

CONFUSION

BOX 493
LYNN HAVEN, FLA

FEB						
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Confusion Sez --'After many a gafia, revives the zine.' So this is our

REVIVAL ISSUE



PROGRAM

<u>MESSAGE</u>	<u>DELIVERED BY</u>	<u>TIME</u>
COVER	Brother Bob McMillan	
Ballance Sheet	Parson Vick	1:00
BEER & BUTTERMILK	Brother VL McCain	2:00
GATEWAY	Brother JL Green	5:00
...AND, HAVING WAIT...	Brother Bob Silverberg	8:00
FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERY	Brother Cal Beck	10:00
InThe Midst of Confusion	Parson Vick	13:00
THE PLAY'S THE THING	Brothers B Morse & T Wright	16:00
WILLIS IN AMERICA	Brother Walt Willis	20:00
SOUND OFF!	Contributions from the Congregation	23:00
Something Up Our Sleeve	Parson	
Back Talk	Parson Vick	

CONFUSION

HALLELUJAH!!!

v2n4

THE NOVELTY FANZINE

#16

Confusion, 10¢, a collection of messages on the evils of abstinence, edited by Parson Shelby Vick, Box 493, Lynn Haven, Florida. Any resemblance between theological teachings and fanillogical preachings are, appropriately, confusing. Oh, brothers, repent from the evil ways of Seventh Fandom! And O, brother, hold not thy grudges against one stricken of gafia. O, brother, forgive thy wayward fellowfan for backsliding into temptation. And...oh, brother!

ON THE COVER -- On this subject, we have a few words from Brother McMillan: Well! What have we here? It seems that Dangerous Desemoria has bagged herself a BEM. When asked to do a 'cover-girl cover' for cf., the thing that immediately suggested itself to me was the old BEM-fem-him thing, sadly prevalent in pulp art a few years back. However, in this case, I have pulled a switch and made the dame the menace. /That is a switch?/ The BEM was probably a tame one trained to keep thrips out of someone's garden. But with a menace like Dangerous Desdemona and a walking arsenal like Captain Jenks, the old boy just didn't have a chance. This brings up the problem: with the Cap armed & protected to an inch of his life, how does the gal manage with a Bikini & goggles? Only I and Virgil Finlay know, and I'm not telling. Another problem: what is the thing she has inher lily white? You have me there. It might be a king-size cigarette. It could be a treasure map. Judging from her costume, it's probably her suitcase. Would you dig that crazy Ronson in the background? And that 1923-model spaceboat? I really got primitive in this one. It's seldom I deviate from the modern, clean-cut, Wernher Von Braun-Chesley Bonestell-COLLIER'S sort of art, but this brought out the beast in me. /Man or mouse?/

THE

BALANCE

SHEET



This time, I'm afraid our sheet is out of ballance. We are way in the red. In fact, we owe so much I fear that we'll never be out of debt to these nize pipples. Such as --

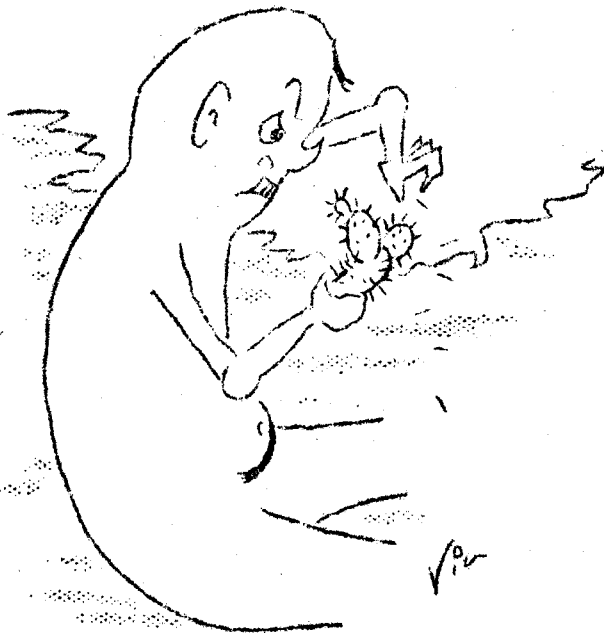
Nan Gerding.

In fact, ESPECIALLY Nan Gerding. Nangee is the wonderful gal who has graciously agreed to not only run off cf., but Also to assemble and mail this issue! And she's going to cut some stencils, and -- Well, you can see how much that gal has done for us. We'll never be able to thank her enuf. All we're running off is the cover, bacover, the novelties & Bob Silverberg's article, which we have already done. Would like to explain that if there are certain pages that are rather fuzzy on the edges, they aren't the fault of Nan. On the other hand, they aren't the fault of someone else we owe a lot to. Who is --

Bob McMillan.

He cut a whole batch of stencils for us. Over a dozen. This was way, way back, before any thot of Nan Gerding running the stencils had ocured. (Oc- curred? You look it up.) In any case, it seems that Nan's machine does not print as wide a surface-- so some of the stencils are cut too far out. Thru the fault of no one.

Also we owe lots to many, many OTHER people -- all you good folk who have had patience with us for lo, these many months. To keep things within our pocketbook and timetable, we'll have to keep cf. down to nothin over 150 copies until we are past a crisis that has been growing apace. This Vick Mimeograph Service eats a peck of spare time. And is now coming a possible \$550 job that will take many, many moons to complete. Thanks to Nan's kind offer, I'll be spared the time involved in running off and assembling cf. but there will still be the addressing and stencil-cutting to take care of. And the novelties; SUOS and whatever else might -- as the saying goes -- pop up. Since I do the mimmy-o work in my spare time, my other spare time work will have to suffer. Until I collect, at least...



SHE HATES ME - SHE HATES ME NOT...

BEER AND BUTTERMILK

V L McCain

If you Angelenos note one Raymond Douglas Bradbury wearing a woebegotten air these days there is a reason. Mr. Bradbury must feel much like a lion tamer who has just been subdued by his pet feline armed with a chair and whip.

The June issue of MAGAZINE OF FANTASY & SF contains a story by James Blish entitled "First Strike." And what ex-fan Blish did to ex-fan Bradbury shouldn't happen to any Ray, not even Palmer.

For years Bradbury has turned his far from inconsiderable talents into channels of anger, and many and unhappy have been his targets. But all can be linked into the single classification of 'stupidity.' This has been the common denominator of Bradbury's victims (it would be hard to call them 'villains') and one fact has emerged; Bradbury has nothing against innocent stupidity...in fact he is rather fond of depicting not-too-bright people of the soil or victims of the machine whose stupidity resembles naivete and is harmless. But, to Bradbury, no indictment is too severe, no punishment too great for the aggressively stupid person.....the man who victimises others by his stupidity, no matter how noble his intentions.

That is why it must have come as a considerable shock to him to find himself impaled on the same mounting needle of savage satire which he has wielded so successfully against others. Blish is not in the same league with Bradbury as a writer but he must have felt this story from the bottom of his soul. It is easily as scathing and convincing as the stories on which Bradbury made his own reputation and is easily one of Blish's three or four most memorable stories.

Naturally, the story does not mention Bradbury by name. He is referred to throughout as 'the Old Master,' a veritable cardinal of evil when viewed from Mr. Blish's viewpoint. And it must be admitted Mr. Blish makes his view very convincing. Just as Bradbury has repeatedly denounced such things as the misuse of science by political power, so he now is denounced for his own misuse of freedom of expression for the possible future stifling of progress, were his popularity to continue increasing indefinitely at its present rate.

It is always good for a man to see himself as those who disagree with him see him. It is doubtful if any of Bradbury's views will change but the re-evaluation will be valuable. Equally valuable to the public is the opposite point of view...the rebuttal to Mr. Bradbury's answer to the Utopians of the '30's, so to speak. There has been an incoherent pool of strong resentment to Bradbury and his views in the sf fields for some time. Blish is the first one to do a good job of stating the case for the opposition.

Blish is obviously ardently pro-science. Is Bradbury, despite his denials, anti-science? My personal opinion would indicate in the affirmative, though it is doubtful if anyone, even Bradbury, could say for sure.

Which view will prevail? Blish's has a tremendous mass of momentum behind it. Bradbury's followers are an articulate but relatively impotent group where large social issues are concerned. To oversimplify, this is the conflict between the 'practical' and the 'aesthetic.' While it seems impossible to wholly destroy the

latter, the former has consistently won the approval and support of the vast majority.

Just as Bradbury is an important writer (where sfans are concerned, anyway) so I would term "First Strike" an important story which should be read by everyone who is interested in science fiction as something beyond a means of killing an occasional idle hour.

And, odd as this may seem, despite my appreciation for and admiration of "First Strike" I think my own position would tend to put me very close to the views of Bradbury.

In a letter to Redd Boggs some months ago I was attempting to point out that life was simpler in the past but not necessarily better. As examples of the superiority of our present-day life, I cited penicillin (which by implication includes all the antibiotics and other health advances made in recent years) and tape recorders (which would include all modern methods of recording and reproducing sound). Then I vainly sought for a third example. To my own amazement there was nothing else. Or, perhaps I should say, nothing else which I wouldn't gladly sacrifice for the advantages of living several decades ago. Victorian prudery was fashionable; architecture and other items were horrible bedizened with gewgaws; people were almost certainly more intolerant. But in the basic important things such as freedoms of speech, movement, information and civilized treatment of enemies, it is doubtful if the world ever reached such a high cultural level, such a truly 'civilized' state as in the era spreading roughly from 1880 to the start of World War I.

Science certainly cannot be blamed in whole or even in large part for the considerably less pleasant (if far more luxurious) lives we now lead. But without science it is doubtful if most of the changes could have been implemented so rapidly. Coming one at a time, the world could have absorbed each into the cultural matrix without splitting apart at the seams as has now happened.

I'm not violently opposed to this era. Nor am I particularly opposed to science. But neither am I particularly prejudiced in favor of either nor blind to the virtues of the past (let me state right now that the present time is still of a much higher order of civilization than most of the past. I'd hide my head in horror if asked to live in almost any other past era. However, I feel right now we're going downhill and that the world of fifty years ago was essentially more civilized even if it did contain the seeds of its own destruction.)

Science has its virtues. But is there any great intrinsic value in jet airplanes, television (as now used), or any media of mass advertisement? I can't feel there is. Nor am I sympathetic to those incurable optimists who insist all change is progress, whether of a mechanical, political, or artistic nature. And, let's face it, for every development of science that has enriched or ennobled man's life, there has been another one which has exerted a debasing influence. The man of 1900 was in some ways an ignorant creature with insufficient leisure. Doubtless countless cases of injustice and misery from the period can be presented. But I doubt if at any other period in history did so large a portion of mankind live under ideal conditions, that is, close to the basic realities of earth but something of a god upon that earth.

I expect if I had the choice I'd stay right here. But every time I'm faced with one of Mr. Bradbury's unpleasant examples in real life, I toy with an idea that is escapism in its purest form. How nice it would be to take an efficient time machine, journey back into the past sixty years, take along some efficient doctor with access to all the latest discoveries, and some sort of tape and record reproducer which would run on the primitive power then available with my own choice of ten to fifteen thousand records.

3

To the large percentage of fandom (and perhaps Mr. Blish) which regards space travel and all the possibilities of the FUTURE (spelled in giant capital letters) this is both heresy and cowardice. QUANTRY once published a somewhat similar story by me about a man who went back to 1920 and not even my attack on the NFFF drew severer criticism.

But I woke up to an interesting fact recently. For years I've been bored to death by people fascinated by flying saucers and other 'unexplained phenomena' which crops up in public print all too frequently. Recently I've experience the same boredom where space travel is concerned.

I re-evaluated my views and was quite surprised at what I discovered. I considered writing a piece called "I Don't Like Science-Fiction." (The explanation is that it isn't sf I like but fantasy, and that it is sf's function as a branch of fantasy which endears it to me, not its usefulness as prophetic fiction. I like the ideas in sf, but it makes no difference to me whether the original ideas are possible, as in the 'sacred writings' or the obviously impossible as in fantasy. I also like logic, thus my preference for sf generally (with the exception of UNKNOWN styled fantasy) and the opinion I had for years that I was a bona fide science-fiction fan just because I preferred to read it to most other types of writing.

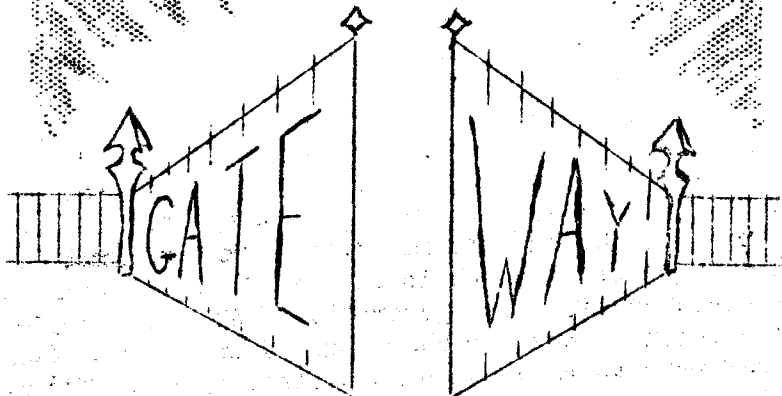
At any rate, I'll string along with Bradbury for the most part but I recommend the Blish story very highly for your thoughtful perusal.

... vl mccain



DARLING, HE'S PLAYING OUR SONG!

THE



J L GREEN

I seem to have dropped out of fandom to a large extent lately. My mailbox is no longer crowded with junk and no poetry arrives for me to gloat over, fume a little, and return, no poetry comes for me to look at, smile, in a strained and lop-sided fashion (out of the other side of my mouth) in fact, no poetry comes in at all. . . . That makes it sound odd when I say I am overstocked and need no poetry and anyone who reads this column and intended to send his little master, or mistress piece, is cordially invited not to. Reason? Simple, if you're Cf. subber, not so if you ain't. Boils down to the fact that Cf. is coming out veddy veddy irregularly now and consequently I use very little poetry. What I have on hand is adequate, considering the length of time between issues.

Now, I tink, is a good time to thank, sincerely and all that, the people who contributed their time and efforts to Gateway. To list them would be useless, since every regular reader knows the names that have appeared here time and time again. Probably, in fact, the regular readers are the ones who see their names signed under their poetry. Oh, well. . .

Nameless

Memories.....

What are memories
But dreams of a long forgotten past
Which,
Throughout life
Are faded, dimmed, but to the last
Remain
To be recalled,
When, with the cooling of life's glow
We wait,
In age, and dream.....
And dream, again, when lights are low.

Greg 'Goshwogoewhizoboyoboyoboy'
Calkins

Numerous poetry is rare as kangaroo feathers in Gateway, but occasionally one will come in. This is one I know not the writer of, save by the rare identification of a name, and it was sent in by someone else, of all things. Thanks to Hal Shapiro for sending this. Hal is also the boy who gave me the name of Poor Press Publication, featuring Press Poor material. . . Then used the damn name himself before I put out another column!

Poem

Halfway to Mars and his jets were clogged
And his ship was a useless sholl.
His suit was torn and his helmet fogged
And his radio shot to hell.
The green spacecasts were closing in
And his chances grew ever thinner.
Lord knows how he'd 'a seen it through
If his Ma hadn't called him to dinner!

Paul Enevers

And now we hear from my oldest and most faithful contributor. Oldest in that she contributed the first unsolicited poetry, not in age.

I Walked In Darkness Then

Here I am lying dead,
Past all caring, past all feeling,
A smile on my lips revealing
Scorn for things held dear.

Unseen by you I pause,
Beside the husk thatt once was mine
And watch the flowers you entwine
Between my inert hands.

Tapers at head and feet
To light my soul's way through the gloom,
Dispelling shadows in the room;
I walked in darkness then!

I see your falling tears
But feel no sorrow for your grief,
In life your love for me was brief;
I had no flowers then!

Is

Once of these days, after getting his permission, I'm gonna loosen up and tell the world (via confusion) who Toby is. But not yet; not yet.

Before The Curtain

And once, before the final curtain,
look upon the mountains, and the meadows;
look upon the hilltops and the glistening snows;
look upon the oceans, and their caps of fluff;
and last of all, look upon the works
that you have wrought, and find them good or bad.
And then, make whisper; "Done; and now, farewell!"

Toby Duane

This issue, for the first time since its inception, Gateway recommends a song its ed. has never heard. What's more, I don't know who recorded it. I've never seen the record. However, its written by Stan Jones (who wrote "Ghost Riders in the Sky," "Whirlwind," and several other excellent songs) is fantasy, about an old subject which has never before, to my personal knowledge, been given musical treatment, and, last but not least, its long and I need a long song to fill up this page.

Siren of the Sea

A sailor stood his watch upon a lonely wind swept deck
And waves thundered heavy on the shore
He saw a lantern flashing on the distant jagged rocks
A lantern that had ne'er been there before.

Oh, sailor of the sea, oh, sailor come to me
Oh, sailor here I'll make you free
Boy, he couldn't take his eyes from beauty that he saw
Or the singing of the siren of the sea.

The ship was standing steady toward the bay around the bar
The wind was howling high across the bow
The rocks were deadly, waiting, and the sailor knew it well
But all that didn't seem to matter now.

Oh, sailor of the sea, oh, sailor come to me
Oh, sailor here I'll make you free
The fog horns tried to warn him and the buoy bells rang out
But he only heard the siren of the sea.

With a lantern in her hand, her smile is hard and cold
Her eyes glitter brightly as she sings
The wind blows bits of seaweed from her long blonde hair
While a squid to her bosom tightly clings.

Oh, sailor of the sea, oh, sailor come to me
Oh, sailor here I'll make you free
Like a statur madly grinning the sailor turn'd the wheel
and tried to reach the siren of the sea.

With a roar of steel like thunder the ship went on the rocks
Not a single man was left to tell the tale
But the last thing that the sailor heard
as the waves closed o'er his head
Was the siren's mocking laughter as she wailed

Oh, sailor of the sea, oh sailor now you see
How I really make you free
The ghost of many sailors will ne'er forget the night
They listen'd to the siren of the sea.

The End

...jl green



...AND, HAVING WRIT...

-- Bob Silverberg

In the late spring of 1952, after having thought about the notion for a good while, I wrote an article called "First and Last Fans," in which I extended the Jack Speer chronology of fandom which appeared in his 1944 Fancylopedia. "First and Last Fans" was accepted by Lee Hoffman and published in Quandry # 25, October 1952.

I feel like the fellow in Schuyler Miller's story "As Never Was" -- the one who went into the future and found a knife, which went into a museum where he found it again several hundred years later. I reached into the future to extrapolate Seventh Fandom, and the extrapolation came to life as a result of my reaching.

Not that Seventh Fandom would not have come about if I had never written that fateful article; if I believed that, then the whole point of my article would be lost. What I was trying to say was that fandom consists of a series of overlapping cycles, and that there is a constant evolution. But somehow I served as an unwilling catalyst and set off the reaction which has brought the onset of Seventh Fandom much too soon and much too noisily.

Sixth Fandom, in which cycle I rose to greatest fan activity, did not appear with fanfare and trumpet blast when Art Rapp enlisted. That single action deprived the fan world of Spacewarp in the summer of 1950, and a short interregnum followed. But the fall of 1950 saw the new group slowly take form. By the following spring it had already formed a tight clique, but not so tight that a newcomer like Gregg Calkins could come along and become a full-fledged member in a few months. But, until its decline, it never worried about its own existence. It was Fandom -- not Sixth nor Fifth nor Eighty-First, but just Fandom.

Of course, it wasn't even that, since plenty of people considered themselves fans without ever having seen Quandry or without ever knowing who Walt Willis was. But it served as an inner circle. Like all other groups before it, Sixth Fandom began to disintegrate. Lee Hoffman took up horseback riding, Shelby Vick and Walt Willis fell victim to illnesses, Ian Macauley succumbed to wanderlust, Max Keasler disappeared into a fraternity house and never reappeared. And, just as this focal group began to break up, new names entered fandom.

It was at this point that I wrote my article, showing how the cycles were inevitable, how First Fandom had gone on to pro status, how Second and Third fandoms were swallowed by the army. I could see the cycle coming full circle and a new group of leaders taking over -- but I should have kept those speculations to myself.

You all know what happened. The new fans leaped up and shouted their presence with jubilation, and even went so far as to form a Seventh Fandom APA, a sort of contradiction in terms. For the new cycles have never before cut themselves off from the past so completely. In their determination to become Seventh

Fandom in a hurry (as if evolution can hurry) the fifteen or twenty enthusiastic teen-agers who have made the most noise have succeeded in alienating most of the survivors of earlier fandom.

Redd Boggs was writing for fanzines back in the early 1940s, but that didn't stop him from close contact with Art Rapp of Fifth Fandom and Lee Hoffman of Sixth. Bob Tucker, that old reprobate, published his first fanmag in 1932, but he was just as much a part of Sixth Fandom as anyone else. Robert Bloch is a dirty pro who knew Lovecraft and Weinbaum, but that didn't stop him from infiltrating the pages of Quandry.

But Seventh Fandom, which is so uniquely self-conscious, has made itself an island in space-time, and cannot last. Bob Stewart, Larry Balint, Don Cantin, Joel Nydahl, and all the other fans who date their first activity from 1952, can't carry on fandom alone. Nydahl has wisely maintained contact with the fossils left over from before the 1952 deluge, but most of his cohorts have not. And thus Seventh Fandom is neatly tying itself into its own coffin, by making itself so self-evident that no one else will have anything to do with them.

No group of new fans can be worth much without ties with the past. Lee Hoffman's contacts with Gerry de la Ree, Joe Kennedy, Fran Laney, and other leftovers from Third and Fourth Fandom had a much greater influence on Quandry's early development than is generally remembered. But Seventh Fandom has set itself up as an independent entity, and has strangled itself inside a year.

I'm almost afraid to say this, because I remember what happened the last time. But Seventh Fandom will have to be written off as an abortive freak, and (but don't tell them I said so) Eighth Fandom is just around the corner. And most of its members, oddly enough, will be the same chaps who now call themselves Seventh Fandomites, only they'll be old enough to shave.

...bob silverberg

CRIP QUIPS

"...take a casual ramble through Memory Lane, and let the toes stub where they may."

Robert Bloch, OCPSLannish II

I hear that you are a science fiction fan. It's a shame, you sounded so intelligent otherwise.

Richard Harter, ibid

"Not even a dejection slip?"

Walt Willis, ubid

My fanzine, tis of thee; with works literary...

Gregg Calkins, hebid

"My suggestion is...a picture of the horse's head on the front cover. On the back cover, of course..."

Robert Bloch, FIENDETTA

Fandom IS a way of life!

Harlan Ellison, A LA SPACE

Why Did They Fold?

The
Famous
FANTASTIC
Mystery

-- Cal Beck

When the first issue of FFI came out in (Sept.-Oct.) 1939 under the slowly abbing and fading Munsey company, the sole purpose was to introduce a "zine" to a select group of readers of the older Munsey publications. I might add that this "select group" included many thousands of devotees, all who cherished England, Merritt, Glasz and other story writers of similar high caliber.

After the first issue the editors took it upon themselves to go monthly. This lasted for six issues; from the Dec., '39, number until the Apr., '40, edition. Then back again on a bimonthly basis for two years...then once more a monthly schedule starting with the June, '42, issue. This attempt endured for seven long and brilliant issues. Dec., 1942, has now gone down in history for not only being the last issue of FFI ever to be published by Munsey, but the approximate date when the last 'zine ever appeared under the name of that old and wonderful organization.

Three months later, March-43, the next issue of FFI, now under the sway of Popular Publications, showed up. During that year, only 3 issues came out. Afterwards FFI stayed on a quarterly level. Since Dec-45 to date it's been on a bimonthly scale.

The first nine issues of FFI were priced 15c; number of pages per each issue, at this price was 128. The next four editions were down to 10c (Oct.-40, to Apr.-41), and of course the volume of pages dropped proportionately to 112. Up went the price and size a nickel and back to the 128 page format for six issues (June-41 to Apr-42). On June-42 the price was jacked up to 25c without any changes up to date, and page quantity rose to 144, but with the June-44 number it was reduced to 130 pages in size. However, since the March of '51 page quantity has been 114 with no apparent change.

From here little attempt will be made at any form of straight and dry statistics other than those essential to this article. But a few lines I believe should cover the FFI artwork angle, for this magazine has been able to surpass all other S-F publications in the ingenuity and selection of excellent cover and interior art. Some may wish to quibble here that Weird should also take a bow; but to me WF has been less consistent than FFI and its subsidiary 'zines insofar as artwork stands. To wit:

FFI's first five issues were without any cover art. Instead, a table of contents type cover was utilized, similar to the Munsey Argosies of around that period.

209

Starting with the 6th issue, with the exception of 3 Paul covers, Finlay handled all cover-art until the Sept.-43 issue. I'd daresay that during this time it was Finlay's greatest moment in overall interior and cover jobs. Many wouldn't hesitate in avowing that this was mostly due to Abe Merritt's sincere confidence and liking for the then young artist. Merritt was often responsible for encouraging him, especially during the time when the late "master" was special-features editor on the staff of the Journal-American, and had employed the Finlay talents for various art assignments on the famous Sunday Supplement of those early years.

Interiors in the first FEM were exceedingly crude, done entirely by detective mystery type artists. With the second issue the interiors took a tremendous jump in improvement, and as you might guess the bulk of the work was shared between Frank Paul and Finlay. When Popular acquired the entire works, company and rights with the March-43 edition, a newer and nearly equal rival appeared opposite the sensitive Virgil F. Since then he's always been known as Lawrence. Most of the cover art has been to date handled by him, with a few disturbing intervals by Norman Saunders, of whom I feel is better fitted for science-fiction formats. Naturally, Finlay was responsible for all the illustrations on the A. Merritt stories, and I believe that it was the author who specified it to be so.

Indeed, no effort shall be made in giving you a checklist of all the stories that have appeared in FEM....we'll leave that to the dozen or more indexes and classification systems that have been published for an odd number of years now. Nevertheless, this article would be merely a waste of your time and mine without citing some examples of why FEM has been so widely established with collectors and non-collectors --- why FEM is now calculated for being one of the rarest or highest priced 'zines in the back number field (and by all indications will in a few years become the rarest mag to collectors -- excluding only the first few years of Weird, 1923-28 or so, and a few issues of Unknown and even fewer numbers of Astounding). One could argue that Unk is possibly the rarest without taking into consideration that it specialized only in new-original-stories, that a huge quantity of its material is easily available in book form now, while FEM used only reprints and the large bulk of what it's used is nearly impossible to obtain in any form. Occasionally FEM has printed an original story, but to my recollection these were only shorts; and incidentally, whatever shorts it has presented were as a rule minor classics.

Though FEM is one of the few all-time "greats" in SF mags, the early editions had one disconcerting factor, particularly to the "serial" haters. This was enervating to some degree, especially when they ran in 6 parts like "Conquest of the Moon Pool" (Nov.-39), or Farley's "The Radio Man" (Dec.-39) in 3 parts. The most irritating circumstance occurred when the Merritt novel was in its 5th installment (Mar.-40) --- to this issue Hall's & Flint's monumental saga, "The Blind Spot", was added and intended for a 6-parts run. After appearing only 3 times the editors announced that "Blind Spot" would be used in its entirety in the first issue of Fantastic Novels (July-40). It did. Immediately the entire policy of the publishers changed with that issue, and though FN lasted only five numbers (until its revival, Mar.--48), novels have since then appeared in their entirety. A number of "trilogies" and sequel presentations were, however, used and nearly the stock and trade of FEM ---- the important reason why this magazine became an overnight favorite.

Several memorable and classic incidents include the all-time giant George Allan England with: "Darkness and Dawn" (Jul.-Aug.-40); "Beyond the Great Oblivion" (June-41); "The Afterglow," which was the end of this blazingly unforgettable trilogy (Dec-41). The Jul.-Aug.-40 issue alone has been quoted at prices ranging from \$2.75 to an average of \$4.50 within the last few years. A complete set of the trilogy has been offered to me three times in the past for as much as \$11.00; the cheapest offer was a mere \$7.50. Fortunately I got these as well as all issues, and completed my

11

files of FEM two years ago, without losing any of my limbs or a pound of flesh. Some of the other series and "group novels" were by Merritt, Giesy and Stilson. Since it would require a book or two to describe all the writers, stories, et al., and though it might interest most of us, it shall not be done -- not this time.

As is my policy with these "histories," a description of sorts is given for the 1st and sometimes 2nd issue of a publication:

FEM - Vol. 1, No.1 (Sept-Oct.-39) -- Standard pulp size. Editor: Mary Gnaedinger. No letter section or any feat res, except for the stories, and a short blurb appended to the contents page stating the reason for the mag's existence.

Novel: "The Moon Pool" -- Merritt; Shorts: "Space Station #1" --- Manly Wade Wellman; "The Whimpus" -- Todd Robbins; "Karpen the Jew" - Leath; "The Witch-Makers" --Wandrei; "Blind Man's Bluff" - Giesy; and Cumming's novelet, "Girl in the Golden Atom."

During the first seven issues such superflous and odd adjectives were to be found heading every story on the table of contents: "Amazing!--Thrilling!--Eerie!--Strange!" and other bits of terminology suited best for the title of stfantasy 'zines.

Not much should be said about Fantastic Novels. Except for the purpose of featuring full-length novels, while leaving the burden of serials to FEM, FN was only a duplicate of the latter. After having run for five issues on a bimonthly schedule (Jul-40 to Apr-41) it expired, only to revive again in '48 (Mar), last for 20 issues and fold up with the June-51 edition. Curiously, FN's "revival" actually marked the first 'zine introduced to the post-war public.

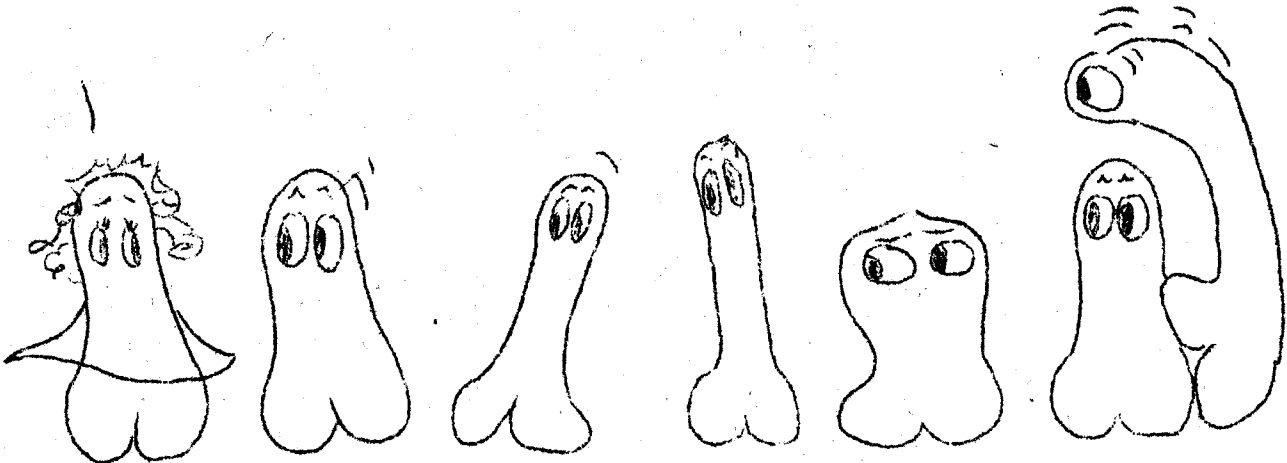
FN - Vol. 1, No.1 (Jul-40)...Format: like FEM's. Interiorally, superior than FEM's first issue, illustrated by Finlay. Outside of "A Word from the Editor," no features used except for:

Long Novel: "The Blind Spot" - Austin Hall & Homer Eon Flint.

Short: "Monsieur De Guise" - Ferley Poore Sheehan, no less!

Parting Glance: In the Apr-41 issue, a letter by Bradbury, then but a respectable fan, commenting on fantasy records and music.

...cal beck



"STAG(GE)LINE"

FOOTS - COURTESY OF CHARWELLS

CONFESSION

VICK

Subtitle One --

"It's Been A Long, Long Time..."

Back again. I know, there were those among you who thought that perhaps cf. wouldn't be back. There were those, too, that hoped it wouldn't be back. And there were those, two, who liked us.

'Never, in the history of fan, have so few done so little for so few.'

Incidentally, I hope that this is making a readable stencil. As is evident, it's being done on larger type. Just this one page, tho. It's a Remington portable, and most anyone can tell you that portables aren't the best thing in the world for cutting stencils on.

Once again, I'd like to thank Nan Gerding for being mainly responsible for cf. coming back as soon as it did. Yeah, soon! If it wasn't for her generous offer to run cf. off, this would take me possibly a month longer to get to you. And since she has agreed to do the next big issue, too, that assures you of getting it earlier. And while we're on mention of the running off of this issue, someone tell me -- is the paper white or colored? At present, I'm not sure whether it'll be on something like the handbill stock cf. used to be run off on, or white paper.

Quite a few fannish connections have been lost. And I missed Indian Lake. And Philly. The fannish connections were lost for the usual reason -- after all, I wouldn't continue writing to me if I didn't receive answers. I missed Indian Lake becos of inability to leave my job. (Vacation started one day after the InLaCon.) Philly, same reason. But this year I hope to make Indian Lake, altho I greatly doubt making S.F. for s-f.

I might as well warn you that cf. is back on a 'not-more-than-bi-monthly-and-we-can't-even-guaranteeing-quarterly' basis. It will so remain until I either quit the A&P and go into mimmy-o work on a full-time basis, or quit the mimmy-o work on the side. (Needless to say, mimmy-o work on the side is far more difficult than mimmy-o work on your feet...)

Ouch!

--Quick, Ajax -- turn the page!

Subtitle Two --

IT CAME FROM -- RAY BRADBURY?

I believe it was in RHODOMAGNETIC DIGEST that I read it. I think it was titled 'Mr B Goes To Hollywood', or something similar. It was about this sf author, 'Mr B' (the B, it seems, stood for Bradbury) who went to Hwood to sell a scenario of one of his sf stories. Hwood, in ther usual manner, proceeded to change it to something totally unrecognizable.

Startling prediction!

Now -- a year or so after that article -- Hwood comes out with IT CAME FROM OUTER SPACE which, supposedly, was written by Ray Bradbury. In the entire thing, there were maybe two spots of dialogue that showed the Bradbury touch. They did manage to get one thing across -- the idea that it was NOT an alien invasion, and that the aliens were NOT inimical. In fact, they weren't concerned with us at all. And there's one thing you'll have to admit; Bradbury gets his success not simply from unusual plots or situations -- rather, it is his style that has made him; his underwriting, his clever way of manipulating emotions. That's something perhaps not impossible to get across on the screen, but certainly very difficult to do.

The picture wasn't exactly a flop -- besides what I've mentioned, there was also the commendable fact that the alien ship wasn't a flying saucer. But there were discrepancies -- the aliens, in their natural form, would appear on the road. The car would run thru them like they were a mist. Then they would appear in the shape of humans and be vulnerable. Of course, it's easily explainable; perhaps when they took on human form, they also took on human frailties; a good sf-type explanation. But not even the hint of an explanation was given. A fan could figure it out, but mightn't it be puzzling to those not attuned to sf thinking? And wasn't that an awfully short hour, at the end of the pic? You know; the aliens told the hero to stall the humans off for at least another hour, and they'd be ready to take off. An hour. And yet, they are hardly out of the cave when there is a trembling of the earth and, with a mighty roar and a shower of rocks that bounced up the aisle of the theatre (I saw the 3-D version) the aliens flame out into space. (Out into space being, strangely enough, down behind the horizon...)

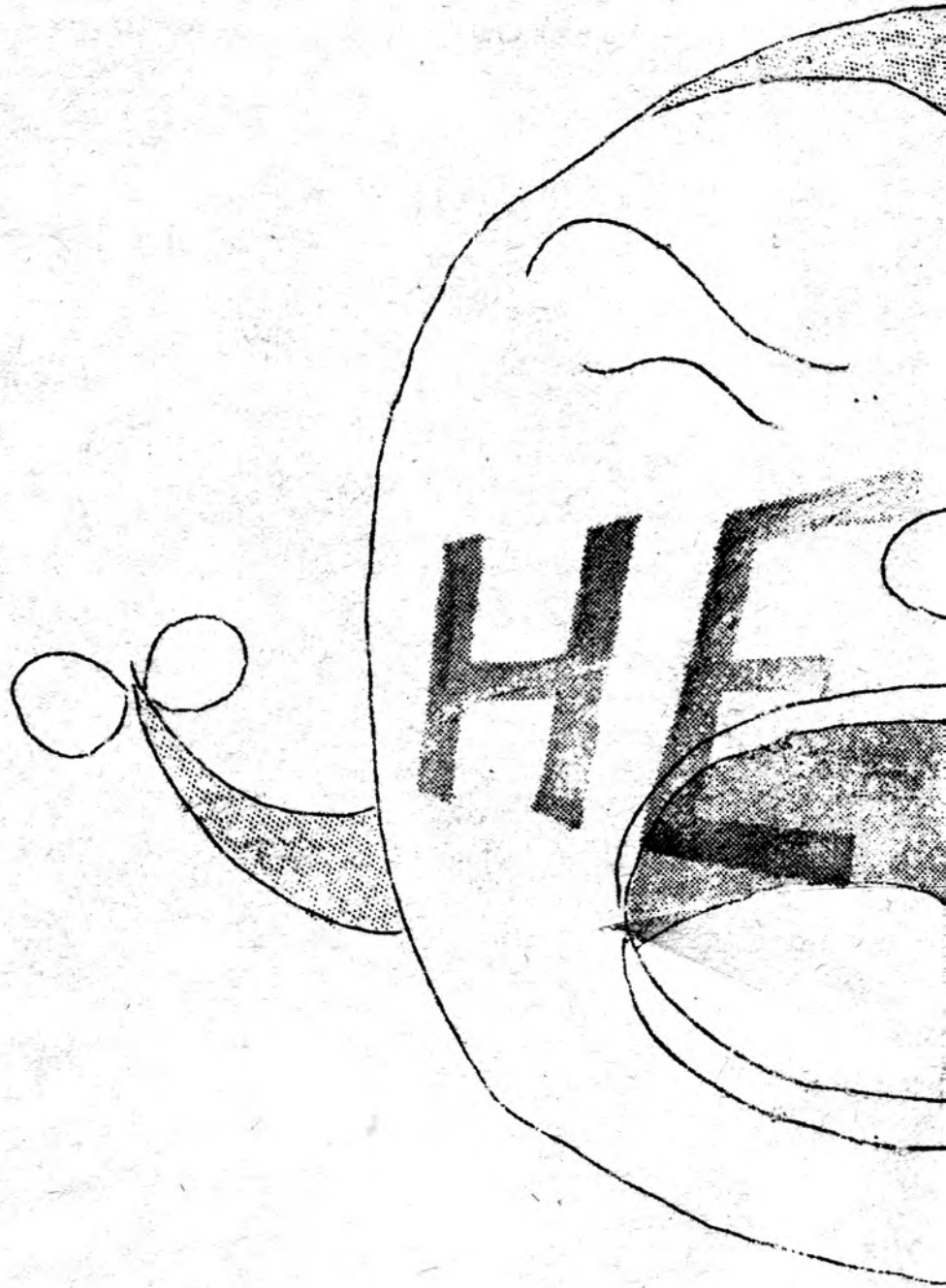
Aweel...

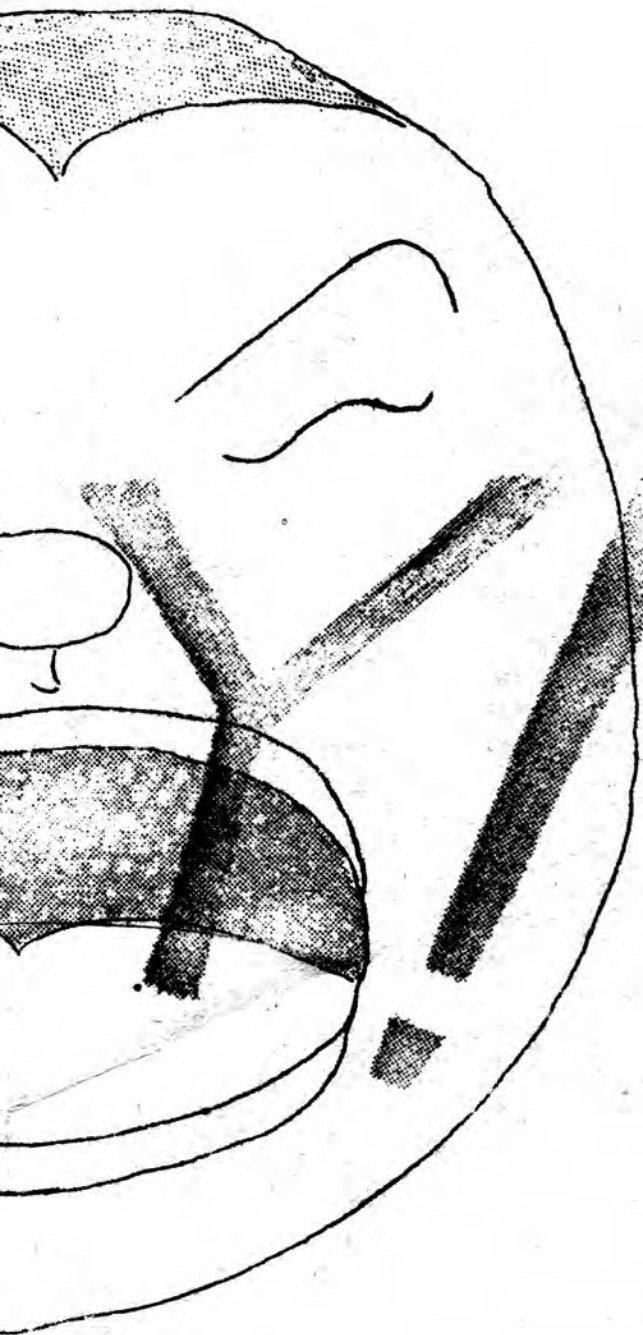
And while on the subject of 3-D (I brushed by it just then) I'd like to mention that they have always been 'at popular prices' in Panama City. (Lynn Haven's nearest approach to 3-D movies is the library's stereopticon.) The only extra charge is 15¢ for your glasses, and you can keep them and save that at the next picture. So there.

By the way -- you know these 3-D comic books that are flooding the newstands? Did you know that it's easy for fanzines to duplicate the feat? quite. All you need is a Ditto duplicator, or even hektograph, and a green and a red carbon. Then you copy one of their pictures using green where they do, and same for red. Then run it off, snitch little brother's green-and-red glasses from his latest CAPTAIN 3-D comic, and there you are. Now, as to how you are going to fix up an original drawing in 3-D -- tch; such gross technicalities aren't for the more lofty mind. You figure it out...

I T A I N ' T S O !

We are not folding with this issue. Look at the cover; see? No black border.

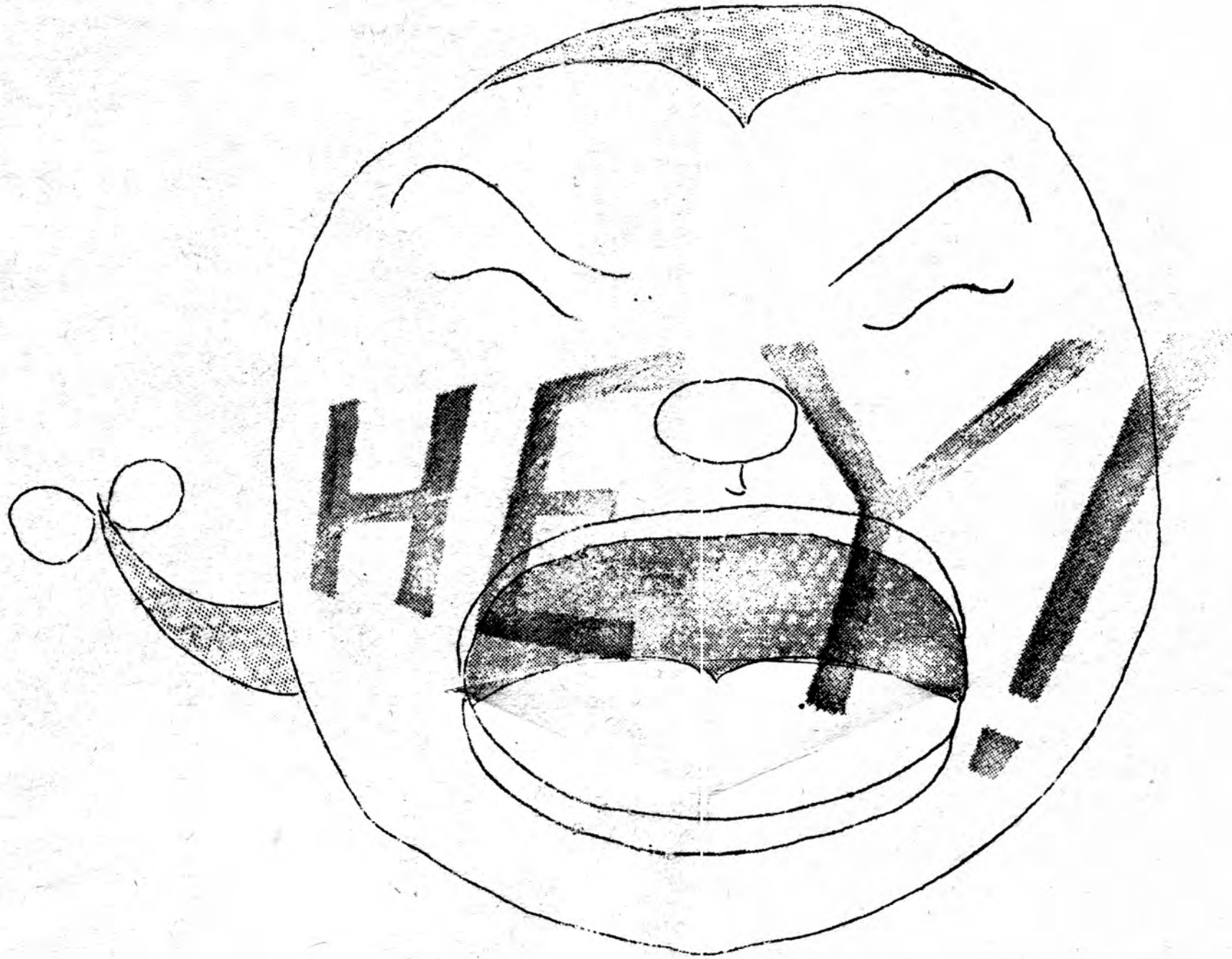




A clumsily-worded attempt at humor in the last PI thing has given some of you the wrong impression. This is just to assure you that there are still big things ahead for CONFUSION...

I T A I N ' T S O !

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A clumsily-worded attempt at humor in the last PI thing has given some of you the wrong impression. This is just to assure you that there are still big things ahead for CONFUSION...

subtitle three --

CAME A FAN

There was nothing about him that made me realize he was a fan; nothing definable. I sorta suspected it, and yet it couldn't have been from his appearance. Nothing unusual about a guy wearing a green sweater, sunglasses over a sensitive face and crewcut topped by propellor beanie. It was in the A&P. I was shucking onions. He came up and said, "Do you work in the produce?" I looked up. "Yes," I replied in my usual witty manner. "Could you tell me if you have any Venusian Watercress?" he asked.

Now, first you have to understand something--in the A&P you hear almost anything. In fact, I think I should have left the 'almost' off. You are asked for white onions, green onions, red onions, brown onions, purple onions, Bermuda onions -- you have people ask you where the raisins are when they are looking over the raisin display to talk to you. You have people hand you items that came from a display marked 19¢ (and the item is marked 19¢, too) and ask you, 'Is this 19¢?' So nothing startles you. So even now, I wasn't positive he was a fan. His name was Joe Christoff, and he came from Pensacola, Florida, and he attended the New Orleans con -- but I don't leap to conclusions.

"Where is the nearest bar?"

--THAT settled it. Yup; I then knew he was a fan. Those of you who were in NO for the Nolacon probably remember the Android, and also the young man who played the piano for the old silent movie, A Conan Doyle's LOST WORLD (or is it LOST CONTINENT? /'Scuse it, please; this typewriter of mine is uneducated; it couldn't have been LOST CONTINENT: MIGHTA -- oops; darned typer again -- mighta been LOST CONTINENT, tho.../)

Anywee, he had supper with us (Joe), played the accordion some, and gave me a chance to slip a plug in here --he bought a dollar's worth of magazines that I'm getting rid of. I have almost two hundred -- FFMS, FMS, AMAZINGS, FANTASTICS, TWS, STARTLING, WIERD, and almost anything but ASF, MoF&SF and GALAXYS -- not a complete collection, but quite a few mags over the last few years. They are NOT in mint condition. Some have backs missing, some have rat-gnawed spines -- and (forgive me, Beal!) I also have quite a few OTHER WORLDS. 'Thought of them right here, becous our rats seem to have a definite preference for OWs. More of their spines are destroyed than any other magazine. Of course, it's easy to understand; rats are always attracted by corn... Anywee -- these mags are all readable, and that's all I'll guarantee. I'm selling 'em for (hold your breath, boys!) 5¢ -- one fat nickel -- each! Plus, of course, postage. Probably around 3¢ per mag. Send me your want lists.

Nice seeing you again, Joe.

s u b t i t l e f o u r - -

AND SO, 4th --

Due to the sudden appearance of the bottom of the stencil, there will be no Subtitle Four in this issue. No more than a brief apology to Bill Morse for misplacing the last page of his English con report, which is why it doesn't appear in this of Confusion. Sorry, Bill.

*okay - sol lost the drawing -- after all,

THE

PLAYS

THE

THING

!

-- BILL MORSE & TERRY WRIGHT

The Place. An asteroid circling the weary old sun. We are in the living room of the only building it is large enough to carry.

The Time. Some ten years after the war that blew up the world.

Set. See drawing.*

Music 'If You Were The Only Girl In The World.'

Enter a girl, carrying a bowl of flowers. Crosses to the table under picture, places flowers on it. Retires two steps, palms together, breast high, and bows from waist to picture. Turns to dressing-table, sits and fusses. Voice off, deep and harsh.

JOHN: Ella. (Ella takes no notice.)

JOHN: (Louder) Ella! (Ella pauses, makes a gesture of annoyance.)

ELLA: What is it, John? (Weary -- as if she didn't know.)

JOHN: What the hell have you done with the oil? Have you been 'tidying up' again?

ELLA: Look, John, you know very well where it's always kept. It's in here, in the right place, on the dressing table. Do you want me to do it for you?

JOHN: (Enter with grating noises a robot -- moves toward Ella, checks, turns toward Picture, bows, squeaking badly. As he straightens, Ella gets to work with the oil-can in places indicated in speech.) Please dear...blasted sardine-can... left ankle, dear...I'd give my first edition of Dianetics for a real body again...right hip...still, we're lucky we had even this to put my brain into when the radiation sickness began...neck...aah, that's better...(Stretches, winces) right armpit...aah...By Campbell's Beard, I feel like a new man!

(Ella looks him up and down, shrugs hopelessly, turns away.)

JOHN: Ella.

ELLA: (Puts oil back on dressing-table, inspects herself in mirror. Speaks absently.) Yes, John?

JOHN: Tell me, can you still remember that last night on earth?

ELLA: Well...not very well...can you?

JOHN: Yes, ye-es...up to a point, up to a point...even in these! (Thumps belly absently with steel hand...CLANG!) Don't you recall, we opened the London Circle's new H.Q. at 10 Downing Street?

ELLA: And after that we went to see...what was it now?...that wonderful film...ah, yes,...Rocketship XII!

JOHN: (More excitedly.) And we listened to extracts from the Willis speech of welcome to Mahaffey...that is, the bits in English!

ELLA: (Reverent, & turning to face front) And then we teleread the Arthur C. Clarke classics...

JOHN: (By now absently squeezing Ella's hand) If only you hadn't been so prudish.. there was just room for both of us in the telereader...but you'd only let me put my head in...all the rest exposed to the radiation...THE LCT! (Throws her off) What did you think you were, anyway...a Bradbury heroine? (Stops, aghast, Ella's hand to his loudspeaker. Both turn hurriedly to portrait, bow as before)

ELLA: (Furious) It's all very well for you...look at what I'm stuck with! (picks up books) 'Sex for the Encysted'...'Canned But Carefree'...'The Book of the Jammed'... (tosses them aside) What do I get out of that? Not even the clatter of tinny feet! And speaking of getting canned...(reaches blindly, picks up metal polish can next to bottle of whisky.)

JOHN: (snatches it petulantly) My last tin of Brasso!

ELLA: (Nagging) John! You know very well in that mood your nuts work loose and fall off...there...I told you so! Now you get the spanner yourself. It's no use, if you can't get a real body....

JOHN: (moved to transmitter, interrupts exasperated) I feel as if I've spent centuries in front of this matter transducer...you and your Martian mutation mink coat...but for that we could have had the de luxe model with visi-screen, and seen what we were catching. Remember what we got last month?

117

(Acts in speech indicating action as follows: curtains parted from in front of transmitter...needle swing checked...switch on. Ella returned to seat before mirror, turned half-front.)

ELLA: Heavens, yes...that awful fresh vegetable from Antares IV.

JOHN: As it is, the set's nearly U.S....There are at least two, if not three, grids going in the H.T.2 circuit. If only I could short them out some way, to ease the load...What would be absolutely perfect for the job would be one of those old Volstead Grid Bands...but I suppose the last of those disappeared when the earth went up. Hmmm...(struck with a thought) perhaps that wasn't such a bad thing after all ! (Meanwhile electronic noises become audible. The first bars of 'The White Suit Samba', i.e., the gurgles, repeated is our idea.)

JOHN: Where have we got to on the Arthur C. Clarke Galactic Atlas, Almanac and Cockery-book?

ELLA: It's Sirius again.

JOHN: Again!! It always is! Oh, I see...sorry folks, this is corny!..hmm. let's see ...6.6 light-years...coordinates....

ELLA: (Reading from Exploration of Space) Vector C. 2X Quadrant 700..Amplitude G.16.

JOHN: Right. (Electronic noises speed up, get louder, needle begins to oscillate in time to the music.)

ELLA: (Excited) John, look...

JOHN: You've got the heat-gun ready, just in case? (Needle oscillations go faster, less movement from side to side, becomes rigidly vertical...bell rings)

ELLA: Ready when you are..(meaningly,) long before you are...NOW!

JOHN: (Pulls final switch..noises off..rumbles and roars, e.g., thunder superimposed on itself. Lights on & off rapidly, a couple of BOINGS. Final rumble, thud. Two bodies enter. John backs away from the machine, says, slightly blase:) What in Arthur's name do we get this time?

ELLA: (Scream) Vargo Stratton!

(The bodies blink rather vaguely, look at each other, then at John and Ella. Gaze wanders round room till it is caught by picture. Start, look at each other. Eyes shine, kneel, raise half-bent arms over head to floor.)

JOHN: Amazing! Fantastic!

ELLA: John, do you think they're really authentic?

JOHN: (Nods.) The legend of Arthur lives on! If they know the old belief they may speak an earth tongue...they might even speak English.

(Chuck is irresistably drawn to books on table. Leafs through them and tosses several aside during the following speeches. Finally settles for book with cover of Einstein displayed to audience, checking through it with pencil)

JOHN: (Embarrassed snigger) Er..ahem..I wonder if..wollen sie...

ELLA: Lo hablo Espanol?

JOHN: ahem...e pericolo sporghesi...

ELLA (Lushly) Kommen sis mit?

JOHN: Voulez-vous...oh hell, it's no bloody use!

ELLA: (Seductively) Messieurs...(Terry, having found the mirror at the same time Chuck found books, continues to admire himself. Ella edges round to overlook Chuck, writing in the Einstein book.) John, look...see what he's done? He's solved Einstein's Unfinished Equation!

JOHN: (Lifts metal head up to audience) A FAN! (Returns to action) That's for me...

ELLA: Us!

JOHN: (Indicates Terry.) Better keep him with you, then. He may object to my treatment of Einstein here. I'd better try sign language. (Mimes Bigger and Better Books Next Door!) EXEUNT.

JOHN: (Off) Ah! Anaesthetic...quick..good, no struggle...strap him here...head under the transfer controller...now me. Ella, come and lock me in place.

ELLA: (Exit, saying) Coming, John. (Terry continues with mirror. Locking noises off. As Ella returns, John speaks.)

John: It won't be long now, Ella..I'll be in a real body very soon...

ELLA: (Goes to switchboard) I'm switching on, John..NOW. (Generator noises) Terry has crossed to Ella during the above action, placing hands on hips.) (hers)

ELLA: (Flirtatiously) Why, you naughty boy! What do you think you're doing? (Giggles) Why, I do believe you're telepathic! (Terry nods vigorously, turns to transducer and signs to enter it) Whatever are you getting at? What! But John? (Pointing) He's what? An Android? What's that? Oh..hmm..(Shock) An ANIROID! Do you mean that he..that we..Can't...ooooh! (Terry, still beaming and nodding, enters transducer, beckoning.) (Ella looks off to John, back, off, back..decides...) WAIT FOR ME! (Exit through transducer, electronic noises, flashes.)

JOHN: (Off) Ella, come and see my new body. Come and untie me...Ella...(crooning, almost,) Ella. (Sharp, with an edge of surprise.) Ella. (Same, but louder) ELLA. (Louder still) ELLA! (Realizing that he is alone and doomed...at the top of his voice)....ELLA!

CURTAIN.

...bill morse & terry wright

these 'things' by...



... "Sam"

WILLIS IN AMERICA

= WALT WILLIS

The LASFS clubroom is a big room on the ground floor of an apartment house. At least it was a big room, but evidently the feeling was that a much smaller one would be adequate for the club's activities after I had been there; a wall was being built across the middle and all the sensitive fannish faces, about thirty or forty of them, were congregated at one end. I looked around them and saw Rick Sneary. Since Forry had been buttonholed the minute we entered the room I struck off on my own. "Hello, Rick," I said, valiantly resisting the temptation to say, 'Hay, Rick' because I knew people are sick of all the puns that can be made on their name before they leave school. "I recognised you at once." His reply was lost to me under the reverberations of the colossal hunk of brickwork I had dropped. Rick must be thinking, with natural hypersensitivity, that it was by his deformity I had recognised him -- though actually it was entirely from his face. However I recovered myself and went on as if nothing had happened, and Rick didn't seem to notice.

I'd thought the fan beside him looked like Len Moffat. This was explained by the fact that it was. We talked for a while about the Convention about which they were very curious. I'd never visualised telling American fans about one of their own conventions and it was quite a thrill. After a while though I thought I'd better circulate a bit more in case I was accused of being stand-offish or being monopolised or something...I'd learned a few things in Chicago about being a celebrity...but I ran into the same difficulty again. It's awkward to go up to perfect strangers saying brightly 'I'm Walt Willis' and offering a hand. One is always afraid of the answer "So what?" or "Who?" So before very long I found myself back at the door again, looking round the room and cudgelling my brain into total recall of a photo I'd seen once of the LASFS membership.

A young sailor who had just come in spoke to me.

"Glad you could make it," he said.

"Thanks," I said. "So am I."

"This your first time here?"

"Oh, yes."

"I thought you'd get here sooner or later," he said.

"I'd always wanted to see this place," I said, "but of course I never thought I'd ever actually be here."

"Oh," he said, "I knew you'd make it some time or other. I hope you come again, often."

"I'd like to," I said, "but it doesn't seem very likely."

"Why," he asked, "have you come far?"

"Yes," I said, startled. "Quite a bit."

"Oh," he said. "Do you live out of town then?"

"Yes," I said. "Well outside."

"Oh," he said, "I'd seen you around town a lot in the bookshops and I figured you lived in LA. I hope you think it's worth the journey?"

"Oh, yes," I said. "Very much so."

"Of course," he warned me, "This isn't an ordinary club night. There's some foreign fan or other coming in to talk to us. It'll probably be pretty dull."

"I expect so," I said.

"Guy named Willis, I think," he went on. "You'd hardly have heard of him."

"The name's familiar," I said loyally.

"If you like I'll introduce you afterwards," he said kindly.

"Gee thanks," I said.

"Come again soon," he continued, "and I'll introduce you to Ackerman and the other famous fans here. I've some fanzines I could lend you too, if you want to know more about fandom. Anything you want to know, just ask me."

But before this fascinating conversation could go any further Jim Wilson called the meeting to order and I went to my place beside Forry and sat down. After an easy little talk about the Chicon Forry then introduced me. The conversation with the sailor was the first intimation I'd had that I was supposed to be the guest of honour here and that I'd have to make a speech -- I'd assumed I was going to an ordinary LASFS meeting as an ordinary fan and would have nothing to do but drink it all in -- but after the Chicon banquet nothing could ever seem so terrifying. I went to the front and sat down on the table, swinging my legs, made a short speech and answered questions for an hour or so. It went over quite well, I thought. Afterwards there were a hectic series of short conversations with various people -- Walt Liebacher, Rory Faulkner and dozens of others whose names I can't remember. Then a party of us went along to a restaurant called The Melody Lane. We all sat down round a long table. I was passed an acre of cardboard purporting to be a menu. I started at the North West corner and began reading my way into the interior. Seeing the dazed look on my face Forry exhorted me to live dangerously and made a few bizarre suggestions, none of which I had ever even heard of.

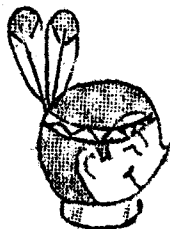
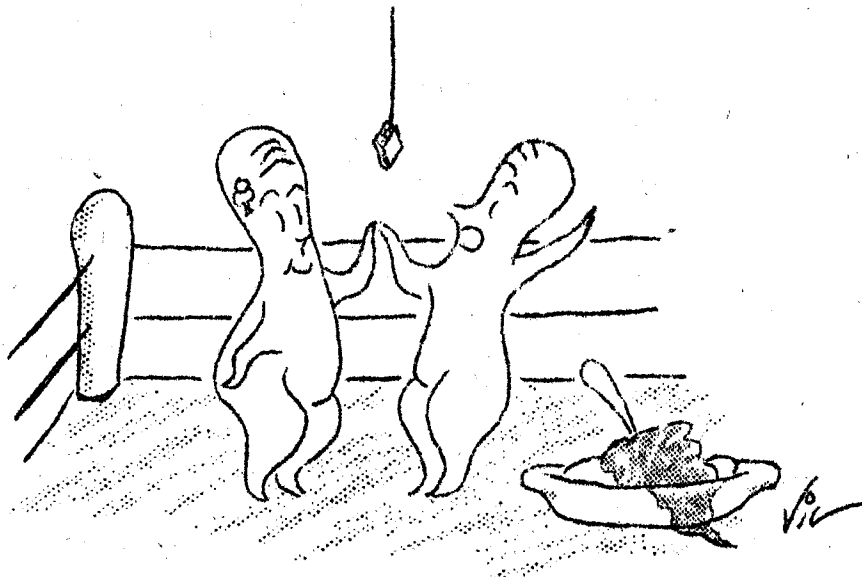
I ordered a hot nut fudge sundae.

Fans, I should like to warn you all here and now about the hot nut fudge sundae served in the Melody Lane, Los Angeles. Since encountering this hot nut fudge sundae I have never been the same. I consider that the LASFS, the Outlanders and the Insurgents should parade before this restaurant in shifts (or any other striking garment) bearing placards inscribed BEWARE THE HOT NUT FUDGE SUNDAE!

21

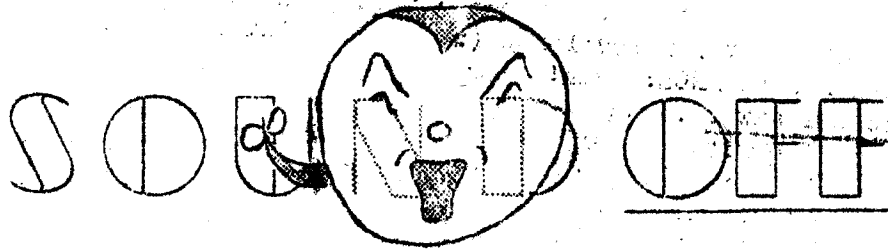
The fact that this was no ordinary hot nut fudge sundae but a hot nut fudge sundae of transcendental malevolence (would you mind if I said that again? **TRANSCENDENTAL MALEVOLENCE!** Hah!) may be seen from the fact that it made me ill even before I saw it! As soon as I ordered it I knew I had made a terrible mistake. The miasmatic aura of the thing (say, this is pretty highclass writing, isn't it? First transcendental malevolence and now miasmatic aura. You wouldn't get this classy sort of stuff in an ordinary fanzine.) /No, and unless you can find big words that are easier to type, you won't be finding many more in cf.!/ extruded around me from the catacombs of the Melody Lane where it was even now being awakened to hideous pseudolife. Cold shivers staggered up and down my back as I realized that every moment it was approaching nearer and nearer. By the time it arrived I knew the best I could hope for was to get home to South Sherbourne Drive before I was physically sick in the presence of the elite of West Coast Fandom. The sheer horror of that thought made me summon up my last reserves. Imagine being ever afterwards known in Los Angeles fandom as the guy who was sick in the Melody Lane like Van Couvering is known for having walked through a glass door, and being confused by generations of neogen with Ed Walthers. Calling on Roscoe for aid I struggled desperately against the hypnotic lure of that hot nut fudge sundae. Ghod knows what would have happened if I had succumbed and actually tasted the thing, but I finally overcame it. Summoning my last reserves of strength I drove a sharp spoon through its heard and staggered out into the night. It had been a grim fight but I had won. Henceforth I should be known in Los Angeles as nothing worse than a guy who bought hot nut fudge sundaes just to look at.

(They must have thought I belonged to a Sundae Observance Society.)



CONFUSION SEZ --

Fan who has obligations, clear-um obs with fan wampum!



RAYMOND L. ALLARD; 4841 Emerson Ave S, Minneapolis 9, Minnesota

Dear Vic: —

cf. #15 arrived this aym and I've been giggling and guffawing all over the place. I liked the ish. Many more of 'em!

Glad to hear you're striving to conquest a novel (howzat for murdering the King's English?) Hope it gets Book of the Month. I get a great kick out of your asides in the fan letters!

Don't keep cf. #16 too long on the reproducer.

Ray

To go from back to front, Ray — I didn't keep #16 long on the mimmy-o — I just kept it away from the mimmy-o too long. And about the book — I'll be satisfied if it merely gets published. Thank for the kind thots, tho.

FIVE DAMNED YANKEES; Up North, USA

Where is your "SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY"?

When is the South going to open its arms to us Northern Carpetbaggers and show us a real Southern Conference? Harry Moore's NOLACON has been the only conference in the south [Capital 'S', suh; capital 'S'!] since the War Between The States. Is the Mason and Dixon Line an iron curtain? One-fourth of the fans are below the Mason-Dixon line. [Those who aren't below the table,] Every fourth World Science Fiction Convention should be in the South. [That takes care of the fourths, but what about the fifths?]

The rotation plan suggested at Philadelphia, and to be finally worked out and adopted at San Francisco, will not be successful unless all sections of the country are given equal oppurtunity to hold a World Science Fiction Convention.

It seems to us that on the basis of the known distribution of fans, a division in the Far-West, South, Mid-West and East is the fairest and most logical solution.

If the Southern fans expect to be seriously considered at San Francisco they should hold a regional conference in 1954 and follow thru each year.

They should plan now to assist in the rotation plan at San Francisco and assure themselves of a World Science Fiction Convention every four years.

You, suhs, sho'ly ree-lize that it wuz jest such danyankee meddlin' in Southe'n affairs thet sha'ted the War? If yo' gent'men wishes to aid us, an' kin guarantee a certain attendance at some li'l ol' conference, nayhap we kin reach a agreement. If'n. But us ain't up to all that-air work. Not by ourselves.

ROBERT BLOCH; Box 362, Weyauwega, Wisc

Shelby:

Well, I said no letters and I meant no letters, but I just couldn't let CONFUSION reign unnoticed.

Copy arrived as I was in the midst of this pocketbook revision job...just got to the point where my hero gets this girl in his room, see, and she takes off all her clothes, see, and then he unzips his Tommy-gun and shoots her in the belly, see, and she says "How could you do it?" see, and he says, "It was easy".

Then along comes CONFUSION, I get my hand caught in a paper bag and can't punch my way out, and I get enmeshed with Hoffman's horse and Walt's Willicisms, and for an hour or so I am carried back to the dear old golden days of Sixth Fandom when men were men and a six-gun was law west of the Bronx.

Now I'm going to have trouble getting back to my next chapter, where my hero squeezes this guy's eyeballs in a nutcracker...and I thought it was easy.

How are you coming with your epic? Hope it's working out well for you. If you have hopes of pocketbook sales, here's a little gimmick I just thought of which might entertain the readers. Your hero has this ice-pick, see, and he sticks it up the guy's nose, and the guy has a cold, and he says, "How could you do it?" and the hero says "It was wheezy."

Now, back to work. Less than 100 days until Philadelphia if all goes well, and why should it? Meanwhile, godspeed you on your project, son, and I hope you knock 'em dead with the book!

Hoping you are the same,

Bob

Walt Kehli

Philadelphia? That gives you a vague idea of how late thish of cf. is! Aweel... Tell you another situation. This guy is beating this gal up. Suddenly he stops. "Mama!" he shouts. "I recognize you by the mole-shaped birthmark on your thigh!" The gal, however, is wearing a dress, ~~that~~ and the guy doesn't have X-ray vision, and she doesn't know how he can see the mole. "How could you do it?" she asks. He points at the dress. "It was sleezy"... Or this guy slips down on the floor of a garage. "How could you do it?" "It was greazy"... Or -- well, no; maybe I'd better not.

DICK CLARKSON; 410 Kensington Rd, Baltimore 29, Md

Dear Shely --

In spite of the fact that you're planning to cut down your "Sound Off", I'm

darned if you can scare me out; that's what I'm aiming for. You know, I've never hit it; 'tis about my turn. Besides, that's as good an excuse as any to write you; it's been a halluva long time.

Sorry, but I already got a Pogo stick. It works fine; just about as reliable as one stilt. Much bouncier, tho...got it outta an old, abandoned birdbath.

I'm moving my living quarters (odd...I can't even fit on a half-dollar) and so start sending cf., til I say change agin, to my Baltimore address.

Stay loose.

Framp,

Dick

Well, I'm cutting down on Sound Off! anywee, Dick. And as you might notice, a good deal of the cutting down came from your letter. Sorry... And what has fitting on a half dollar to do with living quarters? Personally, if you have living quarters, I'd think you could make a fortune with a sideshow, or somesuch. But tell me -- how do you know they are living?

RICHARD LUPOFF; 186-19 Aberdeen Rd, Jamaica, NY

Dear Shelvick,

Seems to me I've been recieving Confusion for the longest time (maybe it only seems long) and I can't figure out for the life of me why. I'm one of those poor fea who tries to read as much of the current prostuff (podadyexeression) as I can and at the same time catch up on old magazines for collection purposes. Needless to say I am perpetually broke; hence I couldn't have subscribed.

I might be receiving free contributor's copies, except I'm not a free contributor. In fact I'm not a contributor at all. I haven't even written for Sound Off!

Then there's the possibility I'm receiving exchange copies for a couple of little items I once pubbed, except that that was over a year ago, and I doubt they were that good.

Fourth possibility: for review purposes. Only one question from this end. What do you want me to do with the review after I've written them? Send them to Lynn Haven for publication?

Seeo, I must come to the conclusion that there has been a mistake somewhere. And, whereas the last cf. I recieved was May, I am beginning to suspect that you too have discovered this terrible miscarriage of justice, and have (perish the thot) cut off my subscription.

Driven thusly to wall, I am faced with a terrible choice: (a) send money or (b) write something for the dear boy or (c) let the subscription lapse.

Of course (a) is entirely out of the question. Other than the highly questionable morality of such an act, there is also the consideration that I have not money to send.

(c) would of course be the most sensible thing to do, but that would cut off the source of reviews of Write, and I would never know if that stinker ever mentioned my many excellent bits in aforementioned fanzine.

Ergo, I must actually take typewriter in hand /rather heavy, isn't it?/ and submit something to Confusion. This course of action presents no more pleasant a view to me than it does to you, but remember, Shely, you brought it on yourself.

The next problem for our consideration is what to write. Usually I write deep, thoughtful criticisms. These are very easy to write. All I must do to write such an item is to pick something -- it doesn't matter what -- and say it is terrible. The possibility of an answer is precluded by saying something like "Of course there are a few idiots and lunatic-fringers who will disagree, but any sane, intelligent fan realizes that...etc, etc." Now the reader, if he is sane and intelligent will disagree, most likely, but then he gets a glimpse of that line about lunatics and morons, and realizes that he is caught: he must agree with the writer or automatically brand himself stupid or crazy.

Unfortunately, Confusion tends more toward lighter material. I have attempted this in the past, with moderate success, but in the process of so doing have discovered that it is work. In fact, hard work.

The crux of the matter is apparent immediately when I reveal to you my basic philosophy, which is contained in the short following paragraph:

"Thou shalt do no work when thou
canst avoid it. Thou shalt do no
hard work under any circumstances."

I am stymied. Two basic needs conflict. I must have cf. The only way I can get it is by working hard. I must not work hard. My position is thus at once untenable and inescapable. Neither can I stay nor can I go. I am trapped.

Therefore it is with supplication in my eyes (and if you don't think it hurts, try it sometime, especially with glasses /martini or old fashioned!/) that I beg your indulgence in temporarily extending my subscription until I can find some means of solving my dilemma.

Yours hopefully,
A humble petitioner,
Richard Allen Luff
Southerner travelling
incognito.

Believe it or not, I have been sending you cf. becos of those two efforts you belittled a page back. I liked 'em. Been hoping for more. ...you travel incognito? I travel in cars, myself. Own a Kaiser, right now...

DENIS MOREEN; 214 Ninth St, Wilmette, Ill

ShelVy:

The girl on the cover looks like she just swallowed hydrachloric acid or something. The colors come thru very nice tho.

Funny, but I just don't feel myself today, or else I'd be pretty silly. Maybe ~~it~~ it's better this way. But McCain is good. So nice to hear something from LeeH again. Fan-Vet report good. Bergeron pretty good. Still don't like poetry. Willis the best of all. Bag thing great. Letter section great. But who's that jerk Moreen? Mentioned three times yet. You must be pretty low for stuff.

Denis Moreen

P.S. Really, Shel, cf. was its usual charming self. And I love it, because it's one of the few fan fmz left which were so active when I first heard of fandom about a year ago.

D.M.

CHARLES HARRIS; 85 Fairview Avenue, Great Neck, NY

Dear Shelby,

Here's what I thought of cf. #15. A* means simply terrific; A is completely enjoyable; A- very good; B* good; B average (typical Beverages being beer & buttermilk); and so on down to D, which is really rotten.

COVER: A*: A magnificent color job. I particularly like the little beetle

CONTENTS PAGE: Again an A.

BEGG'S FAN-VET CON REPORT: A*: Maybe I'm over-rating it because I attended the Con, but I really enjoyed this report. This is not meant to cast any aspersions on Cal--no one can be everywhere all the time -- but I met a few celebrities who were not mentioned in the report, including Katherine MacLean, Dr John W Clark (who writes the scientific introductions to Twayne's "idea" collections), Alan E. Nourse, and well-known fans Bob Silverberg and Charles Lee Riddle, as well as Flash Gordon artist Dan Barry and several EC artists (who kept buying their own illos in the auction!). Cal completely omits any mention of the very enlightening comics-artists-and-editors panel and what to my mind was the most entertaining part of the Con: Arthur C Clarke's witty commentary (punctuated with some very-British "won't you chaps please shut up down there"'s) while his color slides of Bradbury, Heinlein, and RS Richardson were being shown.

WILLIS: B*. And to think that I helped make this possible! Yup, just look at the list of people who bought the OOPSLA! WAWish. See the last one? That's me! But this wasn't up to Walt's usual standard.

MAJOR SPACE (or JET): A. Especially "Strong Wind" and "Nothing to Push against."

SO!: B*. Okay, I give up. What book is Yngvi from???? I know I've read it, but can't for the life of me remember where. Could be deCamp, maybe?

QFLN: A. Particularly Jorgenson.

SUOS: D*. I can't make out the lettering on the bottle.

Well, I guess that's just about that. You'll be getting the second ish of INFY one of these days, and I hope you enjoy it even half as much as I've enjoyed cf.

Yours truly,

From bottom to top: I've received the second INFINITY and I'd like to give the obvious pun -- it gave me infinite enjoyment. Really remarkable, your combination of hecto and mimmy-o. and work, too; I remember Way Back when cf. was trying that, and without $\frac{1}{2}$ the hecto you use, wuf!

The bottle For Sixth Fandom that was Up Our Sleeve last ish was supposed to be labeled 'Plasma'. You know the old expression about 'new blood'... Well, now blood has been the downfall of Sixth Fandom, so I was suggesting a transfusion... Put DOWN that clothespin, Ajax; I know it stunk!

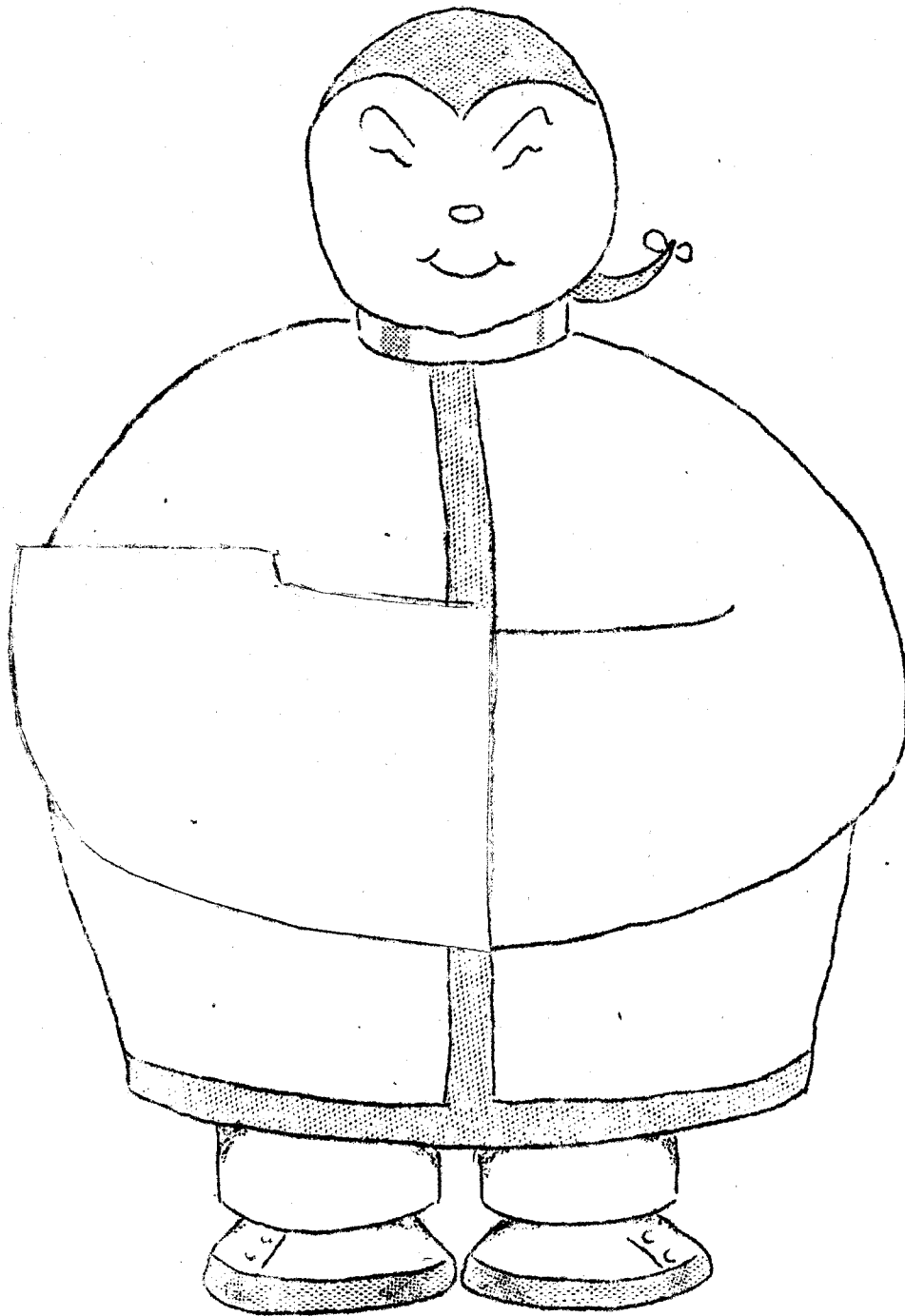
And I know deCamp appreciates the compliment, but I'm afraid he can't claim credit for Yngvi. In fact, durned if I know WHO's responsible. The saying, YNGVI IS A LOUSE has been drifting around ages now...

In cf.'s usual manner, this last page of SO! is way out of order. Alphabetically. Gotta squeeze in a card:

RICHARD E GEIS: 2631 N Mississippi, Portland 12, Ore Dear Shelby, First I want to thank you for the plug of PSYCHOTIC /which has now folded./ The May cf. was, as usual, excellent. In The Bag is very clever. I nearly split when I read the instruction to the game, MAJOR JET. #I like Bergeron's style.

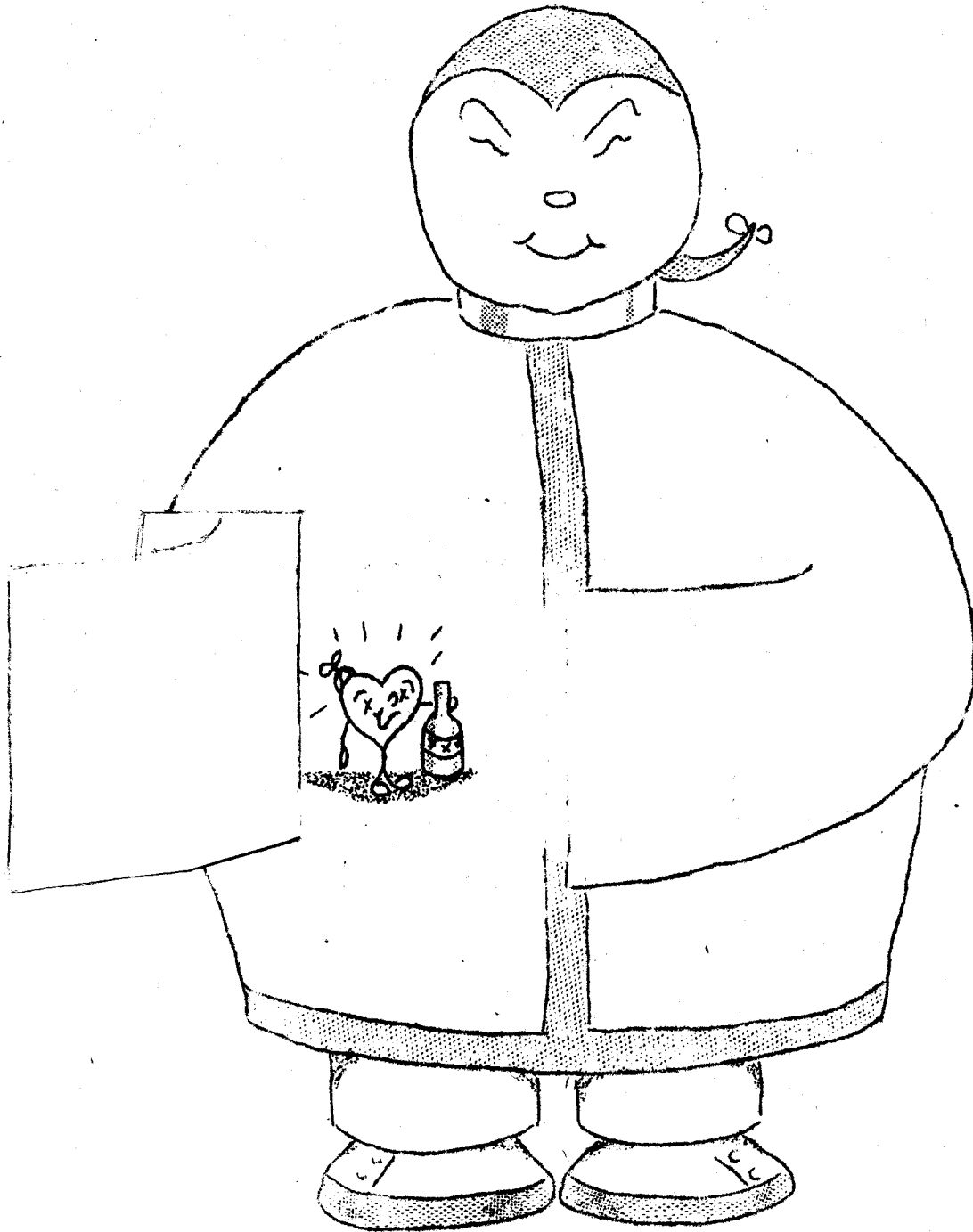
R G

Something Up Our Sleeve



A HAPPY (tho late) VALENTINE

Something Up Our Sleeve



A HAPPY (tho late) VALENTINE



Surprise! See,
we did make it
back.

... now that
all the wild
cheers have
subsided (no,
Ajax -- I did
not say Bronx
cheers) may we
(mas oui!) go
on to say that
we even expect
to be around a
while longer?
It's all too
evident that a
remark I made
in jest (in
jest one Back
Talk ago, to
be precise) was

taken by many of you to be in earnest
(when almost anyone should have been able
to see that it was actually in Confusion)
...Oh, I won't say cf. will never fold. I
know for a fact that all fanzines (except
LE ZOMBIE) eventually end. And I do in-
tend to use a black border on my last is-
sue. But don't ask me when that last one
will be.

For those who notice an inconsistency in
paper in this -- to take as much of the
work as I can off Nan, I'm running all
the color work. But when I ordered the
paper for cf., I had Masters send it to
Nan -- and it's a different paper from
that which we have on hand. So...

Incidentally, there might be some fanzine
editors who would like to know how I got
the red color Up Our Sleeve. I did it all
in one run, without getting any red ink
on my black ink pad; I just cut a piece of
backing sheet a bit larger than the red
area, cut a piece of thin cotton cloth a
bit smaller than the backing sheet, then
smeared red ink on the cloth. I didn't
have to re-ink it, either. (I know there
are many of you who weren't interested in
the foregoing, but I wrote it on the out-
side chance that it would help some few.
And I do mean 'wrote it on the outside'.
It's a sunny day, and I'm typing this on
the lawn. --I know, most people type on
paper, but I prefer the lawn; more room.
Paper's only 8 1/2" wide, whereas the lawn's
a yard...)

FROM:

cf.

Box 493

Lynn Haven Fla

mimeographed matter. rtn postage gtd

TO:

