

MENTAL MARSHMALLOW



Hello, hello. This is a one-shot type deal and it is called MENTAL MARSHMALLOW. Why? You may well ask. I won't sell here. A charming bit of esoterica that will be dealt with more thoroly in the other editorial, or whatever you might call these goojies.

I guess this here is a colophon, not an editorial. MENTAL MARSHMALLOW will never reappear, but I shall be putting out a regular type fnz in a very short while.

In order to get on my mailing list you must do one of the following: Review this in your fanzine, and/or send me yours in trade. Or contribute material, money, or stamps. And you know very well that letters of comment are tremendously welcome. (so is money and stamps) I'm Miriam Dyches, and this is my great fannish type project. All unsigned material is mine. Without the help of Bjo, who stencilled this in the wilds of Bakersfield, and Steve Tolliver, who helped, too, I just don't know what I would have done.

Mailing address is: c/o Goldstone, 350 Delores Street, San Francisco 10, California.

MENTAL MARSHMALLOW is part of Goojie Publications, BWAPA member. MM was blazned because I had nothing else to do in the 2 weeks before the Solacon.



ZZZZzo?

MENTAL MARSHMALLOW is a real neat name for a one-shot, especially a one-shot that features a terrific poem like the "Sonnet to a Fly on a Marshmallow Pie". But I really got the name from a certain fan who called me a mental marshmallow. Now I don't mind being called a mental marshmallow; sticks and stones and all that jazz...plus, I think it about the funniest "insult" i ever got. The only reason I ~~even~~ brought up the subject is that I think the circumstances of the matter are, or at least should be, of vital interest to fandom.

Because this person called me Mental Marshmallow in a letter, to someone else, not to me. I find this a little irksome. But, I was called names because this "bnf" couldn't find time or integrity or honesty to answer a forthright question which I proposed. I cannot reconcile such a practice to my peculiar set of ideals.

There is another fairly common practice employed in fandom that irritates me even more. I'm afraid that I may not get a chance like this for a while. And even tho this isn't a sercon'zine, I'm gonna be sercon for a minute.

I have seen many people hurt in the short (six months to be exact) time I've been in active fandom, by the petty jealousies and back biting that are so prevalent among some fans.

I guess that some of the fans, especially the younger ones, think that being "funny" or cruel at the expense of others is a good way to gain notoriety and bnfdom. Maybe so, maybe not. I can't help but feel that this is not the best way to make friends, and friendship, as far as I can see, is the essence of fandom, ergo...BNFdom.

Take a look at some of the real DNFs. Perry Ackerman, W.A. Willis, the Linards, and lots of others. They are very well known, tremendously well liked, and are certainly not known for back-biting or gossip-mongering. Nuff sed? I hope so. I really do.

While I'm tossing onions to nameless people, I have some orchids to distribute. You know, at the moment I almost wish I were a bnf so that there could be some real honest-to-Elmer ego'oo in my handing out bouquets to those wonderful fannish friends of mine.

Thank you to Ted Johnstone for introducing me to LASFS.

And like wow! The fabulous hospitality of Charles and Isobel Burbee, Honey Wood and Rog Philips, and Cynthia-Lou Goldstone. Not the mention Zeke Leppin, without whose kindness the LASFS (and some of the members) would have been without a place to work and meet, etc. for lo! these many...

Gee! I could go on like this, but nobody likes long drawn out editorials, ZZZzo...I won't even try to tell about all the wonderful friends I've made. BUT a great big gracias, merci beaucoup, danke, and in general thanks sort of thing to fandom for making this Mental Marshmallow so very welcome and happy!

SONNET TO A PIE
WITH A FLY ON IT

by Mike Geisler

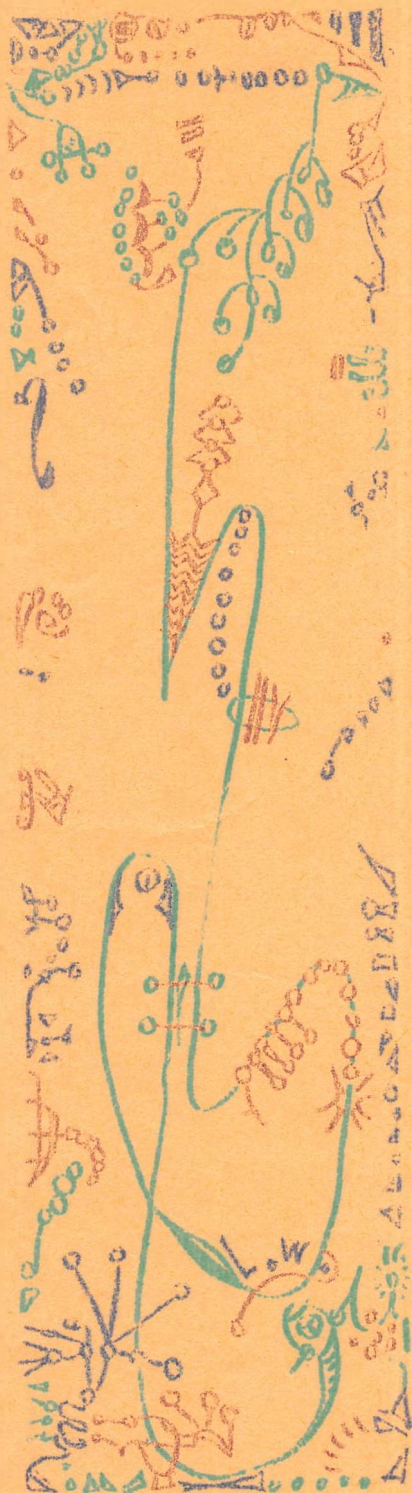


Oh, I'm stuck on a marshmallow pie---said the fly.
What a literally and figuratively grand way to die.
How divine my last pillow will be a marshmallow.
I can eat myself silly on creamy marshmilly.
I can drivel and wallow in gooey marshmallow.
I can tickle my palate with tasty marshmalate.
I can gorge my wee belly on tons of marshmelly.
I can cran like a stallion ~~my~~ favorite--marshmallion.
I can greedily drool on a hill of marshmoolen.
Exploit all my talents for devouring marshmalents.
Replenish my gullet with luscious marsh bullet.
Let my colon be swollen with foamy marshmolen.
I welcome a gullion if it's caused by marshmullion.
My spirit's exhalted when I'm eating marshmalted.
My ardor's idolatrous for sapid marshmolatrous.
My passion is violent concerning marshmiolent.
The cure for my doldrums is nunching marshcoldrums.
Give me succulent, delicate nites of marshmellicate.
My reation's ebullient to gobs of marshmullient.
What morsels of quality--chevy marshmaulity.
To make an analogy's absurd for marshnalogy.
Nothing, I tell you, compares with marshmallyou.
I'll consume by the gallon my precious marshmallion.
Let my figure get bulky if the bulk is marshmulky.
I don't mind being bulbous if the bulb is marshmulbous.

Let my waistline get bulgy if the bulge is marshbulgy.
 So what if my volume's the result of marshvolume.
 Gimme billions and trillions of yummy marshmillions.
 Let me endlessly fill me with tender marshmilke.
 Let me just dilly-dally on mounds of marshmally.
 Let me swim like a sailor in seas of marshmailor.
 Let me jump in it, slide in it, slump in it, hide in it.
 Flop in it, plop in it, slop, blow my top in it.
 Whirl in it, swirl in it, twirl, curl, unfurl in it.
 Rush in it, gush in it, slush, push my mush in it.
 What a glorious feeling to be drenched in marshmeeling.
 No thing do I value as much as marshmaue.
 In total rebellion, I'd risk all for marshmellion.
 I'll take any challenge if the stake is marshmallenge.
 Unabashedly gullible am I for marshmullible.
 Let my larynx be ululant acclaiming marshmululant.
 Though no poet I hail you, Beloved Marshmallyou.
 Let me scream, let me yell it---I LOVE YOU MARSHMELLIT!
 May these words be a eulogy praising marshneulogy.
 Though I reek with tautology, words are vain for marshmalogy.
 Let me die on an island of lovely marshmisland.
 How perfectly thrilling to die of marshmilling.
 Let them say it's folly, I'll down in marshmolly.
 I'm caught in the spell of enchanting marshmellof.
 My rapture's unyielding when I'm soaked in marshmielding.
 Let my twilight be halcyon--make my bier of marshmalcyon.
 Let me lie on a velvety bed of marshmelvety.
 Heaven must be a silo that's filled with marshmilo.
 My wings and my halo will drip with marshmalo.
 I ecstatically holler as I sink in marshmoller---
 Let my stone read--"THE FELLOW WHO DIES FROM MARSHMELLOW"

---Mike Geisler





THE LOVE SONG OF J. ALFRED, VENUSIAN

O come with me to Planet Three!
Just give me one sweet nod---
I'll have you there
In the shake of a hair
On your seventh sens-o-pod!

Strictly between us, I'm sick of Venus;
It's such a drag, I've found.
Now wouldn't it thrill ya
To set your cilia
On Terra's verdant ground?

The weather's queer, but truly dear
There are other compensations---
Take the cuisine!
But really, I mean
You can't improve the rations!

No time to waste! My love, make haste
While Earth is still attractive!
EEVWYIGA, who
Wants people-stew
All spoiled and radioactive?

---Cynthi Goldstone

genuine Venusian illo by
E. Loring Ware

TRAVELLING GIANTS by Terry Carr

On August 1, Ron Ellik and I left for a weekend in the Los Angeles area. Ron had to get some FAPA surplus stock to list for sale, and I wanted to go with him because I hadn't been down there in almost two months--since Durbee's birthday party, in fact. Whenever we take off on a trip to Los Angeles, we always feel somewhat guilty. After all, the Bay Area and L.A. are some 400 miles apart, yet every few weeks we're either visiting down there or someone from L.A. is visiting in Berkeley. This is the sort of thing which gives people back east (who already have a rather sketchy idea of west-coast geography) the idea that the two city-areas are right next door to each other, and could conceivably lead them to make unfortunate travel plans for attending the Solacon--like the person who wrote to Honey Wood mentioning plans to stop over in Berkeley for a day or two just before the con, then drop over to the convention site Friday morning. So we always try to point out that the trip is a respectable distance, and salve our consciences that way. "After all," said Ron as we left Berkeley, "we're travelling giants. We can't be expected to conform to the limitations of lesser mortals." Ron talks like this all the time--in fact, he usually talks in much higher-blown phrases. We in Berkeley refer to his speech-patterns as chitter-chatter--sometimes humorously, sometimes seriously. But Ron is the perfect person to have along on a 400-mile trip, for he is perfectly capable of talking brightly the whole trip, and usually amusingly. It is true that one one trip his high chitter-chatter standards slipped a little (it was 7:00 in the morning, we were just entering L.A., and Ron had tuned in a morning radio program which had a cheerful announcer nattering away about things like breakfasts and working eight hours a day, and Ron was chitter-chattering right back at him, half-asleep.) But on the whole we have fine fannish conversations which would make BNF's of all of us should we record them correctly in print...perhaps fortunately, however, we never remember much of what we've said when the trip is over. We started out just after 6:00 p.m. after Ron phoned his mother in Long Beach to let her know we were coming and I remarked, "Why Ron, your mother was just in Berkeley a few days ago--she must be a travelling giant, too!" "She inherited it from me," said Ron laconically. After a moment of reorientation of my mental processes, I said, "She inherited it from you?" Ron nodded. "Your mother inherited this trait from you," I said again, to clarify the concept. "Yes," said Ron. "Like son, like mother--you know. Feedback heredity and all that." Not to be outdone, I kept from batting an eye, and said, "Well, I can see how that could be. After all, one of the oldest theories of heredity is that it's carried in the blood. And of course, a child while still in the womb shares the same bloodstream with its mother. And modern psychologists have pointed out that a person has some sort of awareness while still in the foetal state--it's one of the foundations of psychiatry today that memories of the womb remain deep in the subconscious all one's life. Aside from the sex urge, psychiatrists seem to feel the basic drive of man is a subconscious yearning for a return to the foetal state. So, since you were already beginning to form as a personality while



still sharing your mother's bloodstream, I can see how she could have inherited a trait of two from you." "Why," said Ron, "if I didn't know you were spouting nonsense, I'd swear you were right." Of course he used much stronger language than that. I looked hurt, and said, "But it's perfectly logical. While in the womb, one has everything one could wish--warath, nourishment, etc. No troubles. All our lives, from birth to death, are a yearning for the return to a womb-like state. That's the tragedy of life." Seeing Ron still looked dubious, I said, "After all, do you know of anyone who has successfully returned to the state of the womb? Name one."

"Dave Pike," said Ron immediately. This ended the conversation, as anyone who has ever visited Dave in his perpetually dim and overheated room might well understand.

It was hot in the valley--we had the windows open virtually all the way, and were still too warm. In Bakersfield, 100 miles from Los Angeles, we stopped for gas.

Buzzing around in the light of the station was a swarm of insects which descended upon us hungrily. "Sure is a friendly town," said Ron, brushing mosquitos and such from his neck, shirt, arms, and pants. "Even the bugs want to have sex with you."

By 3:00 in the morning, we were in Los Angeles, but still a goodly distance to Long Beach, south of L.A. Ron's car, a late-forties Detroit monster which he'd bought second-hand, was the butt of many tired jokes, though it had given us little trouble on the trip. For a brief time we found ourselves following some wild-type teenagers who dogroat at every stoplight, peeling rubber, and slamming on brakes every now and then while turning the wheel so that the car skidded side-ways. No doubt great fun on the wide, empty streets of Los Angeles early in the morning, but we didn't feel like following behind such erratic individuals, and we slowed down till they had disappeared ahead somewhere. A little later I said, "Just for the hell of it, Ron, let's see if this car of yours will peel rubber."

"I don't know about that," said Ron dubiously, but as we left the next stoplight he floorboarded it. We took off nice and slow and smooth, just like always.

"Listen to that surge of power," I said.

We got to Ron's home in Long Beach around 3:30 a.m. and went to bed immediately. I got up early; neither Ron nor his mother were awake yet, so I read a paper until Isabel Burbee phoned. Ron's mother talked to her for a while, Ron woke up, and plans were made for Ron to meet the Burbees at Don Wilson's house that afternoon.

We left Ron's place around 1:00 p.m. Ron was to drop me off at Zeke Leppin's place in Los Angeles, where the IASFS meets, and where I figured I would meet Bjo and Miriam and the other people I'd come down here to see.

Somebody almost hit us as Ron made a left turn, and as usual Ron said, "Don't worry, Terry, he would have hit your side of the car."

"Damn it," I said, "someday I'm going to ride in car with you in England where you can get hit while making right turns across traffic."

"English cars have the wheel on the right side," said Ron, "So you'd still be on the side they'd hit."

"No I wouldn't," I said. "We'd bring this car along and you'd be driving on the left side of the car."

"This car wouldn't make it to England," said Ron.

I thought a minute. "Couldn't we have it deported?" I asked.



We got to Zeke's and found no one there, though Bjo had left a note saying she'd be back around that time. So we wandered around the area for awhile and came back, to find that Zeke had returned. We talked with him awhile, until we heard voices outside. "That sounds like Alex Bratmon," said Ron loudly and clearly.

"That sounds like Ron Elik," said Alex outside.

"Why, it is Alex Bratmon!" I said in mock surprise. Alex and I had been having somewhat of a minor feud through the mails recently.

"I'm not coming in," Alex grumbled darkly. "I hear Carr in there." But of course he was joking, and came in smiling, with an attractive blonde named Jill Vuerhard. She is to be a model in Bjo's fashion show.

We talked awhile and Zeke left on business. A little later Ron left for Wilson's house--he was already late. The three of us remaining gabbed about this and that, until Alex suddenly remembered that there was to be a Solacon Committee meeting at the con-hotel that afternoon, and Bjo would probably be there. So we went there, and asked at the desk where the meeting was being held, and were directed to a meeting room on the third floor. By the time we got there, the room was quite empty, and so we figured we must have passed them enroute. So we went back to Zeke's.

Bjo was there, all right, but no one else was. Bjo phoned Miriam and I found that she'd been home all afternoon. Alex said he'd drive me over to her place.

At Miriam's, we were served coffee and cake, and in a while we went down the street to visit the Bermingham's, and their cousin Nicole, another model in the fashion show. After a few drinks and some enjoyable conversation,

we left for a party at Forry Ackerman's. We arrived there to find the party getting into full swing. There were quite a few people--LASFS members mostly, though some of the guests apparently weren't connected with the club. George Fields was there, and Steve Tolliver, Ted Johnstone, Bjo, Jack Jardine, Milo Mason and the rest of the crew. I surveyed the bookcases and originals and such things appreciatively, and in a little while Bjo informed Miriam that she promised everyone that she would give paper-bird-folding lessons. Miriam has a passion for folding Oriental paper birds, which various people encourage, sometimes to their subsequent regret--it's not unusual for Miriam to leave a trail of paper birds through a house behind her, just like Hansel and Gretel or something. She's a pathological paper-bird folder.

Anyway, Bjo had set up this party-game-to-end-all-party-games wherein Miriam was to pass out sheets of paper with an ad for the last Westercon on it, and instruct the whole assemblage in the gentle art of folding Oriental paper birds. A worthy aim, I suppose.

Well, we gathered around and Miriam went through the whole thing, step by step, overseeing each prenatal bird along the way, and with many cries of anguish. I think it was Milo and Jack who continually injected obscene puns into the running conversation.

I wasn't doing too well; though I'd watched Miriam folding those birds (which come out looking like pterodactyls) on countless occasions. I'd never really paid much attention, and had it not been for the kind help of Steve and Bjo, who were sitting on the floor next to me, and Miriam herself, I probably would never have fashioned anything



Jill

remotely resembling a bird or any other form of life in this star system. Bjo and Steve were apt pupils; for my part, I was making very uneven folds, resulting in a quite lopsided bird. Somewhere along the line, Bjo fouled up and made a bad fold, too, so that at one juncture Miriam suddenly cried, "Oh, that won't work! You haven't got the goojies even!" I sympathised with Bjo, pointing out that my bird's goojies were so uneven as to be almost unrecognizable.

"We both have uneven goojies," I said.

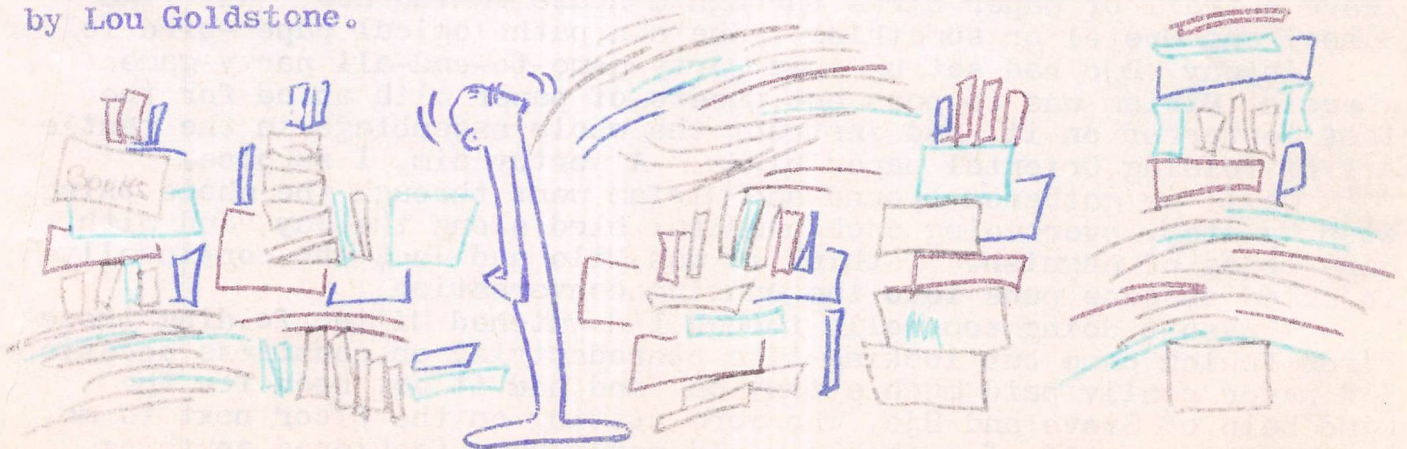
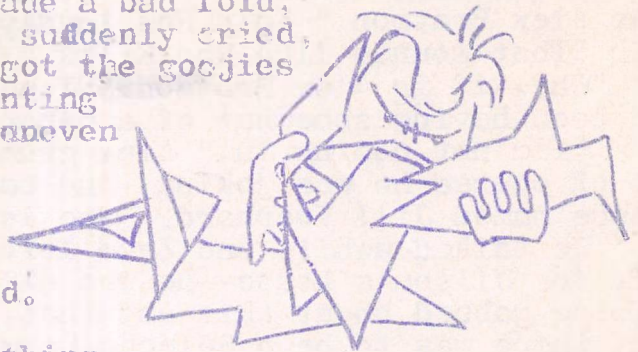
Steve gave us a sudden, shocked look. "Please," he murmured.

I was a bit flustered, but I managed to say, "Well, we have something in common, Bjo." Later on, and throughout the party, we were haunted by that phrase. "Uneven goojies," I would mutter. "What a way to go through life." I said maybe we'd bring it as a headline in Fanac: "Carr and Bjo Share Uneven Goojies!" Bjo made protesting noises.

At one point Forry headed out the back door. "I'm going out to the garage for a minute," he said to me. "Would you like to come along?" I allowed all how I would, and passed on a few of the more colorful stories I'd heard about it as we walked out the back way-- about how Forry had constructed tunnels through the piles of prozines; about how it was rumored that he sometimes sorted through the mass with a snow shovel; about the tales that were told of collectors who had wandered into The Garage and had never been heard from again, save for an occasional cry from the depths of the stacks on silent, lonely nights.

Forry smiled his smile and opened a large double door, revealing a huge conglomeration of magazines, books, pocketbooks, paintings, motion-picture stills, and so forth. My eyes had barely become used to this when he opened still another door to the right of the first, and the rest of the collector's kaleidoscope met my eye. I followed him into the garage with trepidation, keeping him within sight at all times so that I wouldn't get lost.

While Forry looked up something, I cast eyetracks about ruthlessly seeing originals of paintings which graced covers of prozines which were collector's items when I first entered fandom almost ten years ago, and book titles which were legendary. I was inspecting the cover of the last issue of VOM when Forry came back. He explained that it was an illustration from Wright's book "The World Below", done by Lou Goldstone.



Well, the party went on, as parties do, and sometime in the small hours of the morning Forry shooed everybody out, explaining that he had to get up early in the morning for an appointment. I stayed at Forry's, through a combination of circumstances which would only bore and/or confuse you, and through Forry's generosity.

In the morning I called Jack Harness, who had recently moved to Los Angeles. I had written to him that I'd be down that weekend, and we were to meet at Lee Jacob's place north of L.A. that afternoon. I suggested that since Ron was picking me up at 1:00 that afternoon, Jack could get out to Forry's to meet us around that time. Jack agreed, I relayed directions to him, and he came on out.

Miriam was there when Jack arrived and she fixed hot chocolate for us all. Ron arrived a few minutes later and joined us in our repast.

As we talked the conversation turned to FAPA, and quite unsurprisingly to G.M. Carr. Jack had been arguing/feuding with her for some time in FAPA, and Miriam had had a run-in with her in the pages of Dave Rike's RUR. We discussed the appalling obtuseness of Mrs. Carr (who is not my grandmother, no matter what they tell you!)

"If you think G.M. and I have been arguing hot and heavy so far," said Jack, "wait till she hears that I consider Scientology the greatest art-form!"

Considering the incredulity with which my own mind greeted this concept, I could well imagine G.M. spending pages upon pages on the subject. "Scientology?" I said. "The greatest art-form?"

"Yes," said Jack. "Scientology is a way of building people, which is much greater art-form than building cathedrals or anything."

I thought about this for a moment. "Whym that's the most beautiful thing I've ever heard," I said.

Shortly after this we left, dropping Miriam off in downtown L.A., then out to Jacob's place in Pacoima. This was another typical trip in the LA. area where everything is half a day's drive away, and it took us something like an hour and a half to get there. It was a hot day, and as we neared Pacoima I found myself hoping that good old Lee Jacobs would have some beer.

We got to Jacob's and Ed Cox was there; he greeted us at the door with mock horror, shouting, "They're science fiction fans!"

"Signs fixin'?" I said. "What's that?" Cox opened the door.

Jacobs said a friendly hello and immediately offered me a beer. Ron and Jack were content with Pepsi-Cola and we settled down to drink.

Cox had obviously been drinking for some time before we got there; he was in quite a happy frame of mind, and before long he was even suggesting that we should put out a one-shot. Knowing that he'd hate himself in the morning for lapsing back into fannish ways, and knowing that we'd hate ourselves just as much should we follow his example, we attempted to dissuade him. In fact, we said, "Hell, no!"

"But here we have the Iron Maiden," Cox said, waving to the electric mimeo in the corner, "through which Lee and I have cranked countless fine fanzines in the past--TELEKINETIC TERRACE TIMES, TELEKINETIC TERRACE TIMES TRAILER, THE MAINE-LAC, and other legendary names from SAP's past. Why," he went on, "this is the very same mimeo which Manly Bannister donated to the WAV With the Crew in '52 Fund to be raffled off. Nan Gerding won it, and on it she published many fine SAPSazines of her own before we took over ownership of it. It is a machine with a glorious history!"

At this point, Jacobs broke in to point out that the thing was not working worth a damn currently, which was why they were giving it to Ron and me for nothing. But Cox was undaunted.

"Do you have any stencils with you?" he asked us.

It just so happened that Ron had a half-dozen or so out in the car, left over from the listing of the FAPA supplies the night before, and unfortunately he let this information leak out. Cox immediately jumped up and ran out to the car, coming back with the stencils.

"Let's put out a one-shot!" he cried gaily.

"No," we said.

The conversation went on in this vein for a time, wandering farther and farther afield under the expert guidance of Lee Jacobs, until finally Ron was able, while Cox was in the other room for a moment, to retrieve the stencils. He took off out the door to put them back in the car.

Cox came back and, unable to resist it, I said, "Ed! Ed! Ron got the stencils! He's taking them back to the car!"

Cox's eyebrows shot up and he ran out the door after Ron. As I watched, he pursued Ron across the yard, screaming vile fannish imprecations at him. At the last minute, Ron dodged to one side, and Cox ran right into the side of the car. He leaned there for awhile, exhausted, while the rest of us came out and Ron put the stencils in the trunk.

"You really didn't want to put out a one-shot anyway, did you EdCo?" said Jack.

Cox leaned panting against the car and shook his head philosophically. Then we went back into the house.

Well, we talked all afternoon, as is usual with fans. Harness talked Dianetics and Scientology with Jacobs, I talked about cars with Cox, Ron looked over fan-photos that Jacobs had, Jacobs and I talked jazz and that was the way things went. We never mentioned science fiction (which is also usual), except now and then in unprintable terms.

Abruptly, at one point, I noticed that Cox was standing outside, looking into the sky rapturously. I started toward the door, but then noticed Jacobs fiddling with a knob.

"It's the tv antenna," he said, pointing out the window. Sure enough, Cox was staring in mock fascination at Jacob's tv antenna, which was rotating slowly. (Living in a fringe-area as far as reception goes, Jacobs had a directional antenna which was rotated by controls inside the house. "Ed just loves that antenna," said Jacobs.

Outside, Cox was still staring and muttering, "Gosh. Gee, gosh. Golly wow. Just like science fiction, isn't it? Just like science fiction."

We all went out and joined him, staring at the moving antenna and enthusing that it certainly was a wonderful thing.

"Just like a goddam machine out of the future," said Ron.

