasm, decided that they ought to carry grapnels and ropes, prepared to swing from building to building, like a combination of Batman and Tarzan. They very soon found that it wasn't anywhere near as easy as it looked. Any rope light enough to throw a reasonable distance turned out to be so thin it cut the hands when one tried to swing by it. And anything thick enough was too heavy. Don was not a man to let mere impossibility stop him, however, and the pair were armed with ropes and grapnels when another band of burglars, striking while the police car was still being dried out, looted the Bivalve Department Store safe. (The store had taken to importing money from the City, in an effort to avoid the--ah, salty air of the local bank's bills.) Don ran up the fire escape of the building opposite, made a cast of his grapnel, and swung across towards the Department Store. It's just as well that he didn't make it--for one thing, going naked through a glass window without opening it first is just as tricky as it looks--and for another, the burglars were armed with submachine guns. In the panic that resulted when the lights went out, one of the burglars wiped out six mannikins and a hat rack, and if Don had been on the scene, he'd have been very, very dead.

Anyway, about halfway across the street, Don's grapnel pulled loose, dropping him head over heels into the gutter. It also pulled down what it grappled: one wire of the Oyster Bay Traction, Power & Light Company's three-phase electric distribution line, the breaking of which threw the whole town and half the country into darkness. It was then that the burglars were scared, first into shooting,

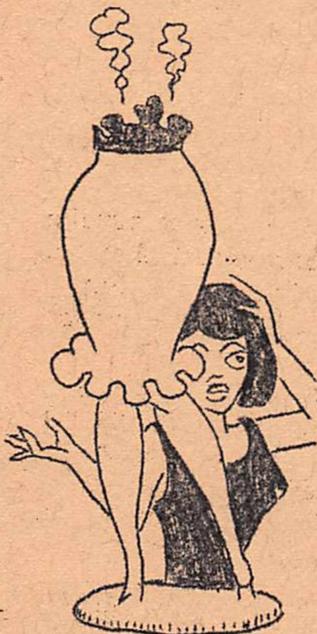


second into running. They weren't too scared to hang onto the Department Store's money, though. Once in the street, they jumped into their car and roared off. Don managed to jump aboard the bumper in approved masked-comic-book-hero style, but discreetly fell off when one of the burglars pointed a submachine gun at him.

Although there was a medium fog, the getaway car turned away from the bay on Water Street, and roared off into the night--a perfect escape, except that the drawbridge over Skaggs Inlet had been up when the power went off, and by the time the drawbridge tender cranked the thing down by hand, there were three carloads of State Troopers on the far side. Sandy had phoned them while Don was falling off the bumper; the telephones were unaffected by the power failure since the Mollusc Traction & Telephone had a long-standing feud with the Oyster Bay Traction, Power & Light and as a result generated its own electricity.

After that, crime subsided to its usual level. For a while, the publicity about the Naked Nemesises (or Nemeses--the various newspapers disagreed on the correct plural) brought on a minor wave of hub-cap thefts by nubile young ladies in hope of being apprehended by the unDressed Duo. A full moon and two weeks of clear weather forced Don and Sandy to take a vacation from thwarting crime, and the wave subsided.

You must realize, of course, that Don and Sandy were vigorous and virile young men, and that some of their exploits, as well as their costumes, were not the sort that the bid-dies of the Comics Code Authority would approve. For example, there was the time they answered a piercing shriek for help from behind a shed just north of Bergenbarf's Pier. They arrived to find a young woman fighting, as nineteenth century novels would put it, to preserve her honor from a fate worse



than death. Current novels, as you know, are wont to describe such scenes in loving detail, down to the last gasp. Either way, the Comics Code would not approve. The Code would approve even less of what happened next, for, after Don and Sandy had tied up the two youths who had been wrestling with the young lady, she insisted in expressing her gratitude to her rescuers in a way remarkably immodest even in this day and age, and somewhat inconsistent with the battle she had been putting up moments before. She also turned out to be insatiable; finally Donald, in a rare burst of practicality, made a quick bargain with the two youths. Don untied them, Sandy gave the young woman back to them as soon as he could, and then Don and Sandy fled while they were still able.

Worse was to come.

The young woman apparently spread a small cataract of falsehoods by omission about the incident, for when the unDressed Duo answered the next scream for help, a few foggy nights later, they were met by two soft-spoken young men in black leather jackets who looked them over with an all too appreciative look, and then made a fi-

nancial proposition. Don blushed all over and then bolted for home. Sandy, a bit more worldly-wise, just ran. . . Afterwards, as they were climbing out of the water and over the rail of the houseboat, Don grumbled that he wished he'd stayed long enough to kick the leather jacketed young men -- hard. Sandy replied that they probably would have been willing to pay for that, too.

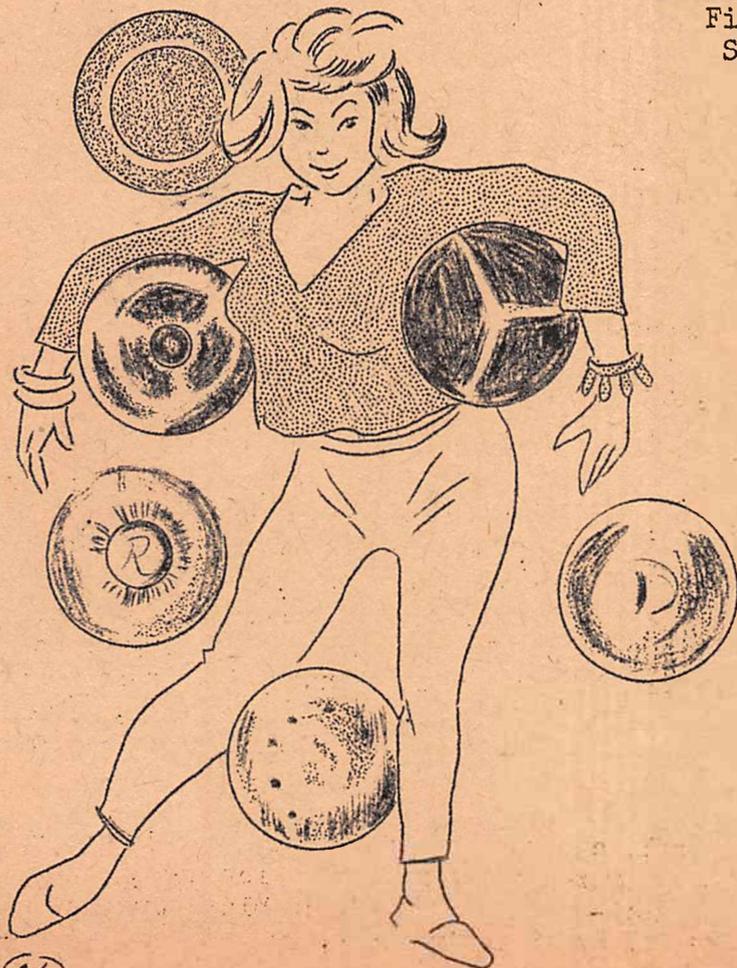
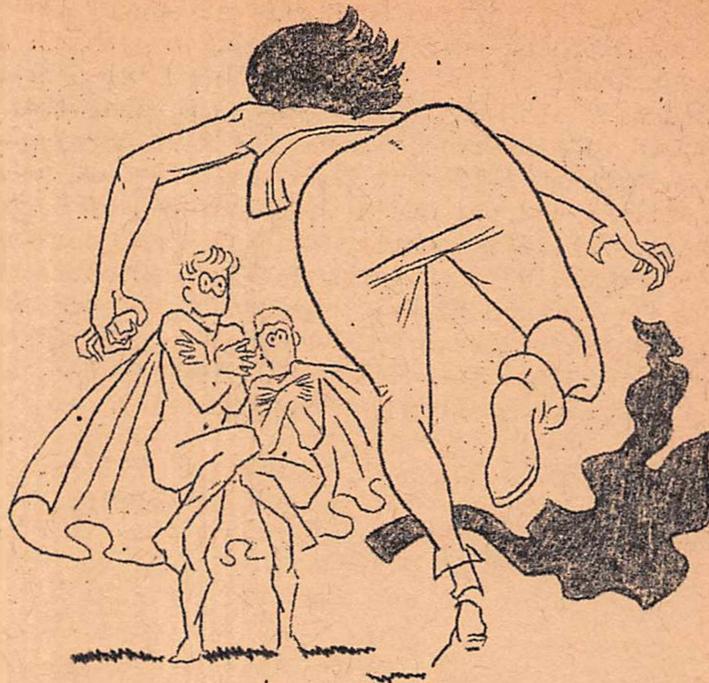
All in all, the lot of the masked heroes of Mollusc-on-the-marsh, while not an unhappy one, was one requiring extreme fitness. If they were too successful in thwarting crime, the female hub-cap stealers came out in force; if they showed too little interest in these, then young men with hungry eyes started showing up again. And as a final blow, the town put up a barricade across the foot of Water Street.

Still, there were memorable adventures--the time an entire convoy of Army trucks got lost going through town--rather like a string of tent-caterpillars--and when the driver of the lead truck mistook the Gar Fish Company pier for the bridge across Skaggs Inlet...

The trucks were a new kind, supposed to be waterproof and capable of operating under water. The drivers were not, and the undressed Duo had a busy evening pulling them out as fast as they drove into the bay.

And then there was a series of gas station robberies. The modus operandi of the robbers was both simple and baffling; they always hit a station that was at the opposite end of town from wherever the police car was at the moment, and since the holdups always took place on clear, moonlit nights, Don and Sandy were unable to catch them in the act. However, they finally caught the robbers by a trick as simple as it was brilliant: Don and Sandy traced telephone lines and inspected terminal boxes until they found out who else had tapped the police phone and then swooped down on them the next foggy night

Even so, as Sandy complained one night, being a Masked Marvel did make for a rather erratic sex life,



and at the peak of the next wave of hungry eyed young men, he proposed to a red-haired telephone operator. Don moped rather forlornly around the houseboat until the rehearsal the day before the wedding, where his eye was caught by a statuesque bridesmaid. It was a pity, in a way, that that rehearsal went off perfectly, since they had to rehearse all over the next morning--the procedure for a double wedding being somewhat different than what they had rehearsed the first time.

That, of course, ended their chances of becoming members of the Masked Heroes Club, for while unchastity and revealing costumes (or lack of same) are heartily frowned upon, a happy marriage is an absolute bar to membership.

As for Don and Sandy, they sold the houseboat and made a down payment on a duplex overlooking the bay. And though they generally lead a happily domesticated life, sometimes, after the children are put to bed, if the sky is moonless and the fog comes swirling in from the bay, Don will get a far-away look in his eyes, Sandy will take down the receiver on the police line, and Don's wife will put on a pot of coffee and Sandy's will make up a plate of sandwiches, and together they'll tell their husbands not to stay out too late thwarting the arch criminals of Mollusc-on-the-marsh.



SPECIAL REVIEW: There is a new science fiction magazine on the market. VISION OF TOMORROW is edited by Phil Harbottle and published by Ronald Graham (at Yagoona, NSW, Australia). You can get copies from any British or Aussie friends, F&SF Book Co. (Probably) or FANTAST (Medway) Ltd. This is large-size and slick, like NEW WORLDS. The first issue boasts a horrendous cover and one excellent short story - "Sixth Sense", by Michael Coney. Remaining fiction, by Wm. F. Temple, Jack Wodhams, Ken Bulmer, Lee Harding, Damien Broderick and Stanislaw Lem, is at least adequate, and there is a fan column by Walter Gillings.



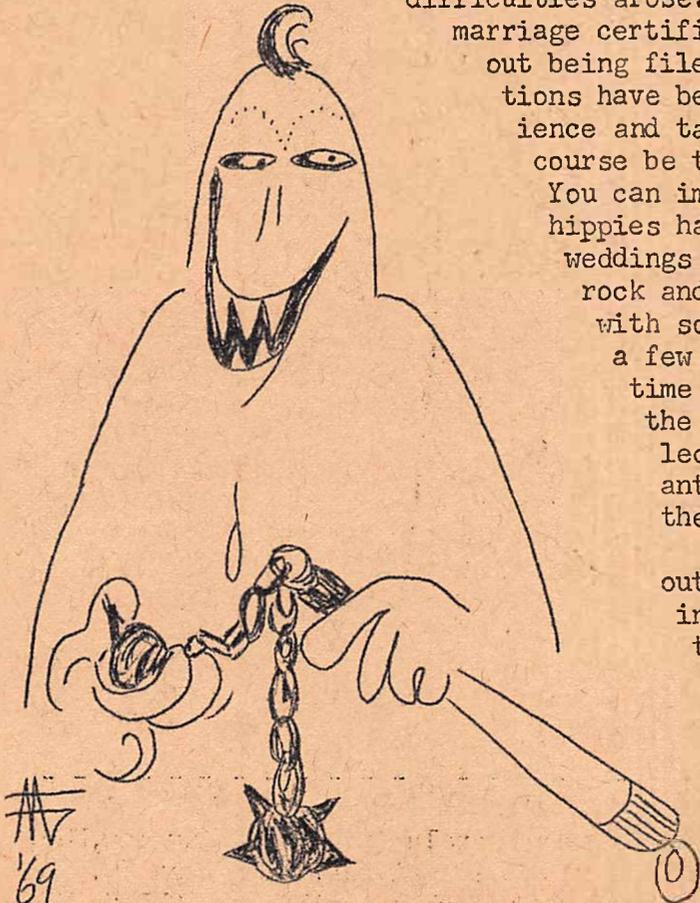
GRUMBLINGS!

Rev. Gregory Shaw, 64 Taylor, Fairfax, California, 94930

Dennis Lien seems to be compiling a list of Universal Life Church initiates, so I suppose I should admit my own membership. The number on my certificate is 23,122, and anyone interested in determining seniority within fandom can compare their own serial numbers. I got into it fairly early, before all the publicity in Time and such and the lawsuits. I believe membership is now approaching 200,000. I know they get thousands of requests a day. I don't know how much is known in your parts about the activities of your own church, but in the hope some of it will be new to you I'll comment briefly on some of the more interesting uses to which Church membership is being put in California.

The hippies picked up on it right away, of course. The staff of San Francisco's underground newspaper, The Express-Times, became ordained and changed the paper's name to the Good Times, eliminated much political news, and began running features on the Church and interviews with Kirby Hensley, who incidentally is a very far-out old guy, completely illiterate, a firm believer in individual freedom, and a very forceful speaker. Ordinations were given away by the Good Times for the asking. At first it was hoped the Church could provide exemption from the draft, but too many difficulties arose. A Universal Life minister can sign a marriage certificate, and in California it is legal without being filed with the State. Thus, many co-habitations have become marriages, for the sake of convenience and tax deductions, and such marriages can of course be terminated by tearing up the certificate. You can imagine some of the wedding ceremonies the hippies have contrived. The occasional reports of weddings held in the nude or in the midst of a rock and roll dance are rather prosaic compared with some stories I've heard. There are quite a few stories about Hensley, too, such as the time he ordained, with a sweep of his hand, the 200-odd members of the audience he was lecturing to. Babies, dogs, hamsters, and ant farms have been ordained. I wonder what they'll think of next?

As for myself, I haven't gotten much use out of my own membership. I considered phoning in our reservations for plane tickets to the Westercon as Rev. and Mrs. Shaw, and asking for the special ministry rate, but I didn't have the moxie for it. I haven't married anyone, not that I haven't been asked, but I don't feel I have the proper voice and manner. I figure as long as someone wants an informal wedding, they should get married by someone who can give them a good show. I haven't any friends in prison that I can visit. However, I'm convinced that



QUEEGNAN

'69

priesthood will prove to be of value someday, so I guess I'll just wait and see what happens.

✓Dennis and I have you outranked, then; I'm #15,775 and Dennis is somewhere below me (15,774?). I didn't know all the news about our religion, no; in fact I wasn't even aware it was still growing. I thought the lately great state of California had put a stop to it. RSC/

Nan Braude, 2644 Dwight Way #7, Berkeley, California, 94704

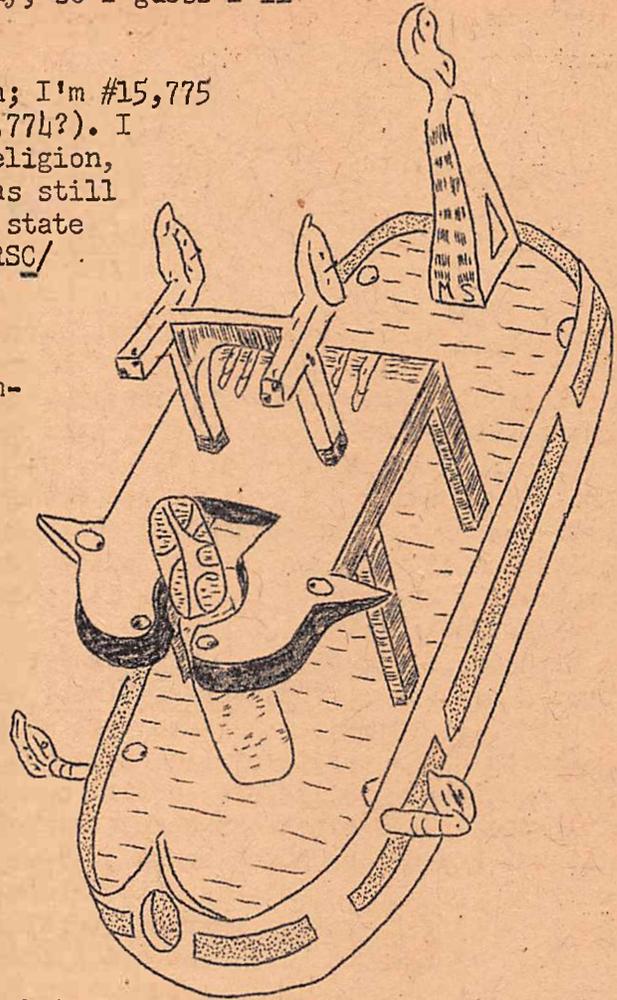
On Juanita's comments in #188 on the family with 11 kids: are you going to revive abortion fandom again? I think the last word on the subject was said the other day when the Supreme Court (I carelessly didn't catch whether it was the state or federal one) struck down California's old abortion law and in effect the new one, on the grounds that the Constitutionally guaranteed right to life includes a woman's right to decide whether or not she will bear a child (since childbirth involves the risk of life). I myself might be more inclined to place it under one of the other rights, but I agree with the principle, which it is about time someone enunciated, that it is the woman's right to decide, not the public's or the state's.

I took time out from writing this to watch two marvelous films on NET FESTIVAL. One was a satirical Spanish "History of Frivolity" which included a medieval striptease--by a girl wearing full armor! Like, when she tossed her stocking to an onlooker, it knocked him flat. As a grand finale she was burned at the stake. The other was a Bulgarian version of Saints-Saens' "Carnival of the Animals," in which all the animals were formed by hands, on the order of shadow-play except in silhouette, not shadow. It was lovely and tender and hilarious by turns, and one of the most delightful cartoons (if you can call it that) I've seen in years. Do you get an educational station where you are? I forget if Indianapolis has one, and I don't know if you can receive that far anyway.

Please do have more of Dennis Lien--his humor is really funny, a custom which in fandom seems to get more breach than observance. I also have a very high opinion of your selection of poetry: not just deCamp, whom one expects to be excellent, but the non-pros too, especially Clancy. He is uneven, but I thought "On Ignorance" in #189 was a perfection of precision--not one word wasted, and the expression perfectly balanced between message and subtlety.

Incidentally, were you deliberately quoting Cicero in the last line of your review of NOBODY SCARES A PORCUPINE? I ran across an almost identical statement by him from De Officiis in the readings for a course in classical lit. that I was the reader for this summer.

The gun control controversy seems to be continuing, so I may as well put my two oboli in. I can see two sides to it, your side more clearly since the neighborhood I live in has gotten rougher in the last few years. A couple of months ago the disgruntled boyfriend of a girl in another apartment broke her door down and badly beat her and the man with her, and I myself have had prowler troubles; so I can better understand why many people feel they really need something around the house to defend themselves with. On the other hand, I can remember from when I was living in Phoenix



that almost every day the paper had a story about some man being shot to death as the result of an argument in a bar. Of course, there were stabbings under the same circumstances, too, but I think that the results were less frequently fatal. It is, I imagine, a lot easier to defend yourself against a drunk with a knife than against a drunk with a gun. If guns were less available, the mean drunk would have a much harder time doing serious damage to the next man, who doesn't happen to agree with his opinion of the Giants. Sydney J. Harris, who is not generally one of my mentors, had what seems an eminently sensible idea in a column some time ago: different gun regulations for urban and rural areas. His premise was that on a farm a gun is much more of a tool, for shooting varmints and putting injured livestock out of pain, and that farm boys are taught respect for and proper handling of guns from early childhood.

This all, by connections which may be apparent only in my own mind, brings me to Alex Gilliland's article on the Columbia revolution and SDS in #188. I'm not at all sure that I agree with his conclusion, that the Establishment is on the whole less dangerous than the Far Left. I have lived through an armed occupation by our local Establishment, and they managed to kill somebody, which is I believe more than SDS has done to date. No doubt the reports you got from the national media were repulsive enough, especially if you saw the photo of a cop aiming a shotgun at the back of a fleeing demonstrator; but there were a lot of things that didn't even make all the local news media, like the shooting-up and teargassing of Willard Jr. High School, or the item about the girl who was out walking a couple of large, frisky dogs who ran away with her, and as a result she was bayoneted by an overly impulsive National Guardsman at the corner barricade (all the streets in my neighborhood had barricades guarded by armed soldiers); or the fact that the majority of the witnesses at the inquest on James Rector testified that he never threw anything (of course, most of them had long hair and beards, which these days constitutes a priori evidence of perjury), and only one of the police witnesses claimed to have seen him with a brick in his hand--in fact, the consensus was that nothing was being thrown at the time the shot was fired. Or about the police tactic of completely surrounding a crowd and then arresting it for failure to disperse. Or about the half-dozen of so faculty of the School of Criminology, including the retiring chairman, who publicly asked Alameda County Sheriff Madigan to resign from his honorary connection with the school. The sheriff was in command of the operations, and his deputies committed most of the enormities. I guess the brutalizing of prisoners at the county farm at Santa Rita has been pretty well documented in Life. The sheriff's deputies, who I understand are, like the Oakland police, mainly recruited in Bull Connor Land, are not given any professional police training that amounts to much. The Army operations were hardly an improvement. I remember one day walking down the street and noticing that some of the Guard at the barricades had their bayonets fixed (this on a day when nothing was happening) and some didn't. I asked the soldiers on my corner (whose bayonets were sheathed) why some had them fixed, and they had no idea. One is not impressed by the clarity and coherence of Army policy. I am a second-generation Army brat, raised on Army posts, with a great deal of pride in the military profession; but during the Occupation I felt as a citizen of Prague must have: that the occupying forces were somehow alien. I was brought up a conservative, and in the past few years have progressed to the point of becoming a fairly moderate liberal; Tom Hayden will never make a wild eyed radical out of me, but Ronald Reagan just might.

Incidentally, don't expect me to be impressed with your Godawful Governor stories; Our Ronnie is the Platonic Form of the breed. Item: when the Board of Regents voted to turn the Park into a parking lot, against the wishes of the students, the faculty, and the Berkeley City Council, the head of the Berkeley Planning Board said to him, with tears in her eyes, "The blood of the people of Berkeley will be on your hands." (Admittedly a rather overwrought statement, but then she'd had plenty to overwreak her.) "Fine," replied Our Gov tactfully; "I'll wash it off with Boraxo." His most recent fatuity was to veto a bill making it possible for people under 18 to get VD prophylactics more easily, on the grounds that "this wasn't the way to solve the problem."

(No, I wasn't quoting Cicero; never read the man. (I'm just naturally brilliant...) No educational tv here, and we're definitely missing something. They're bringing cable-tv to Hartford City, but I have my doubts that they'll extend it six miles out into the country. Not for a price I'll pay, anyway. But your governor has an unfair advantage; he gets national news coverage. Our governors may not be in his league, but they deserve some notice; Whitcomb just proclaimed Midwest Castings Conference Week in Indiana. Admittedly it doesn't come up to "If you've seen one tree you've seen them all", but it does have a baroque charm.RSC/

Bill Conner, 1711 Providence Avenue, Springfield, Ohio, 45503

I just did an article for my weekly science column about a study the Post Office is making about electronic transmission of the mail and about a proposed merger of the P.O. facilities and those of Western Union.

As you know, the Post Office is about to go down for the third time under a flood of ever-mounting letters, cards, and parcels. So the P.O. has awarded a study contract to the Electronic Division of General Dynamics Corp. to investigate the use of electronic facsimile machines and other electronic devices.

Postal officials envision a sort of "electronic mailbox" which someday may be found in every home. The household facsimile machine of the future might be used for spewing out the daily newspaper, bills and bank statements, as well as letters, junk mail, and perhaps even Yandro.

Long before home facsimile machines are spitting out fanzines to everyone on your mailing list and Juanita's mimeo-cranking days are over, the P.O. may be sending and receiving mail at post offices much faster than today's mail, since radio waves zip along at 186,000 miles per second, and Xerox now has a copying machine model which can turn out a sheet of copy in one second flat.

The actual time involved in the post officer-to-post office electronic system of sending and receiving mail electronically would only be a matter of seconds anywhere in the U.S. or around the world, using both domestic and international communications satellites.

But it would take the P.O. much longer to deliver electronic mail from the local post officer to the addressee. Letters would still have to be collected and delivered locally, but this system would cut down on the vast amount of mail flowing between cities by truck and airplane.

The August, 1969, issue of Electronics World has an article about the proposed electronic mail service which stated that a merger of Post Officer and Western Union facilities may soon be given a limited trial in several post offices. By the way, Western Union has its own microwave communications system now from coast to coast, to handle a volume of messages which increased by 789 per cent between 1958 and 1969! This is what the term "communications explosion" is all about.

I suppose at first "teleletters" will cost much more than ordinary letters. But if such a system does come into being, and to me it's inevitable, the day will come when it will cost much more to have a piece of mail shipped from Anderson, Ind., to Springfield by conventional means. I'll sure miss that good ole Twilltone.

And although the P.O.'s press release on the electronic mail study emphasized that "Preservation of letter sanctity in any electronic transmission process which might be used has been emphasized as a 'must' to the contractor," I fear that electronic mail will always be all too easy to bug. Besides, the P.O.'s reputation in "guarding the sanctity of the mail" is already badly tarnished by their record of entrapment maneuvers against those accused of sending pornography through the mail. And, of course, since computers are going to be running this electronic system, who's going to make sure some bureaucrat doesn't sneak in a little "Big Brother" programming.

I wasn't really urging that hippie types and drug takers should be expelled from fandom in my letter in Y 190--I agree the last thing we need is rigid organization or screening of prospective fans. But I do wish their likes a speedy and lengthy gaffiation. Now I'm sitting back and waiting for someone to defend the "Heads" in "Grumblings"...

Not being a forward, progressive type, I don't think I'll like Tom Swift and his Electric Mailman. But by the time the current system has run downhill a few more years, I might change my mind. Outside of the legal aspect, I'd sooner associate with a marijuana user than with a drunk, but I can't really see becoming a bosom buddy of either one. RSC/

Ruth Berman, 5620 Edgewater Boulevard, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 55417

Department of time-binding: "Dune strikes me as an over-portentious (I think he probably means pretentious rather than portentous) book. Much is hinted at in the opening third or half. I tried to guess the outcome and found Herbert's revelations disappointingly anticlimactic. Certainly the book is ambitious and awesome in many respects. It's a book you live with, if only because of its size. But I find my tolerance is low for Herbert's basic writing style."; "This book has all the depth, impact and scope of DUNE." Ted White in a letter in Psychotic 24, March 1968, and in a bacover blurb to Ursula LeGuin's THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS, respectively.

Footnote to Joyce Fisher's letter about my letter about A Thousand Clowns (if you'll pardon the rambling syntax): the intended presentation was canceled, along with the intended tour. The Falstaff theater presented The Odd Couple, instead, with Robert Vaughn. I went to see that. It was very good. After the first minute or so, Vaughn's Oscar Madison obliterated the Napoleon Solo image. You just accepted him as Oscar--beautifully done. Oscar is the slob, by the way. Some people at the con, when I described the performance, commented that they would have expected Vaughn to play the neat one, Felix. Oscar is a somewhat larger role, but I suspect that Vaughn would have chosen to play him in any case, just because he was further from Napoleon Solo than Felix.

Viewmaster has a set of three discs of Apollo stereo pictures out--probably as cheap as such pictures can be had, especially if you already happen to have their viewer. Lovely photos.

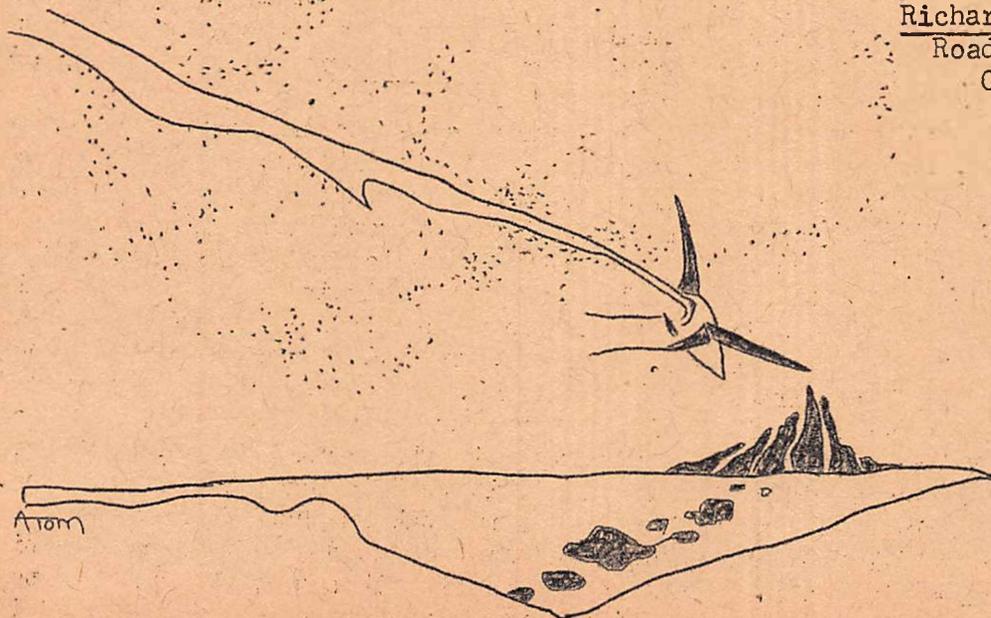
Well, Terry Carr once objected mildly to my saying the Quip was "the best fannish fanzine since Innuendo" when I'd never given Innuendo a good review while it was being published. I suppose reviewers tend to get brainwashed into accepting the general conclusion that an item is a great work even if they didn't like it themselves. From your quote, though, I'd guess that Ted did mean "over-portentious", even if it is a clumsy phrase; lots of portents but few revelations. RSC/

Richard Labonte, 971 Walkley Road, Ottawa 8, Ontario, Canada

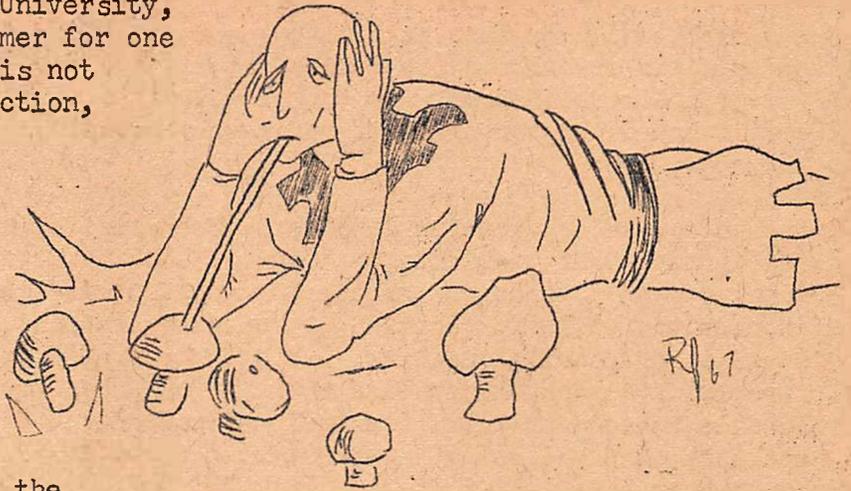
Yandro 190 was full of slings and arrows and asperions on Canada; a fun issue to read. The most interesting was the story about Ottawa TV viewers protesting the cancellation of STAR TREK because of the Apollo 11 coverage.

That was my fault.

You see, the editor of last year's



student newspaper at Carleton University, Peter Johansen, worked the summer for one of the two local dailies. He is not much of a reader of science fiction, but I admit to his existence because he shares journalism, my other great interest. So about the weekend of the landing--Friday night, I guess it was--we were talking, and I said something about the bored people who wouldn't realize just what it was they were watching, and would phone the TV station to bitch about the football or the



baseball or the wrestling or whatever was being presented, or who would complain because Ed Sullivan wasn't bringing it to them in colour.

And he said, "Yeah, that might be an interesting story. I'll call up CBC and CJOH Sunday night or early Monday morning and see what audience reaction was."

And I said, "I'll bet someone will complain about missing STAR TREK and MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE..."

And he called, and people had complained, mostly about sports but some about variety shows...and a good number about STAR TREK.

That became his lead, of course, and the CP re-write men picked it up as a funny filler, and it got onto an AP or UPI wire, and now the whole world knows about dumb and Ottawa, and dumb Ottawans with no soul and minds fit only for STAR TREK.

Does anybody out there trust a newspaper?

Roy Tackett, 915 Green Valley Road NW, Albuquerque, N. M. 87107

Borrowing to attend the Worldcon? That's not at all fannish. That's mundane. Although it seems that it really is becoming necessary. I'm told the rates at Boston will be \$23 for a double. Such being the case it seems unlikely that we'll be in attendance at that one. I know this is the age of Affluence--not to be confused with the age of Aquarius--but I'm not that affluent.

High prices and back to the soil and the like...Whatizname, the guy who takes over for S. Agnew in Washington now and then, keeps talking about how something has to be done about inflation but nobody seems to be doing anything. Except keeping it going. Reminds me of an old Eddie Cantor movie, the one wherein he was called Al Babson and somehow ended up in the setting of the Arabian nights (and we could do quite a piece on the great American misconception of how it was in those days) and becoming involved with a flying carpet that wouldn't fly. "It won't go up," said the owner of the carpet. "In my country," said Eddie, "the President makes everything go up." "How?" "By inflation." Whereupon the carpet rose. Yes. But this whole inflation bit, it seems to me, can be laid at the head of the middleman and the final retailer. According to Business Week, wheat is selling for \$1 per bushel less today than it was ten years ago. I listen to the livestock market reports now and again in the early mornings and the price of beef on the hoof is not up so very much; maybe a couple of cents per pound. Well, I am very fond of beef, but, like you, I'm not going to pay those prices. Hamburger and chuck may not be as good as the choicer parts but it is cheaper. A chuck roast, cooked in a pressure cooker, is quite edible.

I get all sorts of amusement out of the thought of city types--not just fans--trying to make a go of it in the country. Getting back to the soil. Ha!

Should there ever be a catastrophe of some sort that would cut the lines of communication to the cities the city (and suburban) people would starve. They simply could not make out without the standardized, homogenized glop they pick up at their local supermarket. Too squeamish for one thing. I'm reminded of the gal who wrote to Dear Abby complaining about the time her dumb sap of a husband brought home duck eggs--completely unable to eat them, she was. Or a couple of days ago, for another

example, Juan Loranca made one of his frequent trips to Mexico and brought back a bottle of Mescal. Mexican mescal features a genuine worm in the bottom of each and every bottle. The domestic version does not, of course. Juan and I were the only two in the shop who imbibed--the rest were put off by the sight of the pickled worm and, indeed, a couple of the chaps turned green and left the room when we tipped up the bottle.

So how would they make out in tilling the soil--or living off the land--which is damned hard work and involves coming into contact with all sorts of weird beasties not to mention vast quantities of dirt.

Paper...yeah...the deterioration of written material is a problem. One would think our technology would be able to come up with a satisfactory substitute. It would have to have all of paper's qualities, of course, including quick disposability. Mighod, if paper couldn't be burned we'd soon be buried in it. There would certainly be a mint to be made by the first company to come out with a satisfactory paper substitute.

Buck, did you really cut a limb that size with a bow saw? I'd have used a hand-ax. Much quicker--lots less work.

Challenge your statement, Buck, that tv could replace newspapers. Not without devoting much more time to news than now. Tv gives you headlines and that's about all. It takes digging into the newspaper stories to get details. Most of it is all from AP-UPI anyway which means 10% news and 90% propaganda.

You just getting around to giving up on the Merril collections? I did that years ago.

Can't say as I agree with Bill Conner and flushing out the hippies and all. Really can't see flushing out anybody. Characters are what make fandom interesting. If anyone is to go I'd just as soon it was some of the square mud types. I feel more akin to the hippies than to some of the characters I've run across in fandom.

Well, I don't really feel akin to any of them.

The question of whether one would sacrifice himself to save the life of some one of "greater value" is amusing. I can't think of anyone whose life is of greater value than mine. So maybe King was important and the Kennedys were important but important to who? To me? Depends, doesn't it? I will concede their importance to America as a whole but, being somewhat selfish in matters of this sort, they were not nearly as important to me as I am. I am not the self-sacrificing type. No. When it comes down to it, I'm not sure of their importance to America as a whole. Politicians are politicians and there is little difference between any of them. The lowliest precinct boss and the occupiers of the loftiest halls of government are all cut from the same cloth and they are like streetcars: if one passes there's another right behind.

"Strange Fruit": Why do you bother listing Diplomacy zines?

/Because people send me Diplomacy zines. I'll review anything that comes in; even if I won't trade for it. I've even reviewed practical jokes, back when Vic Ryan was in fandom; he occasionally used me for a straight man. Well, I didn't say tv could do the same thing as newspapers (though it could, if it became profitable). How many people do you know who read anything but headlines anyway? A handaxe is quicker than a bow saw only if you have a decent-sized handaxe. One of these damned pound-and-a-half "camper's axes" isn't quicker; not on anything larger than a toothpick. Dad has a hand axe, with a three-pound head, but I haven't been able to locate one in this effete time. (Not that I've really been worrying about it.) RSG/

Bruce Gillespie, PO-Box 30 Bacchus Marsh, Victoria 3340, Australia

Your magazine contains the second most extraordinary thing I've struck in fanzines since I started receiving them - i.e. a second article by Richard Delap that I agreed with. (The first was in Granfalloon.) The only thing Delap should never touch is the sf novel. On films, he does a good job. For instance, the Hugo Ballot for Best Dramatic Presentation is a far more exciting list than any of the others--except, perhaps, the list for best Fan Writer. A sf categories are laughable--especially the en-

tries for short fiction.

PLANET OF THE APES delighted me because of one fairly short episode which dominates the rest of the film. The "episode", or just "strip of the film" falls between the landing of the ship on the "alien" planet and one of the first conversations after the nasty humans are captured. For just a short time there the viewer genuinely believes he is on a totally alien planet. The superb locale shots of a completely barren landscape support this impression. That old Black Magic, the Sense of Wonder, continues until the first conversation where the Friendly Ape (I can't remember his name) mentions that he is an archaeologist, and that he has been working on some old ruins... etc..etc... From then on the rest of the plot is completely predictable, although that doesn't matter. Even after this episode, the viewer knows that he is back on Earth, but still feels the alienness of the "ape" environment and that very empty desert of the opening scenes. The two impressions superimposed themselves on my mind in a very delicious way. Come on, Dick. The man/monkey jokes were superb--one giveaway line after another. Better than DICK VAN DYKE.

/I thought the man-monkey jokes in APES were all too obvious, and therefore not terribly funny (mildly humorous, but not any great shakes. RSC From the point quite early on when Heston says "You can't go home again" the conclusion of APES should be apparent to anybody with a stfnal background... almost to anybody who's read any amount or seen a number of films. And the "alien" landscape wasn't, particularly, to me--or, I suspect--to the majority of Americans; it was plainly the American west, and we've all seen Arizona Highways and ilk even if we've never been there. It's still beautiful, but not alien, because it's familiar from numerous photos, films, and picture postcards. JWC/

Irv Jacobs, PO Box 574, National City, California 92051

I'm not apologizing for my original remarks about OUTER LIMITS. I've always enjoyed a mixture of weird-fantasy-stf; of course it is necessary to suspend one's basic disbelief and the realization that one is after all just watching special effects. Not everyone reacts in the same way. Mike Deckinger obviously belongs to the "bah, humbug" school.

I think I am perfectly capable of recognizing juvenilia (Rocky Jones, Space Cadet, Captain Video), and OUTER LIMITS was certainly not in that category. OL was the descendant of the horror films of the 30's and 40's, plus the monster series (The Thing, Mothra, etc.) of the 50's. All of this is now loosely categorized as "nostalgia", and presumably young adult audiences will no longer accept it.

I have watched films like "The Black Cat" dozens of times, never failing to be thrilled by the confrontation of the two old antagonists Karloff and Lugosi. Films that I saw 25 or more years ago remain in my mind. Consider, for example, Peter Lorre in "Mad Love". It might have been a real potboiler, even in its day, but after 30 years I can still remember the film. Lorre goes on a murder spree, embalms all of his victims, displays them in his wax museum, visitors all comment on how "lifelike" are the statues. Go ahead and laugh, Mike, but what was the last flick that shook you up, so that you remembered it for years and years? And how about Vince Price in "The Fly"? Maybe today no one but 3 and 4 year olds would enjoy it, but there was a time, not so long ago when adults could accept this type of material as pure entertainment, without feeling any embarrassment. Maybe the trick today in order to win acceptance by the young knowledgeable is to cloak the old impossible special effects and preposterous situations in the respectable mantle of "allegory" or "symbolic", i.e. "The Prisoner", which I imagine Mike might grudgingly award a Thumbs Up, despite such incongruities as people being swallowed up by big bubbles.

/I'll have to let you and Mike fight this one out. I didn't like OUTER LIMITS, old horror movies (with a very few exceptions), or "The Prisoner". I didn't think much of "The Fly", either--or the Lensman, or Cap Future, or Doc Savage, or Conan, or Captain Marvel, or Oz. (I suspect my ances-

tors used to burn witches--not because they believed in them, but for the fun of it. RSC/

Mike Deckinger, 25 Manor Drive Apt 12-J, Newark, NJ, 07106

Suppose we license the gun-owner, as you suggest, and register the firearm? That way, if a local shooting is performed once the exact type of firearm is determined, you will at least have an idea of some possible suspects. This would be by no means infallible, but it's a start, and it's better than having law enforcement officers completely stumped by a shooting, and unable to turn anywhere for questioning.

Of course, I'm also aware of the fact that disarming the citizen will make it easier for the criminal, who will have no difficulty obtaining guns, as he rarely does. But I would be just as frightened of a gun in the hand of an irrational, law abiding citizen who is out to enact justice himself as I would be of a gun in the hand of a hardened criminal performing some crime.

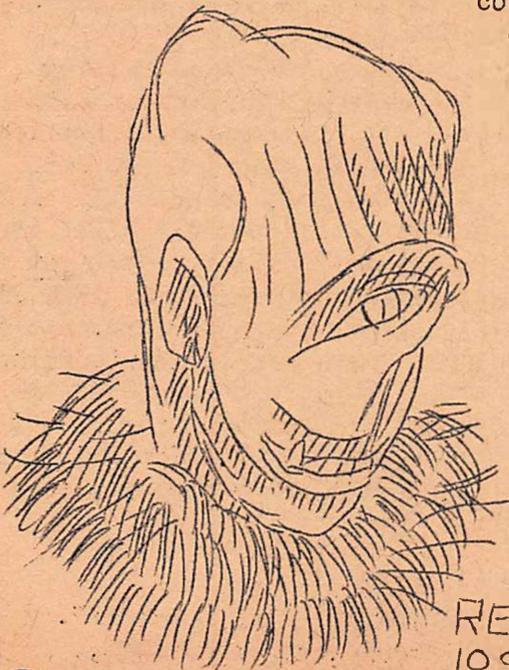
The Ackerman collection from Powell Press is very lightweight, amusing to read, and then easy to discard. Perhaps the second collection will be an improvement over the first.

Admittedly, S.J. Byrne was never a major writer, but you could read a lot worse authors at the time he was popular. I never cared much for the "Colossus" trilogy but the Michael Flanagan stories Byrne wrote as "John Bloodstone" weren't too bad, if memory of nearly ten years back is correct. And there was a novelette he did for Other Worlds in 1952 or 1953 titled "The Naked Goddess" which also appealed to me when I read it about ten years ago. And you can't forget the promised "Tarzan on Mars" which the Burroughs estate humanely refused to allow publication, because they realized that it would instantly eclipse anything that E.R.B. did. (I've also heard that his 1956 Other Worlds novelette "The Metamorphs" was to be filmed--but not with Raquel Welch.)

I recall you recently made some displeased comment in the Yandro lettercol about George Willick returning to fandom. I recently received a fanzine with a new back cover by D. Bruce Berry (and a pretty good cover at that). Do you think the distinguished author of "A Trip to Hell", about whom you once said "he is not responsible for what he says", will re-enter fandom and again expose us as the backbiting curs we are?

The weird thing about Berry is that in Trumpet he mentions having sold a sex novel to Greenleaf--where, if I am not mistaken, Earl Kemp is working as an editor. Never let a feud interfere with business. Possibly I could have read worse authors than Byrne, but I don't think I ever did--not in a professional magazine of that era, anyway. (There was that guy who had a Signet pb published a bit later; I admit he was worse.) I've never noticed the police having much problem in finding a killer when it's worth their while under our present system. Local shootings are either done on impulse and usually in front of a dozen witnesses, or they are planned ahead of time and nobody is going to be idiot enough to use his own gun in that kind, even now. I'll stick with licensing the owner, after some sort of testing, and making a mandatory increase in the penalty of any crime committed with a gun. RSC

Mike, I imagine if you were killed by an "irrational, law abiding citizen" using a registered gun it would be easy enough to track him down and comfort your widow, but is that really what you want? Really?



REG
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What it comes down to is either a sneaky or unconscious knowledge on the part of "register guns and save lives" types: this is only the first step. And then they will be able to say registration isn't really saving lives, and the ultimate answer is confiscation, except for the arms of the military and law enforcement officers. I commend to you Nan Braude's letter earlier in these pages for a foretaste of what that might be like. JWC/



Gary Anderson, 2610 Trinity Place, Oxnard, California, 93030

In reply to the letter of Alice Hopf: unfortunately, I have not read the work under discussion and so do not know the underlying assumptions under which the problem is formulated. However, some things can be said about the question of the polar regions.

First of all, if this planet is on the inner edge of the region of possible habitability, it most likely doesn't have any seasons. If this is, as it seems to be from the letter, a limiting case, then seasons would be detrimental to habitability. The poles would be cold and the equator hot, with the temperature varying nonlinearly in between. Naturally, this is a very rough approximation, since local geography might affect habitability enormously.

If seasons are regarded as necessary, then there is less chance of a tropical climate in the habitable zone. Now, however, the question of oceans is of great importance. The presence of an ocean would tend to filter out the seasonal variations, while dry planet conditions would render the whole sphere uninhabitable. The sense of habitability that I use here is meant to include any climate between arctic all year round and deep desert.

I realize this isn't much of an answer, since I do not have immediate access to the book in question, but it may help to clarify your conception of the problems involved. Any sheaf of solutions will necessarily depend on the assumptions involved. The very concept of habitability of a planet is a complex of assumptions and probabilities (which must be linked to confidence levels).

Gary Mason, Warili Road, French's Forest, N.S.W. 2086, Australia

Could YANDRO give Syncon '70 a plug, please? I think John Ryan was going to mention it to you, but in case he hasn't as yet... Syncon '70 will be held on 1st, 2nd and 3rd January, 1970... making it the first science fiction convention of 1970. (The time difference makes that so, even if someone in, say, the United States or Europe also holds a convention on 1st January.) Any Rich American Tourist-types who happen to be in the Far East or the South Pacific over the holiday season may care to drop in on us and they will be made very welcome. Address is Syncon, P.O. Box A.215, Sydney South, N.S.W. 2000, Australia.

Jim Kerr, P.M.B. 5010, Lebanon St, Ibadan, Western Nigeria

The latest screech now is over a Nigerian in UK eating someone's pet cat. None of his work-mates believed him and so he brought the cat's skin to work to show his mates. He was sacked and Nigerians are worried that their image abroad will suffer.

✓Yeah, them cat-lovers got fiorce publicity. Incidentally, after all the fuss I made about the idiot Nigerian who thought the moon-landing would bring some calamity on mankind, Bob Briney sent a clipping equally as wild from the Boston Herald. The writer is complaining that the moonshots adversely affect her weather, and the planets were put there to look at and not to be walked on. (And she says she took a course in astronomy when preparing for college!) However, while the average American is no smarter than the average Nigerian, at least the Boston paper didn't give her a prize for her wonderful letter.

RSC/

To My Library

It's Saturday night, and my calendar is mute -
No dances, no deadlines, no visiting bromide from Butte.
Forsooth, I can do as I please, and that means I will read;
On shelves stand an army of volumes to answer my need.
What caliph conceded his servants such trust absolute?

Let's see: shall I pant in pursuit of Achilles the bold
Or saunter with Siegfried in search of the Niebelungs' gold?
Perhaps I should study the innermost secrets of stars,
Bestride with John Carter the saffron sea-bottoms of Mars,
Or prowl with the Deerslayer through the primordial wold.

I'll burnish my German (those damnable adjectives!) or
I'll ponder the logic of Caesar's Iberian war;
From Time learn the follies and feuds of the men of my day,
Or in the Jurassic a dinosaur venture to slay,
Or fight beside Conan until we are covered with gore.

I'll suffer with poor Alexei Karamazov or smile
At Jorkens's whoppers; I'll go to the glamorous isle
Of Plato's Atlantis and stay for a space to admire
Its gates and its spires of orichalc, glowing like fire,
Or seek to compete with some fictional criminal's wile.

I'll ogle the finds from an archeological dig
Or rescue from peril Lord Emsworth's preëminent pig.
That monarch I mentioned - however my evening I spend,
So long as I'm left with a trustworthy tome for a friend -
I give for his glory and power and pelf not a fig!

L. SPRAGUE DE CAMP

STRANGE FRUIT

LOCUS #36, 37 (Charlie and Marsha Brown, 2078 Anthony Ave, Bronx, New York 10457 - bi-weekly - 6 for \$1.00) The top fan news mag. #37 is devoted mostly to the recent Worldcon; #36 is general news. #37 also contains various other things from people like Bob Tucker, Tony Lewis, etc. (Speaking of Tucker's contrib, I have a news item for you, Charlie; it is rumored that the next Midwestcon will be held in Heyworth, Illinois. Hartford City in '73 indeed!) Rating...7

THE NEW FORERUNNER #6, 7 (Gary Mason, Warili Road, French's Forest, New South Wales 2086, Australia) Aussie fan, pro, and comics news. These issues are more interesting than LOCUS. (Which is not Charlie Brown's fault; in this country we just don't get into juicy news items like having customs inspectors sieze a couple of the editor's magazines. CREEPY and EERIE, if you're interested. Australia is a nice place to visit, but...) Rating.....8

SERENDIP #3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, with VIMY VICTORS #5 (John McCallum, Ralston, Alberta, Canada - irregular - 10¢) Postal Diplomacy journals. VICTORS includes things like rating systems, letters, etc. SERENDIP is smaller and sticks mostly to moves.

HARPIES #4, 5 (Richard Schultz, 19159 Helen, Detroit, Mich. 48234 - monthly? - no price listed) The official publication of the Detroit mob. Actually #4 was put out by Hal Shapiro, who apparently borrowed one of Howard's mimeos. One of Howard's old mimeos. (There's an item on the back page that tells you what the headings on page 7 were if they are missing in your copy. Unfortunately, my copy had the headings all right; it was the bottom lines that were missing....oh, down here it tells what was on the bottom lines.) There seems to be a sort of feud going between Schultz and Shapiro, which I'm just as happy to stay out of. (But I do wish Hal wouldn't come on like a bad imitation of Harlan Ellison.) Issue #5 is considerably more readable, tho with that paper the mag is never going to win any beauty contests. #5 has a lot of stuff on the Westercon that I didn't read, but it also has book reviews (which I didn't read.....) More or less pleasant, small fanzine. Rating...4

Have here a couple of issues of CURSE YOU, RED BARON! Series II, but I sort of doubt if Eney keeps any extras. You want reviews on this, Dick?

DIPLÔMANIA #26 (Don Miller, 12315 Judson Road, Wheaton, Md. 20906 - bi-monthly - 35¢) A general-type mag on Postal Diplomacy; rules, suggestions, strategy, letters, gripes, etc. Also a checklist of Diplomacy mags; 88 mags listed.

THE GREAT AMERICAN CON GAME (Ben Solon, 3933 N. Janssen St., Chicago, Ill. 60613 - one-shot, no price) This is Jon Stopa's plan for a North American con to replace "our" Worldcon. I see no particular need for a big national or continental convention every year, but if you do you might be interested. (In any event I believe something like this was passed at the St. Louis business session; I'm not sure because I didn't bother to attend.)

EMNUI #2 (Creath Thorne, 706 Hudson Hall, Columbia, Missouri 65201 bimonthly - 25¢) Small, editor-written plus letters. Creath is a fairly good writer; he even has a moderately enjoyable con report, which is a mirror miracle in fandom. Rating.....4

I also have a copy of BIAS #9 here, but since it's sent mainly to announce that the mag has folded, there seems little use in reviewing it. Too bad. I enjoyed it; not enough to write for it - I have a place to express my opinions - but enough to send an occasional encouraging letter.

SON OF CRUDZINE #3 (Louis Fallert, c/o Listoe & Wold Mortuary, 531 So. Snelling, St. Paul, Minnesota - "somewhat monthly" - 10¢) Also editor-written, but he isn't the writer that Thorne is. Well, give it time. Rating...2

ARTS AND INFINITY (Morris Scott Dollens, 4372 Coolidge Ave, Los Angeles, Calif. 90066 - quarterly - \$1.00) Since I have an advance "proof" copy, I'm not even positive that this is ready to be sent out, but.... The mag is designed to display Dollens' artwork. Mag will be 64 pages; this advance brochure is only a few pages. Multilithed, of course. Each issue will concern a single "theme". Sounds like it might well be worth a dollar. Morris also announces that he'll have a Christmas card catalog out sometime in October; send 10¢ if you're interested. There will also be a catalog of bookplates (with samples) for another dime, and he is also selling color slides of his paintings, shop signs, etc. I can vouch for the beauty of the slides now (I've had an assortment of Dollens' slides for some time but only got a slide projector last Christmas.) This particular brochure that I have will be 10¢ for completed versions; send a dime for it and see if you want to invest any more.

DALLASCON BULLETIN #3 (Dallas in '73 Bidding Committee, P.O. Box 523, Richardson, Texas - free) A few notes on the Dallas bid and a lot of ads, mostly from comics fans. As Tom Reamy says, comics fans seem to have more money than stf fans. (They also seem to have less sense, in a large number of cases, but Tom didn't mention that.) Anyway, unlike some fans, I see no need to police other fanzines' advertising. If you're not on the mailing list, drop the Committee a card. You can't lose anything.

If you didn't get a copy of CORR #2 $\frac{1}{2}$, write Perri Corrick, 126 No. Orchard St., Apt. #2, Madison, Wisconsin 53715, and ask for one. These were being passed out at the Worldcon as advertising for CORR, so presumably they are free. Also presumably there are none left, but it doesn't cost much to ask. Short thing, but I did thoroughly love the "Guide To Performance Appraisal".

Also have a St. Louiscon Edition of NOLAZINE (Craig Shukas, 2716 Prancer St, New Orleans, Louisiana 70114) Dunno if this costs or not; regular price of the mag is 3 for \$1.00. This features a humorous - more or less - bit of fan fiction by Perry Chapdelaine, illustrated by Jack Gaughan.

FANTASY NEWS #10 (Harry Wasserman, 7611 No. Regent Road, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53217 - irregular - 35¢) This is an Annish and runs to 90 pages & what I swear are cardboard covers. Almost entirely on stf-horror movies, but there is some lovely controversy between Bill Kunkel and a couple of devout Catholics. (Even that started over a reference to the Legion of Decency.) Bill has all the best of it because, being intelligent and a Catholic, he knows what aspects of the Church lend themselves to derision, and he can back up his statements. Rating.....6

BEABOHEMA #5 (Frank Lunney, 212 Juniper St, Quakertown, Pa. 18951 - quarterly - 75¢ for this issue, normally 60¢) This is an Annish; over 100 pages, all that jazz. This features columns and articles by the smaller-name professionals; Leo Kelley, Dean Koontz, Piers Anthony, Joe Hensley (sorry about that, Joe; if you'd just write a little more....). And I guess Piers is becoming a big name in both fan and pro circles. Anyway, there is good writing and lots of controversy. (There are plenty of fans present, too; it isn't all pro stuff.) The sheer size of the thing defeated me; with books piling up, I don't have time for 100-page fanzines. But it seems to be a well-done job, with lots of variety (or in other words, there are controversies about all sorts of things.) Rating.....7

TIMEBEAM #2 (Rudy Hagopian, Tredjelangatan 45, 413 03 Göteborg, Sweden) Seems to be mostly reviews; mainly fanzines. Entirely in Swedish, so I can't read the price or schedule. And no, Rudy, I won't trade after this issue. Sorry; it's not your fault I can't read Swedish, but on the other hand there is no point in my trading for a fanzine I can't read. (I always feel a bit guilty about things like that; if Swedish fans can learn English, I should be able and willing to learn Swedish. But I'm not, so I don't trade with foreign-language mags. Of course, I don't trade with a lot of English-language fanzines, either...)

So today I got a regular issue brochure from Dollens, meaning they are ready and you can send in your dime.

FORUM INTERNATIONAL #1 (Per Insulander, Midsommarvägen 33, S-126 35 Hågersten, Sweden - quarterly - 5 for \$2.00) Midsummer street? Ah, these romantic Swedes. Printed in English. Fiction, articles, interviews with John Brunner and John Sladek. And, as the editor points out, the first English-language general type fanzine from Sweden in a long time. Material is good; I would prefer a more European slant since I can find out about US stf and fandom elsewhere. But this is an excellent beginning.

Rating.....5

DMSFF #2. (David T. Malone, Bacon Road, Roxbury, Conn. 06783 - irregular - 35¢) Another big one. Poetry, reviews, letters, articles (including one from Asimov), some particularly beautiful art and layouts. Material tends toward the College Literate (a defense of Yevtushenko) without getting stuffy about it.

Rating....7

NOMROD #13 (Dwain Kaiser, 390 No. Euclid, Upland, Calif. 91786 - irregular - 50¢ - co-editor, Al Snider) A thoroughly enjoyable fannish mag, from the industrial-advertising parody which "explains" the cover to the long letter column. Emphasis is entirely on fandom and whither and so on (and I really should have written in again and straightened out a few more of those dunderheads. Maybe next time.)

Rating...7

MOEBIUS TRIP #1 (Edward C. Connor, 1805 N. Gale, Peoria, Ill. 61604 - bimonthly - 25¢) Actually what he says is ".25¢" or a quarter of a cent. If you have any old farthings around, try one. Small, editor-written, and the editor's taste seems to run to the same sort of slightly oddball stuff that mine does (but he takes it more seriously.) Not a bad first issue at all.

Rating....4

OTHERWORLDS #1 (David Gerrold, Box 526, Hollywood, Calif. 90028 - irregular? - 60¢) Overpriced, but enjoyable. Mostly by Gerrold; some "Star Trek" stuff but mostly on general book and magazine stf. I did like his bem with the built-in helicopter beanie.

Rating....5

AVESTA #1 (Don Blyly, 825 W. Russell, Peoria, Ill. 61606 - irregular - 35¢, tho I believe this issue was passed out free at the Worldcon). Or at any rate it was passed out there; I saw it lying next to Tucker. General; verse, fiction, articles, reviews. Probably letters next time. Nice reproduction.

Rating....3

DECAL #2 (Don Cochran, 151 Valley St., Jackson, Miss. 39209 - irregular - 35¢) Primarily fiction, though there is also a checklist of science fiction in BOYS' LIFE from 1964 thru June '69. (Now how about a checklist of the mag from, say 1935 to 1945?)

Rating....4

SF COMMENTARY #2, 3, 4 (Bruce R. Gillespie, P.O. Box 30, Bacchus Marsh, Victoria, AUSTRALIA - monthly - 40¢) And no checks; get an international money order. This aims to take over the spot vacated by ASFR, and seems to be doing it. The third issue shows a trend toward a larger percentage of letters, which is all to the good as far as I'm concerned, because they are interesting letters. Large; runs 40 to 70 pages. Sub price is 9 for \$3; considering delays in postage and the problems of paying a 40¢ premium on a 40¢ money order (or is it an 80¢ premium now?) you might as well sub.

Gee, here I have an official TAPS mag and I don't know where it came from (or why I got it - probably with another fanzine. If so, it's been separated now. It's TT #55, if the sender wants to write in and get some publicity in our letter column; you won't get any here because I can't figure out how the club works.

ICENI #6 (Bob Roehm, 316 Maple St, Jeffersonville, Ind. 47130 - bimonthly? - 40¢) General type; articles, reviews, letters, the first half of a "Star Trek" script. Jerry Lapidus has some good fanzine reviews even if I don't much agree with them.

Rating....4

MENTAT #11 (Ulf Westblom, Urban Hjärnes Väg 20, S-161 52 Bromma, Sweden - monthly? - \$3.00 per year) Some items in English, some in Swedish. (Unfortunately, most of the English items are by English - speaking authors; it would be more helpful to have their writings translated into Swedish and the Swedish writings translated into English. (It would also, of course, be a hell of a lot more work.) Both this mag and FORUM INTERNATIONAL boost the bid for a Swedish Worldcon in 1980. Okay; why not? Swedish fandom has been around for a long time now. Rating....4

THE THIRD FOUNDATION #90 (Lee Gold, 1435 So. Bundy Dr. #4, Los Angeles, Calif. 90025 - 3 for 75¢) There's another conversation between a human and a computer "psychiatrist"; the first one of those I read was funny, but they have been getting less interesting ever since. This one is somewhat saved by Barry Gold's explanation of how the computer program works. The usual fiction, reviews, letters, humor. For some reason the whole thing strikes me somewhat like a Fritz Leiber novel; I have an aversion to picking it up and starting to read, although when I do force myself to read an item I find it as good as most fanzines produce. An interesting reaction. Rating...5

AKOS #2 (Janet Megson, 321 W. 105th., 50, New York, N.Y. 10025 - no price or schedule - coeditor, Eli Cohen) Small, with too much room taken up with a con report and another damned computer conversation. Otherwise reasonably interesting. Rating....5

DOUBLE BILL #21 (Bill Bowers and Bill Mallardi, P.O. Box 368, Akron, Ohio 44309 - irregular - this issue \$1.00, future issues 75¢) This is multilithed, about 3/4 of "standard" size. Some beautiful artwork, including the first Steve Fabian illos I've seen that I'd give houseroom to. Wide variety of material, mostly quite well done. Very close to 100 pages. It's worth your dollar. Rating..8½

THE DOUBLE BILL SYMPOSIUM (Bowers & Mallardi and Lloyd Biggle, address above, one-shot - \$3.00) A set of questions about science fiction and science fiction writing, and the replies of 94 sf writers. The whole takes up somewhat over 100 pages. I find myself totally indifferent to this sort of thing (we wouldn't have a copy except that Juanita answered the questionnaire and her reply was lost in the mail and the publishers were generous enough to give her a copy anyway). However, it's extremely popular and the sort of thing that becomes a collector's item. If you go for this sort of thing, it's extremely well done. Multilithed; stiff covers.

QUARK #11 (Chris Couch, Rt. 2 Box 889, Arnold, Missouri - irregular - no price listed - co-editor, Lesleigh Luttrell) A sort of not-quite-final issue, due to changing circumstances of the editors. Deals largely with fandom and pop music and I thoroughly enjoyed it anyway. Rating....6

THE UNDERGROUND #71 (Wayne Finch, 616 No. 73rd St, East St. Louis, Ill. 62203 - quarterly - 50¢) A fanzine for cave-crawling; the official publication of the MMV Grotto. Humorous and serious articles, on field trips and how to hook up electric lights underground and how to clean carbide lamps and stuff.

SCHAMOOB #1, 2 (Frank Johnson, 3836 Washington, Cincinnati, Ohio 45229 - irregular - 25¢) The usual beginner's stuff; humor, articles, fiction. Major item in issue #2 is a reprint from a Sunday supplement, which I don't much approve of. (Reprint from obscure sources, yes; but not common ones.) There is improvement, at least from the first to the second issue, and presumably it will continue. Rating....3

CONGLOMERATION #1 (Brad Balfour, 5129 Newfield Ave, Cincinnati, Ohio 45237 - quarterly - 25¢ - coeditor, Joe Small) Pretty much the same as SCHAMOOB, except perhaps a trifle better reproduction. Rating..3½

EXILE #6 (Seth Dogramjian, 32-66 80 St, Jackson Heights, New York 11370 - quarterly - 50¢) I guess the state is New York; he didn't say. Offset; 20 pages, too many of which are devoted to a set of portraits from "Planet of the Apes". (They're drawn well enough, if you thought that particular movie was worth anything.) In fact, there is very little written material at all. Rating.....3