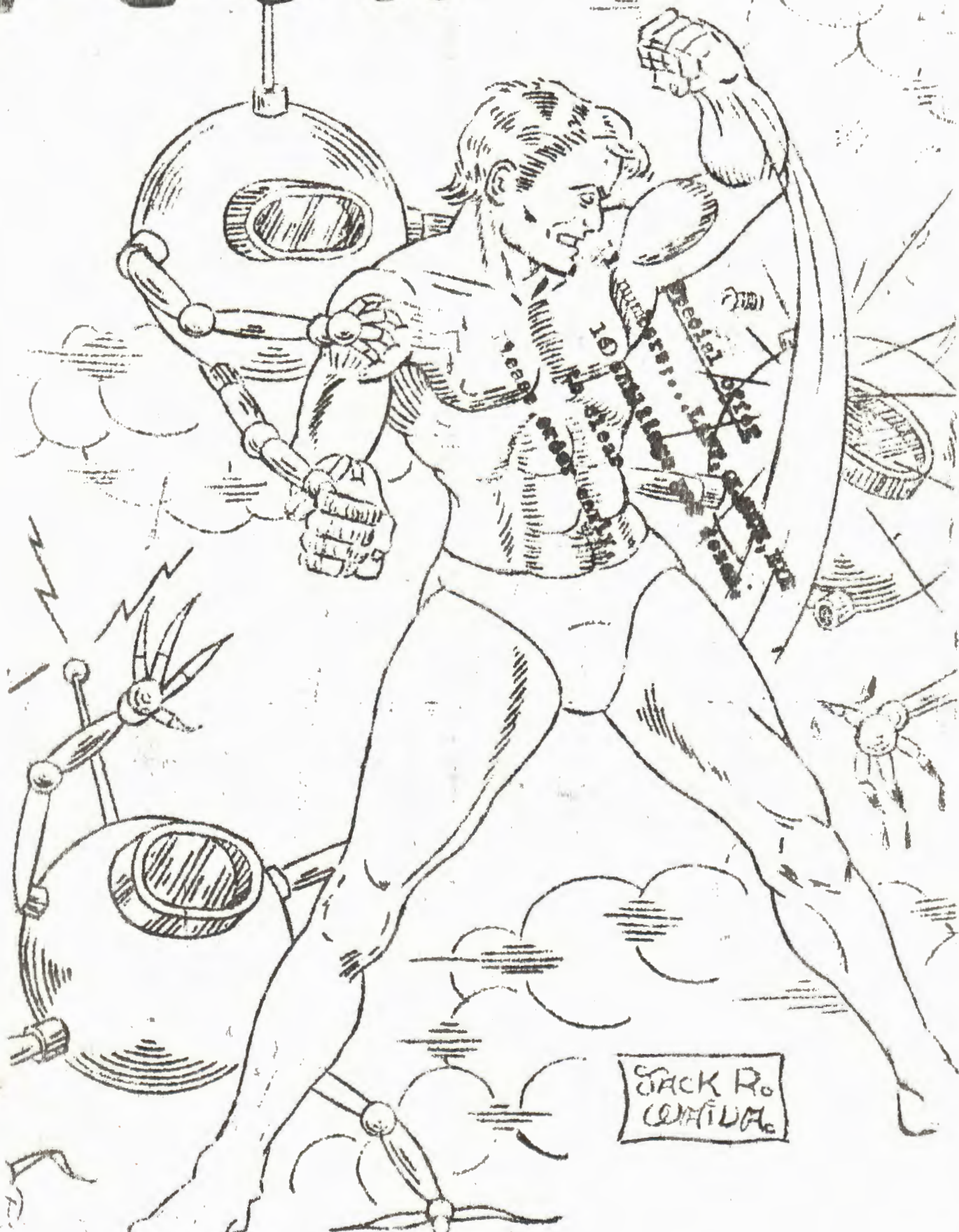


PEON



peon

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EDITOR:

Charles Lee Riddle, PNL, USN
Fleet All Weather Training
Unit, Pacific,
c/o Fleet Post Office,
San Francisco, California.

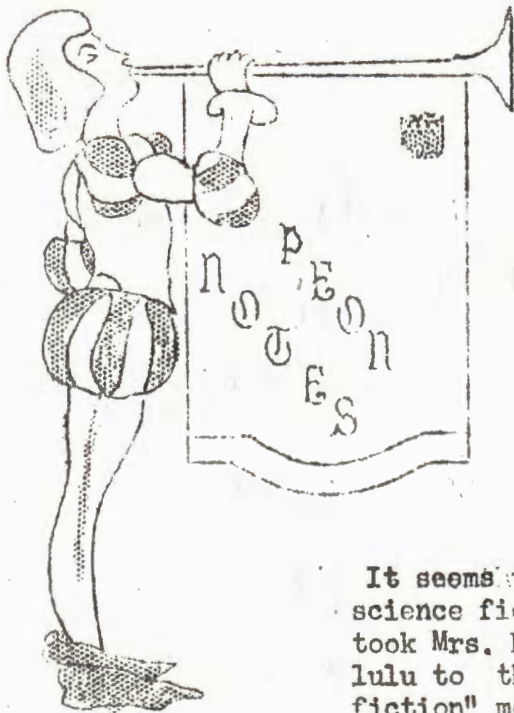
PRODUCTION EDITORS:

M. J. Anders, PNSN, USN
G. F. Pecha, PNSN, USN
Maximilian Michael Riddle

INDEX

YOU CAN'T JUDGE A BOOK	Page 3
Joe Kennedy	
THE ANNALS OF AARDVARK	Page 7
A. Aaron Aardvark III	
THE COMING OF TSATHOGGUA	Page 9
Herman Stowell King	
HARMONY	Page 11
Jim Harmon	
TWO LOST WORLDS	Page 13
Erik Holmes	
MESSENGERS OF DEATH	Page 15
Ed Ludwig	
KAN KAN KABITZER	Page 17
T. E. Watkins	
MORE FANTASY OPERAS	Page 21
Anthony Boucher	
UVANETICS	Page 24
William Danner	
PEON NOTES	Page 2
BOOK REVIEWS	Page 28
By the Editor	

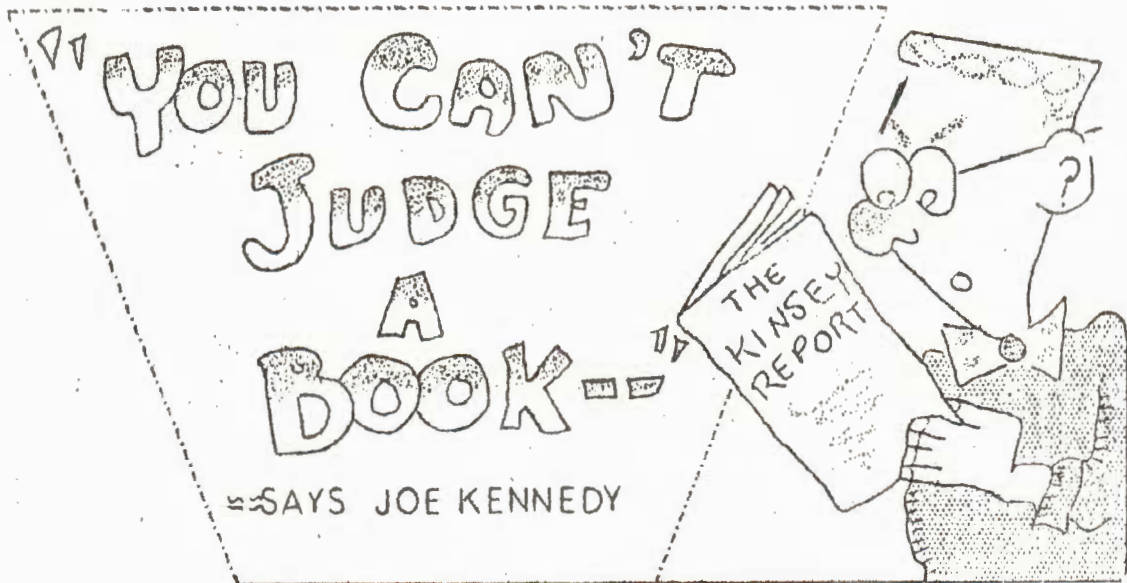
Cover drawn by J. R. Waida; Interior illustrations from drawings by Joe Kennedy, Rotsler, and editor.



Aloha! Two things make up the reason for the lateness of this issue. Mainly it's due to sheer laziness on my part; but partly, also, because of the visit paid to the Riddle family here in the islands by my mother. What spare time I could get from the office, naturally, I spent with her and in showing her the numerous attractions of Hawaii. We had a grand time with her, and of course, her two grandsons were mighty proud to show grandmother from Oklahoma off to their playmates. However, be that as it may, we're late with the February issue of PEON, and hope you understand. The May issue, I think, will be on time!

It seems that the Riddle family emasse is getting science fiction conscious. Two or three weeks ago, I took Mrs. Riddle, Ira and Robbie, downtown to Honolulu to the Drive-In Theatre to see two "science--fiction" movies---"Rocketship" and "Mars Attacks The World." I was rather curious about these two pictures, inasmuch as I hadn't heard anything about them before this. And, then, too, the Drive-In usually runs ten-to-twelve-year old pictures so it was possible I had missed the pictures originally. But I hadn't--they were two old Flash Gordon serials that I suffered through each Saturday when I was going through highschool, 14 years ago! The picture wasn't put together good in my estimation, being very jerky in spots. Got a few laughs, too, out of the scenes of the rocketships in flight between earth and the planets Mongo and Mars, what with clouds in space; and especially once when Flash Gordon (played in both pictures by Buster Crabbe) opens the door in mid-space to throw out a time bomb--with no consequent loss of air! I might add, in the event you have the wrong impression, that I did enjoy seeing the picture again--this time with 14 years of science fiction reading behind me. Ira (4½) and Robbie (2), who usually go to sleep right after the cartoons when we go to the Drive-In, pulled a switch this time on me. They were so fascinated by the rocketships and the picture in general that they stayed awake the whole time we were there--and commented very sagely on the pictures the next day. They've even started to take my magazines to the bathroom with them and looking at the pictures while engaged in their work in that room. The only thing Ira can't understand, about the covers, is, "Why doesn't that lady get cold without any clothing daddy?" (Shall I tell him?) Now, when I get a new magazine, I have to explain in detail the cover pictures to them. Right now, they're in their room, playing, of all things, rocketship cowboys! Who knows--they may even grow up to be fans, god bless them!

I realize that some of you readers may not like such personal items as
(CONTINUED ON PAGE 25)



One summer afternoon, back in the balmy days when Wilbur Scott Peacock was editor of Planet Stories, yours truly and a couple other fans were bumming around the offices of Fiction House, ogling the originals, when someone demanded, "When is Planet going to ditch that horrible babe-bum and bem cover formula?"

I'll always remember Peacock's reply. Caught off guard, he blinked a few times through heavy-lensed spectacles, then finally drawled, "Go ahead and laugh at our covers, fella! They probably account for half of our circulation!"

How can you argue against logic like that? For the muse of Art is tossed out of the window when the Great God Greenback comes in the door! Fans may rave and rant and cuss ... editors may shrug their shoulders ... self-appointed guardians of public morals may gasp in horror and patrons of "respectable literature" may sneer -- in vain. Like it or not, 'twould seem that galloping green grulzaks, popping ray-guns, shrieking damsels in crimson sarongs, and sun-tanned heroes do seem to sell a heck of lot of science-fiction magazines.

Bales of paper, gallons of ink, and thousands of dollars worth of three-cent stamps have been consumed by stfans who have crusaded for the past two decades for better covers on prozines, via a letter-to-the-editor writing campaign of tremendous proportions. Countless typewriter ribbons have been worn to a frazzle -- but to no avail. The terrible parade of gallant guys, ghastly visaged gals, and grinning goons rolls on and on across the newsstands of the nation, while frustated fantasy fans fume. Some stfans (especially youngsters who don't want to get in trouble with the older generation) make it a practice to rip off the offensive covers before lugging prozines home. Not all fans, however, are sufficiently thick skinned to be able to mutilate prozines in this fashion without experiencing qualms of conscience. Most fans of my acquaintance have formed the habit of snatching Planet Stories or Weird Tales from the magazine rack,

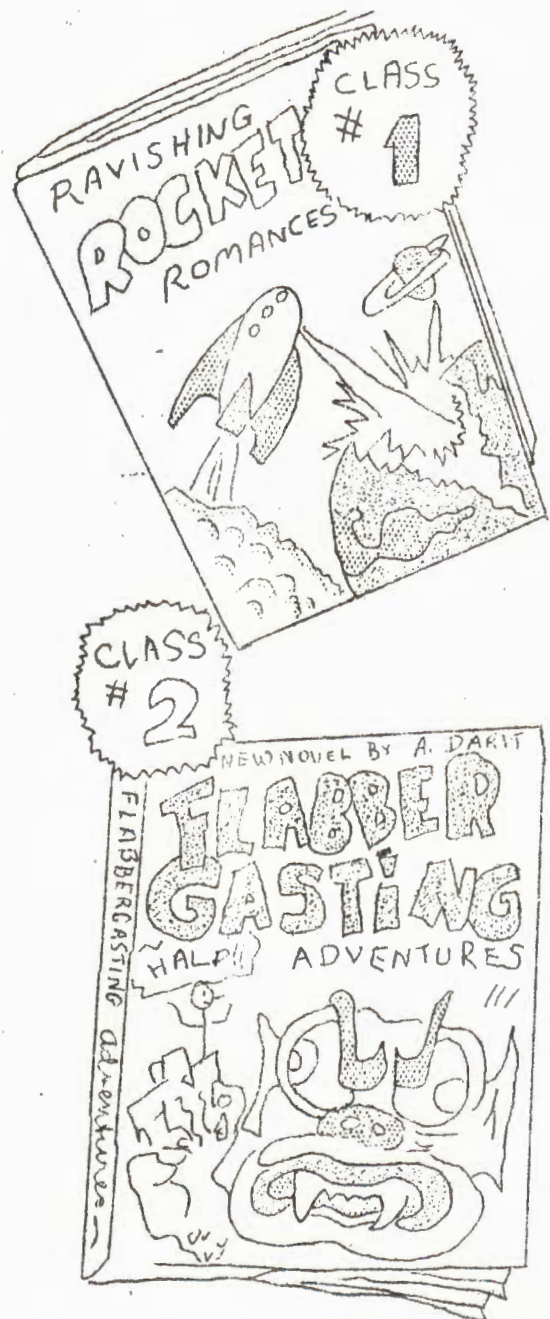
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ISSUE OF REDD BOGG'S CHRONOSCOPE

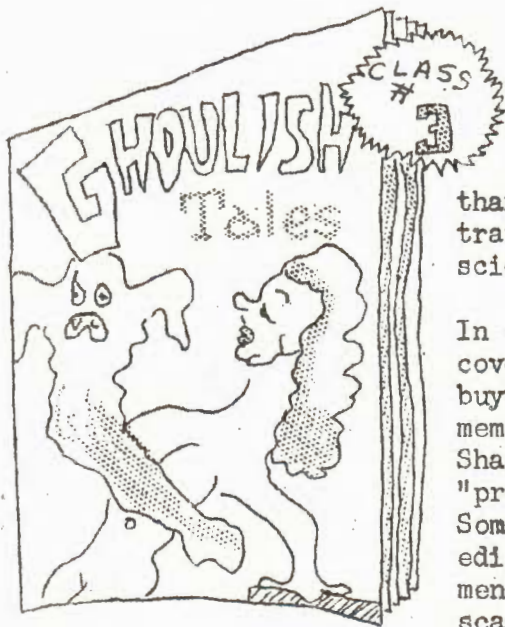
slapping two dimes on the counter, thrusting the lurid publication inside their coat, and racing homeward like a dope-runner smuggling a case of marijuana beneath the very eyes of the coast guard patrol.

Why, then, does this uncomfortable situation exist? Editors are willing to use more mature cover themes. Usually, however, the editor has very little say in determining his baby's outer wraps. It is a well-known fact that some distributors specifically require a curvaceous Miss on each and every cover, or else they will not handle the magazine. Frequently the blame rests with the pulp-house's indifferent art department, or on iron-bound rules of policy laid down by the high brass upstairs.

After long years of painful research this scribe has formed the conclusion that scientifantasy covers can be grouped into three main classifications. These groups refer to cover artwork, that is, excluding such all-too-rare cases of conservatism exemplified by the all-lettering cover designs on the first few issues of Famous Fantastic Mysteries, or the practice of featuring only story titles adopted with the latter issues of Unknown Worlds.

Classification #1 is what I call the "pretty doo-dads" type of science-fiction cover. This sort of thing was popular fifteen years ago, when nearly every issue of Daddy Gernsback's pioneers was resplendent with gadgetry--soaring rockships aimed Saturnward, space flights in the middle of some alien galaxy, with all ray-guns blasting away like an old-time Independence Day Celebration. Or else, when Frank R. Paul got bored drawing rocketships, there'd be a huge, tangled mass of twisted green machinery,, or a stalking robot, or a pair of doll-faced humans flittering across the glittering expanse of a futuristic city. Crude as some of the early attempts on Science Wonder and the Quarterlies seem today, they were tremendously effective. Paul couldn't draw humans any more than I could carve the Mount Rushmore memorials with a can-opener, but -- gads, how that man could concoct a magnificently bewildering





array of gadgets! Paul carved himself a place in a field he chose to make uniquely his own. No, I'll put it better than that: Frank Paul's paintings and illustrations captured the essence of early science fiction.

In classification #1 also, I'd include most covers which attempt to appeal to the pulp-buyer's scant sense of beauty. Finlay's memorable cover for the FFM containing "Creep Shadow!" is about the ultimate peak of the "pretty doo-dads" school of cover-painting. Some of the attractive covers on the Bates-edited Astounding also fit into this department. Remember those battles in space, with scarlet puffs of smoke, against a background of whirling planetoids? In group number one, I'd also put Campbell's recent experimental astronomical covers. While astronomers may sigh with delight at a picture of Mercury in transit, to most readers, I suspect, the picture must've resembled the negative of a photograph of an egg being fried sunny-side-up.

The second classification is what I call the "appeal to the reader's sense of curiosity," or "what in hell is it?" type of cover. The old Wonder Stories boasting affull-page picture of a battleship floating upside down in mid air over New York City (the scene illustrated "Dream's End" by A. Connell) certainly takes the prize in this department. Another good example of this sort of thing is the FFM cover for John Taine's "The Greatest Adventure," which appeared not so long ago. You probably recall the pic. Occupying the right-hand of the half cover, a towering green-scaled dinosaur gazes down at an airplane, out of which a couple of guys are walking. On seeing such a tableau leering down at him from the news-rack, the pulp reader's infernal sense of curiosity may persuade him to plunk down a quarter and buy the thing, if only to find out where the airplane came from and what the dinosaur is doing. Or so the publishers hope. Most such action and adventure scenes are slanted at this vulnerable point in the potential reader. On Fantastic Adventures you may see a bearded villain leaping out of a box, shooting a cannon bedecked with orange polka-dots in the general direction of a horrified damsel. And what is the object of all this? Merely to inveigle you out of twenty-five cents.

Weird Tales, with its Golgove spreads, and Le Brown Coye's formless seeming blobs of color, goes in for this stuff a lot. Even Campbell is far from immune, though -- and remember the Rogers cover depicting a two-headed mutant in Heinlein's "Universe"? In category number two we might also toss certain of the indescribable abortions fostered on the covers of the Sloane-edited Amazing, not to mention the ancient Gernsback-zine cover which consisted of nothing but a lot of colored spots - a

P

A

C section of a picture printed by half-tone color plates, enlarged several
E hundred times!

6 Finally, we come to my favorite classification: group #3, which I call "appealing to the baser emotions" (this is also known as hitting below the belt). There is a certain art to undressing a cover heroine. The rips in the sarong must occur in precisely the right places -- not even a mere eighth of an inch out of the way, lest the censors swoop down like a flock of vultures and chuck the issue off the stands. Terror Tales and Horror Stories were somewhat lax about getting the rips in the right places, and consequently the post office department -- but that's another story. There once was an era, however, when the artists were a good deal more free to appeal to what Dr. Freud termed the "universal urge." Old-timers will recall with fond pleasure the day of Margaret Brundage's cover nudes for Weird Tales, when acres and acres of pink flesh seeped from the Brundage paintbrush. It is a marvel to this writer that outside pressure didn't force WT off the stands, for such vast expanses of skin have seldom been viewed publicly outside of the Minsky circuit. Oh, there may have been a few skulls or peacock feathers scattered around -- in a most unconvincing manner -- but most of Weird's cover attractions were as raw as a freshly peeled banana. In more recent times, though, the more cautious Mr. Finlay has achieved nearly the same effect by means of bursts and scores of rainbow-hued bubbles scattered around the cover maiden in exactly the appropriate places. The more conservative Merwin mags habitually attire the cover heroine in panties and bra (which always seem to defy gravitation), whether or not the setting is in a tropical jungle or the frosted plains of Pluto. The era of Margaret Brundage has passed away, but the spirit lingers on.

Planet Stories' famed eternal-triangle scenes depend primarily on emotional appeal, of course. When the oily - mustached villain blasts a lance of blue light in the direction of Horrified Hetta, the full-bosomed demoiselle with an inexplicable propensity for getting into tight places regularly every three months, Courageous Carson always seems to be on hand with his own trusty atom-blaster -- either defending the heroine, or just running on the scene. One of these days some Fiction House artist will reach the limit of his endurance, and paint a cover in which the hero shoots the monster while the monster shoots the heroine while the heroine drills the hero straight between the eyes with a Buck Rogers gun.

And that, said to say, pretty much covers the prozine -- ah -- covers. There is not too much to be said about the situation as it exists, but we might attempt to suggest a few remedies. In the first place, it's high time that the publishers stopped classing science fiction publications as a peculiar mutant variety of detective mag. For every reader attracted to s-f by the glaring shock - upon - shock style of cover, I'll wager dollars to doughnuts there are two or three potential scared off. It's pretty-generally conceded that the average intelligence of the science fiction reader is several notches higher than that of the chaps who prefer to kill time with wooly westerns or gore-bespattered murder mysteries.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 23)



THE ANNALS OF A ARDVARK

a.aaron aardvark, III

In the few short months of its public existence, dianetics has been too successful for its own good. Evidence of the workability of its methods has been piling up in one "released" case after another--with a few "clears" thrown in for spectacular good measure.

It isn't a two-hour, snap-your-fingers-and-it's-done miracle process; dianotic clearing still involves time and effort and know-how. But it produces results not obtainable with any of the old-line medical and psychiatric methods. A certain modico scoffingly referred to dianotics as "the poor man's psychoanalysis," thereby--he thought--condemning it to oblivion. Dianotics refused to shrivel up and die.

But the major crime of dianotic work has been achieving results without reference to the established professions; without having recourse to the individuals who have gone through seven years of expensive specialized training.

Good?

Some people---these currently active in dianotics---think so.

But others emphatically do not.

Dianotics has already stabbed certain vested interests in the most sensitive portions of their anatomy--to-wit: their wallets and bankbooks. And as more and more individuals obtain a working knowledge of dianotic methods (book auditors without any specialized training DO obtain results), while a smaller but highly significant number take the Hubbard Dianotic Research Foundation's professional courses, this threat to the vested interests will increase.

These interests, however, are not taking this threat to their prosperity lying down. As this is being written, a counterattack by these interests has already been launched, the objective of which is obviously to stop the spread of dianotics.

The Foundation's school in Elizabeth, New Jersey, threatened by an injunction based on the allegation that it was illegally teaching the practice of medicine, has been hurriedly moved to New York. Other legal actions--inspired by you guess who--are pending, and more are expected.

An interesting feature of this attack is that it is not against dianotics itself. So far, no attempt has been made to claim that dianotic work is a fake, or that it does not work. Rather, the attack is based on a claim that dianotic processing is a form of the practice of medicine, and as such should be forbidden to laymen and placed exclusively in the hands of doctors.

At, of course, standard medical-
fees.

#

The Association of Anteaters---
that's the Aardvarks and their cousins---evaluates the situation as follows:

The HDRF may possibly be forced to suspend operations as an organized group. Legal battles are notoriously expensive, and the Foundation was started on a frayed shoestring.

BUT THAT WILL NOT STOP DIANETIC
PROCESSING AND WORK!

Already, it has spread too far to make suppression feasible. Too many people have learned to audit; too many have received various benefits from dianotic processing; and there are too many copies of DIANETICS around.

And the American public has the peculiarity--be it engramic or not--of developing a hearty appetite for any fruit which is forbidden. So it looks as though one of the next moves will be the development of the "dianotic speakeasy."

The Foundation will have nothing whatsoever to do with this. Of course not; as a responsible organi-

zation, it will have nothing to do with such an illegal practice. It will not encourage it--but neither, will it discourage it.

HDA's will not dare to advertise their services; at least not openly. But word will undoubtedly spread on a "ssh, keep it quiet!" basis, with secret passwords of the "Joe sent me" variety and all the trimmings.

It will be strictly a matter of individual enterprise--and therefore, not subject to generalizations.

It will have its disadvantages; people who want dianotic processing will really have to look for it.

But it will have advantages too; the chances of an anti-dianotic Gestapo being able to stamp out the movement are remote indeed.

Hey, bud, you wanna kick an engram around?

FOR SALE \$40\$ EACH

HORROR STORIES: 1935--Feb; Jun; Oct; 1936--Feb-Mar; Apr-May; Jun-Jul; 1937--Jun-Jul; Aug-Sep; 1938--Feb-Mar; Oct-Nov; Dec-Jan; 1939--Jan-Jul; 1940--May.

TERROR TALES: 1934--Oct; 1935--Mar; Jun; Jul; Sep; 1936--Apr; May; Jul; Aug; 1937--May-Jun; Nov-Dec; 1939--Jan-Feb; May-Jun; Nov-Dec; 1940--May.

ALL MINT AND JUST LIKE NEW!!

Box "A"
c/o Editor, PEON

THE COMING OF TSATHOGGUA

by
Herman Stowell King

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Far back in the pre-existence of mankind, when Earth was still a steaming morass, and the first weird life form crawled forth from the ooze of primal slime, the god Tsathoggua came through the void from a distant planet called Cykranosh (now termed as Saturn by astronomers). Tsathoggua was an evil god; he had lived for interminable eons of time, and Cykranosh was not his original home. Viccenillions of years ago, he had come there from a remote star, in a galaxy so distant as to be unthinkable.

In appearance, Tsathoggua somewhat resembled a huge, bloated toad, although he was not batrachian in the least. His skin, and again we must use a mundane analogy totally adverse from the real thing, was covered with a short, sloth-like fur. There were no pupils in his bulging eyes, and his nose was almost bridgeless. His body was moist and slimy: composed of some viscid, protoplasmic substance.

Now although Tsathoggua was extremely repulsive in every aspect, he was an incredibly wise god. He held secrets that a normal terrestrial mind could not begin to conceive; knowledge of extra-cosmic galaxies, multiple dimensions, primordial races of ultimate evolution, the creation of the elements; this, and more, he knew, and could be drawn from wells of the subconscious should he ever have use for such wisdom.

Tsathoggua, however, had more than one attribute of the toad. Aside from quasi-physical resemblance, he was sluggishly lazy. The long journey from Cykranosh (although infinitesimally small in comparison with the one from his original habitat) had tired him, and after gorging on a few amphibian creatures, he burrowed deep in some hot, fetid muck, where for many millions he slept soundly.

The Earth had gone through a long stage of cooling and solidification; and the slime vanished from the surface to be replaced by warm seas. Green vegetation sprang up, and soon the land was covered with lush, tropical jungles. Living organisms went through various processes of evolution, and presently the earth teemed with tremendous animals, most of which were reptilian.

Dinosaurs roamed the jungles, and marshes, and pterodactyls flapped ugly through the air. Diplodocus fed on vegetables, while Tyrannosaurus fed on Diplodocus.

The god Tsathoggua was awakened by the cooling of the muck in which he was embedded. Lazily blinking his protuberant eyes (he had sight despite the lack of pupils--a fantastic extra-optical sense of perception) he wobbled elastically onto the dry ground, and proceeded to search about for means of nourishment.

The first living animal to impinge on Tsathoggua's cognition was a flying Pteranodon. Displaying a remarkable elongation, the squat, drowsy-looking deity from outer space flicked out his tongue and viscosly encircled the poor Pteranodon. There was an inarticulate squawk, and Tsathoggua gulped the reptilian bird down his plastic esophagus. Anon followed a period of digestion. Tsathoggua did not convert his food in the manner characteristic of homo sapiens and lesser animals; instead he merely assimilated it into his own individual substance. And considering his essence, there was no danger of over-expansion.

Having done with that small morsel, the toad god ran rubberly off, apparently awkward, but with amazing celerity. Entering the thick jungle he espied a huge, scaly-clad creature walking upright. Tyrannosaurus Rex, the most ferocious of all reptiles.

Surely, this enormous quadruped would satiate his hunger, thought Tsathoggua. Immediately, he waddled placidly toward the Tyrannosaurus, who after an interval of surprised silence (surprised that anything dared approach him) snorted a loud challenge. Eyes red with terrible wrath, the battle-scarred carnivora of the Mesozoic Age bounded to meet his non-terrestrial adversary.

Tsathoggua quickly underwent a phenomenal metamorphosis, melting into a semi-liquid state, and literally pouring over the bewildered Rex! There was a short moment of violent convulsion, as the die-hard warrior struggled valiantly against the swallowing tide of tenacious life which engulfed him. All effort was futile however, and after a few feeble tremours, the lumpy mass of adhesively sticky matter remained motionless. It had not taken long for Tsathoggua to incorporate the scrawny Pteranodon into himself, but the great Tyrannosaurus was a vastly different undertaking to him!

Hours later, following this extended absorption, Tsathoggua remolded back to his anurian likeness, and deciding he did not like the surface climate, commenced to seek some subterranean abode.

This proved an easy task for such an intelligent deity. By use of some recondite, extra sense, Tsathoggua located a suitable place deep in the bowels of the earth, the entrance being a narrow, volcanic fissure atop a black basaltic mountain.

So the god Tsathoggua found a residence agreeable for a long state of Earth existence. In this underground grotto he slept continuously, coming to the surface only occasionally for food; but usually he even transported his sustenance by exerting some subtle, psychokinetic energy, without moving physically from his spot of repose.

The ages unfolded as he drowsed; the Mesozoic giving way to the Tertiary, the Tertiary yielding to the Pleistocene, and so on. Man appeared

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 23)

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by jim harmon

DISSENTION:: Galaxy, the only truly adult magazine in the field of science-fiction, has arrived--so says H. L. Gold, who may be a trifle prejudiced, since he edits the magazine. We certainly would not want to deprive Mr. Gold of his illusions of grandeur, but since a number of people seem to agree with him, we must cast a loud and boisterous dissenting vote and in doing so, point out a serious breach of ethics.

Yes, what would you think if a fan named Fell started a fan column, copying every feature of this

one, and calling it Feliney? Some might call it ridiculous--but some would certainly call it unethical. So, Galaxy comes out, copying Astounding page by page, feature by feature, and what do the fans do? They praise the new leader in the field (because of the Hollywood-type advertising that proclaimed it as such) and sneer at the fallen star, Astounding, and John W. Campbell, Jr., who spent a good part of his life building aSF into what it is today. Science-fiction has become popular--publishers who have never done a thing to further sf come out with their own particular commercial brand to make money. World Editions wants to make money, so it copies the largest selling sf magazine, presents authors who sell the most magazines and puts one of the pulpiest, hackiest writers science fiction has ever known in charge. Then they ignore fandom, print no letters--saying readers wrote in letters saying writing letters is foolish, which is pretty ridiculous, even considering how ridiculous people are at times--and then; then, proclaim loudly that they are the most adult magazine in the field.

I wonder if any truly adult magazine would draw attention to its own maturity?....

SIGNIFICENCE:: She tore off her clothes, beat her breasts and jumped in bed on top of him. He grabbed her.

"Damn," she said, "same thing, every night. Damn."

"I know," he said. "Looks like these damned authors could think of something original for us to do."

"Looks like it," she admitted, as she rubbed her knee into his groin to test its texture.

He rubbed his groin into her knee to test its texture. Both

textures were found satisfactory.

He put his hands on her breasts and said, "Who are we working for tonight?"

"That creep...that Jim Harmon."

"Oh God, no!" he exclaimed as he tightened his hold. "The last time we done a job for him, we got a two-headed baby. That damned brat keeps me broke. Two hats, two shirt collars, two-neckties. Twice as much hair oil, twice as much tooth paste."

"I know," she replied as their thighs rubbed together coarsely. "But when he grows up, he'll be able to save money on false-teeth. Both heads can use one pair between them."

"Don't mention teeth to me," he implored. "He eats like a horse. Two horses. He should have two heads. His body is big enough for two. And that bright idea of Harmon's...hiding his head under other a cloak. It pops up at the queerest times. It's giving all our friends the d.t.'s." What's more, the head under the cloak always eats away the shirt underneath."

"Those heads are close alright. They think nothing of giving the shirt off their back to the other."

"Oh," he groaned, "we're back, to taking off clothes again."

"We can't very well get away from it. Some lousy writer is always putting us in a historical romance or some lousy pulp love novel."

"Yeah. Same plot. Same story. Just us with different names in different costumes. It's so damned dull."

"Say," she said suddenly. "As long as we're in this line of work, why don't we get in something with social significance, say, something like Phillip Wylie's stuff. It would give us an aim in life."

"Sounds fine, but characters

from Bradbury to Shakespeare are lined up to see Wylie's creative ability. The same with all the other good author's C.A.'s."

She sighed and her sensuous flesh crept over his. "How about this Harmon character, then. He doesn't seem to be an ordinary hack."

"He isn't. He's an unemployed hack."

"Well, at least, he realizes titilation of stupid people isn't all important. He satirizes it."

"Oh sure," he said. "Harmon thinks he's funny."

"He is."

"I mean he thinks he funny--ha ha!"

"That's what I mean, too; did you ever see him?"

"Just his C. A. A head like a watermelon, shoulders like a bull, wasp-waist."

"Well, you know Creative Ability's," she replied. "Actually he is a pea-headed 4-F."

"Not a 4-F, my dear," he corrected. "He's 17. He can't vote. They'll send him over. They'll send the bums who can't vote and spare those who can vote. The politicians are afraid to arouse the dislike of voters who might throw them out of office for getting them into this mess."

"That's an idea," she said as she snuggled her breasts closer into his hands. "We could spread propaganda for Harmon. Let's see him about it."

"Now?"

"Of course not--tomorrow."

"You had me so worried," he breathed. "I've been practising all day for tonight---squeezing grape-fruit."

PREDICTION:::A column called "Harmony" will appear in a future issue of a fanzine called PEON."

TWO LOST WORLDS

--ERIK HOLMES

Probably there will be less bitching about this celluloid masterpiece than there was about such screen epics as, say, "Rocketship X-M". Be that as it may, I feel that a word to the wise is in order and all dinosaur-lovers in the audience should pay heed!

"This picture has everything!"
Let's start at the beginning. The volume "Two Lost Worlds" is opened by a seaman's tattooed hands and we see a list of the unfortunate people who appear in this abortion. The story, if my memory serves, is by a Jack Hubbard, who obviously needs dianetics in the worst way. We watch a sailing vessel pull out of her New England harbor while the narrator (all good pictures now a days have narrators--didn't you see "Sunset Boulevard" or "All About Eve"?)--tells us that young Curt Hamilton, the mate, represents the pioneer spirit of America. The fate of America and of Curt Hamilton ride on this ship, a cargo more valuable than the riches in her hold.

Curt knows that his fortune is dependent on this voyage. Confident in his ship, which he built himself with his own hands out of second hand match boxes, he urges the captain to cut through pirate waters to beat out competing vessels.

The pirates attack! ("This picture has everything!") The fleet clipper ship escapes, but its gallant mate is injured and the captain reluctantly leaves his friend at a

little settlement of sheep ranchers on the coast of Australia. (Shot of kangaroos on a hillside.) Here Curt makes the acquaintance of the governor's beautiful daughter, Elaine. But Elaine is engaged to a sheep farmer who is really a nice guy! Here is real life drama! Curt and Elaine are from different worlds. "But it is spring, and spring is the same the world over; and a man and a woman..." Fade out on the clinch.

But the harders fear the pirates may attack them. The government refuses to send militia! Curt organizes them into civil defense units. But the pirates catch one of the blockwardens off guard. They steal horses. Follows a action packed gun battle from horseback through some very familiar western scenery....Elaine and another girl are kidnapped! Elaine's younger sister, Nancy, is missing! The gallopers find the pirates escaped in their vessel! ("This picture has everything!")

Curt and his gallant band pursue the pirates in a sloop! Again there is a terrific sea battle-- ("This picture has everything!") Both ships catch fire. Elaine's



P fiance is injured in a selfless
A attempt to save Curt. Curt, the
G fiance, Elaine, and other girl and
E Nancy, who had stowed away on the
sloop, are adrift in an open boat.

1 Gallant Curt brings them to
4 land. But it is barren desert! Is
there no water? The boat is broken
on the rocks by the raging surf!
Marooned! ("This picture has every
thing!")

But the sailor spies an oasis.
A long trek across the burning des-
ert. Untold suffering. Elaine's
dress is ripped up the thigh nearly
to the.... ("This picture has every-
thing!")

They reach water! But little
Nancy wanders off. "Little child-
ren know no fear. The whole world
is their playground. The creatures
of the wild are their friends. What
could be more inviting than a
little hop-toad inviting the child
to play?" Then Nancy screams! She
is attacked by a, you guessed it, a
dinosaur! ("This picture has every-
thing!")

Producer: Now, wait a minute, this
stuff is great, but
these trick shots cost
money.

Writers: Keep your skirt on, B.J.
We got that all figured
out. Remember that old
flick, "One Million BC?"

Producer: With Carol Landis and
Victor Mature, sure.

Writers: They had some cute trick
stuff with alligators and
lizards in that. Now we
just dub in our own act-
ors.

Producer: Sure, I get it. Smooth
enough, nobody remembers
what they saw a few
years ago, anyway.

Escaping from the dinosaurs,
our little band hurries on to the
oasis. Soon they are gorging them-
selves on old oranges and bananas
they find on the ground. "But as
hunger subsides, the minds of Curt
and Elaine are filled with thoughts

of each other." Will primal pass-
ions be aroused? With Elaine wan-
dering around in that shred of a
dress, it'll be a wonder if they
aren't!

Curt builds a raft. A lone
chance of getting home! But on the
eve of departure, the volcano, long
smoking the background, bursts into
violent eruption! ("This picture,
etc....!")

Producer: Hey, wait a minute. A
volcano?

Writers: Relax, B. J., this is
all in "One Million BC"
too, remember?

Producer: Oh sure, with all the
big lizards gettin'
caught in cracks in the
ground.

The eruption rages in violent
fury! We even see some scenes that
were apparently out from "One Mill-
ion" of the volcano at night. And
now, we find out why Elaine's girl
friend has always worn black. This
dress, of course, has been ripped
down to the bare essentials. Now,
remember in "One Million" during
the volcanic eruption one of the
cave women in a black fur piece is
engulfed in the lava stream? Well,
that's what happens to this girl!
Right before your very eyes!

"When the little band of sur-
vivors open their red-rimmed eyes
to the dawn," they find their raft
is ruined! The local flora and
fauna, leaping about in flames,
have broken it all to pieces! Curt
reassures Elaine's fiance that he
will quickly rebuild it, but that
worthy merely whispers, "Take..care
of..Elaine.." His eyes close and
we know!

But even now, Curt's friends on
the clipper ship are seeking him.
However, the island is a ruin from
the eruption. "Nothing could be
alive on that island, sir." "Very
well, give the word to turn about

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 20)

MESSENGERS OF DEATH

by Ed Ludwig

P
A
G
E

1
5

It was a cold day, late in the year, and a dark, thick blanket of fog hung low over the English countryside. A young woman sat alone, sewing, in a room of her mother's cottage. Except for her own breathing and the occasional rustle of cloth, there was silence. The girl's mother was in her own room, napping.

Abruptly, a coldness crept over the girl. She felt a peculiar sensation--as if someone were watching her. Her puzzled gaze left her sewing; she turned and, on her left, beheld a strange dog. It was a large dog, ravenblack, and of no recognizable breed. It sat silently, its dark eyes focused on her face.

An icy shiver ran down her spine. The doors and windows of the cottage were closed. How had the creature entered? She shrugged. It was odd but no cause for alarm. She rose and walked to the door, intending to let the dog out.

But she turned again--and the animal was gone.

Shaking her head, she returned to her sewing. Perhaps she had been mistaken, she thought. The day was dark. Perhaps the fog and shadows had played a trick on her vision. Yes, that must be the explanation. A few seconds later she glanced again to her left. This time she screamed.

The black dog was squatting beside her, not more than a yard away. It sat quietly and was motionless as a statue. Only the black, glistening eyes and the still-cold gaze indicated life. The girl's sewing tumbled to the floor. She ran into her mother's room, awakening the older woman.

Almost hysterically, she told what she had seen. "It was real," she cried. "It appeared and disappeared. It was like seeing Death itself!"

The mother's face turned a ghostly white. Her lips trembled, but she said, softly, "It is nothing, nothing!"

That same afternoon, the mother was seized with a sudden illness, and called the daughter to her side. There was a legend about the black dog, she explained. It was supposedly the ghost of a person wronged by a member of the family centuries ago. For generations, the family had been haunted by the ghost which always appeared to some member before the death of a near relative.

That night, the mother died

Such incidents are not uncommon and occur often in European countries where families have long records of ancestral tradition. Some spiritualists believe such an apparition is a ghost or a spirit of evil haunting a family. Others suggest that it is a friendly spirit coming to carry away a loved one. At any rate, an amazingly large number of such phenomena have been reported, studied, and verified. There can be no doubt that many are authentic.

The Caldwell family, of the Midlands district in England, had a similar experience. The two small Caldwell children, Mildred and John, were playing in an orchard one afternoon with the children of a neighborhood.

John suddenly pointed toward the stump of a tree. "What a funny-looking bird!" he cried.

The bird was perched on the stump only a few feet from them. It was approximately the size of a crow, but with brilliant green and yellow feathers which were extremely ruffled. It possessed a huge, long, curved beak. It was like no bird the children had ever seen or dreamed about. The bird fluttered its wings and darted upward. It flew in a great circle then swooped down toward John. The boy jumped, frightened, as it swept past him, nearly touching him. Then it disappeared into the branches of an apple tree. The excited children ran after it but were unable to find it.

The children returned home, too excited to notice that John was no longer among them. They told Mrs. Caldwell about the strange bird.

"A bird with green and yellow feathers," she mused. Her face paled--for there was a family legend about such a bird. Whenever it appeared, supposedly, someone dear would die.

"Where is John?" she asked, her voice touched by fear.

The children looked about them, puzzled. "He was by the pond, near the orchard," one of them said.

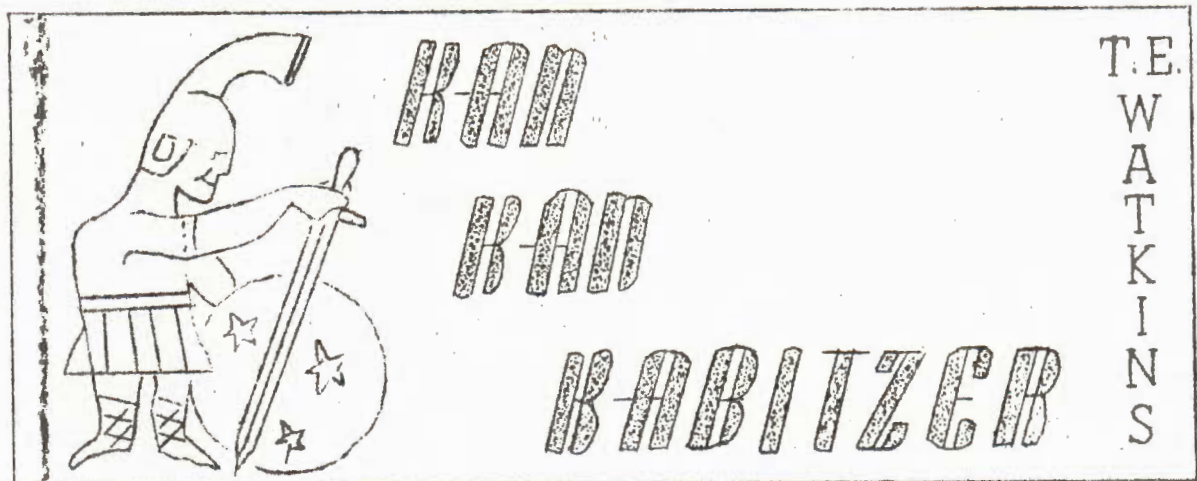
The frightened mother immediately went in search of John and found him drowned in the depths of the pond . . .

Not all such phenomena consist of animal or bird apparitions. The Andrews family in Warwickshire had a legend about a phantom ash-tree.

One night Mr. Andrews was awakened by the continual howling of his dog an Alsatian whose kennel was in the garden. He first called the dog from a window, attempting to calm it. But the dog continued to bark and growl as if confronted with some savage enemy. Angrily, muttering under his breath, Mr. Andrews dressed and strode outside.

As he neared the garden, he froze. There, in the very middle of the lawn, was the outline of an immense ash-tree. It stood where no tree should have been, where nothing should have been. Although there was no wind, it was swaying wildly back and forth. His wife came to his side a few minutes later, but the tree had disappeared. A short time later they

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 20)



THE ABSOLUTE TOP:::::For my money the best variety hour on television is Ed Sullivan's toast "Toast of the Town." The theme song that opens the show states that the performers during the hour are "The Absolute Top." Sullivan misses no opportunity to repeat the boast, and the viewing bears him out. He has the best.

Herewith, we inaugurate an "Absolute Top Department". Whenever we run across anything in fantasy and science-fiction story-telling that we think is the best we are going to file it in this department. It may be a story, it may be only the story idea, a gadget, a character, a scene, a story gimmick or some other element of fiction writing.

For example, in the December, 1950 issue of FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION is a little story by Van Vogt entitled "Process". From the story blurb one gets the impression that this is one of Van's early efforts, although I don't know where it was published or how long ago. The story is about a forest with a life and intelligence all its own. It fights battles with other forests and with human invaders who attempt to land in its area.

Science fiction writers have cooked up all sorts of alien intelligencies to bedazzle the pop-eyed readers. They have put intelligence into monsters, clouds, rocks, vacuums, whole planets, suns, insects, worms, bacteria, chairs, and the Lord knows what else. Some of them have been more believable than others. It is difficult to write a story about a non-human character. Most writers put human characters in such stories to hold the reader's interest. But Van Vogt's forest is a really hero, who fights to stay alive against great odds. The human invaders are so shadowy that we are not quite sure they are human at all. In non-human characters, Van Vogt's forest is "the absolute top."

Speaking of alien intelligences, whatever happened to the out-sized insects? The old stories used to be filled with these horrible creatures. Doc Keller had a story in the old AMAZING in which huge wasps captured men, stung them into a stupor, laid grubs on their chests, which ate and grew, and when the food was gone, flew away, another out-sized wasp. It's horrible, isn't it! Not quite absolute top, however.

I recall another story in the dim past of an alien planet where all the insects grew to gigantic proportions--butterflies, bees, grasshoppers. All I can remember of this story is the illustration of a huge butterfly settling on a gigantic flower and a human cowering in terror underneath. Must not have been the "absolute top" or I'd remember more than that.

Of course, there was Little Abner's turnip termite. In one episode they grew to gigantic proportions and almost wiped out Dogpatch. Can't call a comic strip the top, however.

The all time high in outsized insects was in one of Robert E. Howard's stories. Our hero found his way to the gold (or was it the girl?) blocked by a huge red-eyed spider, so big he had to spin a web of ropes in order to live off the ground like any self respecting spider. Of course, this rope web presented the spider with an interesting problem. No one, unless he is staggering drunk, is going to run into, and get himself entangled in anything as prominent as a rope web. Even outsized flies aren't that stupid. So, in order to eat, this spider developed the art of lassoing his victims. Anything that came within spittin' distance of this spider was lassoed and hogtied for the next meal. Of course the hero had to get through this part of the cave to get to the gold (or was it the girl?).

What a fight! Hero only had a sword. That spider could spit out those loops fast as lightning and hero would cut 'em with his sword. He comes closer and closer to the red-eyed, spittin' spider and at last cuts the main support rope of the web and the huge spider drops into the gorge. Whew! I still sweat when I think of this scene. I get a total recall on it without being a clear. (Yes, yes, I know, spiders are not insects--so we will call this the "absolute top" in outsized bugs if you want to quibble.)

All of which reminds me of Cuthbert. While in the Army during the last war, I was stationed in India for eighteen months and some of the bugs that plagued us over there would make the authors of outsized insect stories pop their eyes in terror. I lived in one of those double-decked English tents with two other sergeants. (This was the Air Force, fellas, lots of sergeants, in fact, after 18 months overseas, the only corporals we had were English and Indian recruits.)

One day we found that a big yellow spider had invaded our abode and built a web at the top of the tent near the ridge pole. I tagged the invader, Cuthbert. Hughs and I were all for cleaning Cuthbert out of there, but Perkins, the T/Sgt. and our senior, a fat lisping little nature lover from California, decided that a spider was just what we needed.

"The thpider will keep down the flieth. Leave her alone," he said.

"But Perk, yea gods, think of having that fat old spider dangling over our heads in the dark."

"Leave her alone!" ordered Perk.

Perk insisted the spider ate flies and would keep the tent free of these pests. He also insisted that it was a she and not a he, and should be called Cuthberta instead of Cuthbert.

"The male thpider ith so thmall you can hardly thee him. The femalths are the big onths. Leave the thpider ALONE!"

Nothing would move Perk. Hughs insisted that Cuthberta crawled all over him at night. Perk sneered. He claimed that Cuthberta never left her nest unless driven from it. It seemed to me and Hughs that the flies were just as numerous as ever. But she was sure eating something. She got bigger every day. Her huge bottom sagged the web. I insisted she had a boy friend hidden some place and was pregnant and any day would pop wide open and we'd have thousands of spiders crawling up there.

"Thpiders do not give birth, thilly. You thee those brown ballth? Those are the eggth!"

That did it. We were going to have a flock of spiders because Cuthberta had six brown balls. Perk showered every afternoon. Hughs and I decided that the shower period was the time to have a spider shoot. Cuthberta was to have every chance. Each made ten paper wads. All shots were to be fired in rotation and while lying on our backs on our cots. If Cuthberta was alive after the twenty shots, she was to survive twenty-four hours until the next shower period. If she decided to leave, taking her brown balls with her, she was not to be molested. She was to have every chance.

Hughs always was lucky and on his fourth he whopped her right in her huge bottom with a spit hardened paper wad. She bounced off the ceiling leaving a yellow smear, and fell writhing into our waste paper basket. We spent the rest of the shower period knocking off the brown balls.

It took Perk no time at all to discover that Cuthberta had departed in agony. He was so mad he turned red from his pink toes to his bald head. He insisted he had given an order and this was a breach of discipline. He'd report it to the major. This was no joke. T/Sgts have away with majors--that's how they get to be T/Sgts.

So I put my arm around Perk and told him about Howard's lasse throwing spider. "Who knows," I said, "we might have had one of those monsters in creation right before our eyes."

"He's right," agreed Hughs. Right then Hughs'd agree with anything I said.

"That's thilly," yelled Perk, "that's that thilly thience fiction you read."

He didn't report it to the major, but he wrote his mother all about it. He kept the light on until midnight inspite of our tent agreement that "lights out" was 10 p.m. He wrote his mother every night and there was an argument around 10 p.m., but this night, we let him scribble away. And he included a description of Howard's spider too, because he asked me, "What wath the name of that author?"

Thus, the fame of Howard's monster spreads.

THE ABSOLUTE TOP!

MESSENGERS OF DEATH:::

(continued)

received word their child had been killed while on a holiday trip

Among the best-known of deathly apparitions are the famous Ghosts of the Hapsburgs. A few days before the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the throne of Austria, the Archduchess Sophie was motoring through Vienna.

As she passed a cathedral, she saw a large crowd gathered in the street, staring upward. Her chauffeur stopped the car and she stepped out. In the sky directly above, was a flock of enormous white birds, swooping swiftly and uttering shrill, eerie cries that flooded the street. From the lips of the observers came the hushed dreaded word, "Turnfalken!"

With a chill of fear the Archduchess realized that these were the White Birds, the legendary Ghosts of the Hapsburgs. For centuries these white, winged portents of doom had been seen shortly before a Hapsburg tragedy. They were seen by Emperor Francis Joseph the day before Empress Elizabeth was assassinated in Geneva, and before the death of his son, Crown Prince Rudolf.

As rapidly as possible, the Archduchess sped to Franz Ferdinand's country castle where he was about to undertake a journey to Bosnia. She begged him not to go. Something terrible would happen, she declared, if he did.

Franz Ferdinand was a stubborn man. Despite the warning, he made his journey to Bosnia--where his famous assassination signaled the outbreak of World War I.

Sources: Men Who Wouldn't Stay Dead, by Ida Clyde Clarke, Bernard Ackerman, 1945.

Family Ghosts and Ghostly Phenomena, by Elliot O'Donnell; Dutton, 1934.

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TWO LOST WORLDS::

(continued)

and head for home." Is the ship going to turn at the last moment and leave the brave group standing on the beach? No, no, groans the anguished audience, it couldn't go on! But at the last moment, a lookout spies the group. (He couldn't miss Elaine in that dress!) And we end on a drawing of Curt and Elaine at the wheel of the ship, drawn by the director's idiot daughter. ("This picture has everything!") And thus, ends "Two Lost Worlds" or, "Off The Cutting Room Direct To You!"

As a clincher, one of the local newspaper advertisements for this sterling production from Hollywood shows a picture of two giant saurians chewing each other's shoulder blades with the caption, "See prehistoric mastodons locked in mortal combat!"

Not content with being very busy with his job as co-editor of that popular prozine, "Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction", writing book reviews for various newspapers throughout the country, and authoring fine detective fiction under the name of H. H. Holmes, Tony Boucher took time some months back to list for the readers of PEON some operas based on a fantasy theme. This was one of the most popular features-it seems-that PEON has had, and we are very happy to publish this supplement to that check-list. Further additions and/or corrections are welcome by the editor and also Mr. Boucher. ---Editor.

Original title (translation if necessary), Date of first production, original language, (Nature of fantasy theme--not given if clear from title.)

<u>No mark.</u> ..very slight fantasy content	no mark..rarely or never produced
ff ..marked fantasy content	now
ff ..very strong fantasy content	* ..produced occasionally (by small groups or in Europe)
	** ..more or less standard American repertory.

f Noe" 1934, French (Noah's Ark with talking animals, based on
 Oboy play)

ff The fall of Usher 1921, English (unproduced?)

ff La chute de la maison Usher (The fall of the house of Usher)
Le diable dans le beffroi (The devil in the belfry)
both based on Poe; both unfinished, apparently lost.

ff Puck 1949, French (based on Midsummer Night's Dream)

22 Duni, Egidio Romualdo (1709-)

- f La Fee Urgele 1765, French (fairy tale based on Ce qui plait aux dames by Voltaire)s

Erb, M. J.

- f L'homme de fer (the iron man) 1929, French (Alsatian legend of soul imprisoned in statue)

Erlanger, Camille

- f Hannele composed ?1914, first produced ?1949, French (based on Hauptmann play)

Holbrooke, Joseph (1878-) (fuller version of entry in 1st list)

- f The cauldron of Annwyn, a trilogy:

The Children of Don

Dylan, Son of the Wave

Bronwen

All dealing with Druid magic; Bronwen contains as an interpolated ballet, "The Masque (six) of the Red Death"

Isouard, Nicolo

- ff Cendrillon (Cinderella) 1810, French

Menotti

- f The Consul 1950, English

Philidor, Andre Danican (1726-1795)

- ff Le bucheron (The woodcutter) 1763, French (3-wishes gimmick)

- ? Le sorcier (The Sorcerer) 1764, French

Saminsky, Lazare (1882-)

- ff The gagliarda of a merry plague. Composed 1924, Russian; produced in 1925, English. (Based on The Mask of the Red Death)

Gretry, Andre Ernest Modeste (1742-1813)

- ff Zomire et Azor 1771, French (oriental magic)

THE COMING OF TSATHOGGUA
(continued from page 10)

23

on Earth, and civilization pushed back barbarism.

Vast empires graced the lands; Hyperborea and Atlantis with their fair cities rearing marble cupolas aloft; Mu and Valusia came and went, leaving naught but myth and legend of their existence. There was among these peoples a mystical few who worshipped Tsathoggua, and in return for their carnal tributes he gave them awful and marvellous powers of sorcery and necromancy. Having the wisdom of an older god at the evocation, these wizards executed nameless foul deeds of evil and corruption. Through the performance of unholy rites and incantations, those that numbered the cult of Tsathoggua could control the elements, conjure up the dead, withstand mortality by regulating metabolism in the protoplasm; in fact, there was little these devil worshippers could not do.

But as time passed, and all these wonderful civilizations vanished into limbo, so vanished man's credulity in gods and all things considered immaterial, till finally there was no one to worship Tsathoggua, because no one believed he existed.

Very few were those who still sought pleasure in the form of strange and inexplicable pursuits, and the ones that did find Tsathoggua were woefully weak and pusillanimous, for they went mad at the knowledge of the toad god's reality. Many of these never returned from the dark-lit grotto, but fell victim to his evil gluttony.

Yea, gone are Hyperborea and Atlantis; gone save in vague fables; but the god Tsathoggua still sleeps in his subterranean abode, and there shall come the time when he awakens voracious, and horror and havoc will descend on the cities of man.

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YOU CAN'T JUDGE A BOOK--
(continued from page 6)

The fact that stfans are able enough -- and interested enough -- to write bales of letters to the editors would seem to substantiate this theory. Why wouldn't slick, technical gadgetry appeal to the public now and then? Popular Science and Mechanics Illustrated have built up a terrific audience by catering to the average American's love for new-fangled gadgets and streamlined machines. Why doesn't some hardy editor experiment further with the photographic style of cover, on the order of the Ziff-Davis pulps of several years ago. And for the love of Lkon, how about some science fictional covers featuring HUMOR? I'll always have a soft spot in my heart for Virgil Finlay's wonderful cartoon-style cover on the final issue of Super Science Stories -- the cover for Hank Kuttner's "Reader, I Hate You!", upon which a curious monster peers quizzically down at a space-suited human atop a glittering spaceship. That was bang-up stuff, too good to be tried once and then consigned forever to oblivion.

There is one thing we sfans can do. That is to keep up the bombardment of letters and postal cards until the pulp purveyors see the light and realize that we're not all drooling morons who'll shell out twenty cents just to slaver over an unclothed cover babe. Let's keep kicking --- kicking hard as hell. "But it won't do any good!" you protest. "The editors don't give two hoots what actifandom thinks!" No? I'm inclined to disagree. Few editors are completely insensitive to readers' taste as evidenced by the mail which pours into their offices. On request, I'll gladly name several cases in which active fans and active readers have kicked loud enough -- and made themselves heard. But above all, let's be constructively critical -- not pan some hard-working artist, who does the best he can with the theme allotted him. Even the much-maligned Erle K. Bergey is a highly competent artist, who can turn out top-notch work on occasion. See his covers for some of the Standard Publications sport magazines, not to mention the beauteous rocket-ship cover on TWS some issues back, illustrating "Sword of Tomorrow." Remember, the baby who wails the loudest is the baby who gets fed. So let's keep wailing, fellow fan-tasts -- wailing good and loud for better scientifiiction covers. For who can toll? Utopia may not always be as distant as we think!

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PEON NOTES

(continued from page 3)

I usually write in "Peon Notes", but if you don't all you have to do is just skip these pages. After all, I'm not a great writer, and find that I can write much better about things that I'm personally in contact with--and I've had some urgings to write more on these lines by some readers, so I'm happy. How about you?

I was discussing two movies before, and would like to recommend one to you--"The Next Voice You Hear." If you haven't seen it as yet, be sure to do so. I believe that this is one of the best fantasy (at least I call it that) pictures that has come out of the mills of Hollywood. The direction was one of the best, and especially on one subject that could cause one of the great controversies of the year. I know that the picture made a big impression on the sailors here at Barbers Point. Much better than "Rocket Ship XM" did at any rate. We haven't been fortunate enough to see "Destination Moon" as yet here in the islands, but we're hoping it will be in soon.

On the last page, you will find an advertisement for a new booklet your editor has been working on these past few months. It grew out of the research for the article "Going Up" which appeared in the last issue of this 'zine. The booklet is really a cross-index of the authors, magazines, and titles appearing in the prozines during 1949 and 1951. It will list the magazines, the authors and stories appearing therein, and finally an author list covering every science-fiction magazine issued during the past two years. If you are interested in seeing what authors sold the most the past two years, or want an accurate and up-to-date index, this is your meat. Only one hundred copies available, so your order should be mailed, today!

Speaking of booklets, two years ago I announced a yearbook of science and fantasy fiction for the year 1947, in connection with a San Francisco fan. Several advance orders and payments were received from fans who were interested (50¢ was the asking price for it), but things kept piling up. My co-editor left the coast. I moved out here, and I'm ashamed to say that I've misplaced the list of fans who paid for their copy of that booklet. If any of you PEON readers ordered it, let me know if you want a refund, or if you want PEONDEX in its place. I know it's a common failing among editors of fandom to accept subscriptions and then fold up the magazine before the sub is finished. However, I've tried to keep all my promises, and if you were one of those who sent me or the co-editor the 50¢, let me know as soon as possible.

Here's a suggestion to the editors of the prozines. The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction have available to its readers a special binder, designed especially to hold copies of the magazine--six in all--in an usual volume. It's a handy thing to have, and keeps the magazines in tip-top shape. Now, why couldn't the other magazines do the same thing? As you all know, the covers on the magazines these days are terrible in the way

they fall apart almost immediately after purchase. I'd like to have some more binders for the rest of the magazines, and feel sure that the cost of the binders would be offset by the feeling of having good copies after a short period of time! (Incidentally, the binder for the NOF&SF will also hold Galaxy.)

One darn thing leads to another. The mention of Galaxy brings to mind a situation which I am sure could be remedied by someone in their mailing department--WHERE IS MY THIRD ISSUE OF GALAXY?? Since I mailed in my subscription to both Galaxy and the Novels last September (before the first issue came out), I have received the following from the mailing department of those magazines: Three copies of Galaxy #1; Four copies of #2; Three copies of the SFNovels #1; Two of #2; 1 of #3; Two copies of Galaxy No. 4; and one copy of #5; but no copies of the third issue!

Harry Weatherby and Jim Harmon aren't going to like me very much when they see this issue of PEON. I had originally scheduled a full length story by Harry and a longer column by Jim. The stencils were cut and some of them run off when I took a short leave last month. However, when I came back to work, I discovered that some bright soul, bless his pointed sweet head, had cleaned up the cabinet where I had left the work and had thrown out Harry's story, and part of Jim's column, leaving me with 13 pages to fill in. I didn't have enough time to reblock and retype Harry's story, and of course, didn't have Jim's original copy. So, I've reprinted an article from CHRONOSCOPE by Joe Kennedy, and have run the balance of Jim's column. Sorry, boys, but it just couldn't be helped! Harry's story will appear in a later issue of PEON, along with more of Jim Harmon!

SHORT AND LAST MINUTE NOTETTES:::The ad for Uvanotics and Joe Kennedy's articles were both reprinted without advance permission from either the authors or editors, but since they were so good I felt that shortness of time made it excusable enough to use them. "Uvanotics" came from STEFAN-TASY published for FAPA by William F. Danner (also the author of the ad!); who is one of the brightest stars in the FAPA bundles at the present. You all know the excellency of Redd Boggs' publications, so nothing more will be said about that.....Erik Holmes, represented in this issue, broke into professional publication for the first time with his story, "Beachhead On The Moon" in the February issue of Blue Book. Eric (correct spelling of his first name) comes by his writing naturally, since his father is well-known in the writing field by the name Alec Hudson. He graduates from Stanford this year, and at present, thinks he will go into the Marine Corps. I can't do a thing about that, poor fellow, since he is a member of the Marine Corps Reserve already! And his father a retired Navy Captain too!.....No "Menchune Mutterings" this issue due to Roy Cummings' being kept too busy at the local Star-Bulletin. His wife is a director of a local play, and Roy's been busy helping out behind stages. Brings me back to about this time last year, for that was where I first found him---busier than a one-armed paper hanger with the seven year itch, what with issuing costumes, talking to me, and trying to eat supper all at the same time!.....Why is it that Thrilling Wonder and Startling Stories appear on the newsstands about two weeks earlier than the subscription copies come

in? Usually, one of the selling points for a sub is the fact you get it earlier than the guy who buys it on the stands, but not in this case. I thought at first it was because I was so far out from the states, but find out it's the same back on the mainland....And while we're on the subject of subs, have you noticed the asking price for a sub to Two Complete Science-Adventure Books? \$1.25 for a year, when you can buy single copies for 25¢ each! Unless my math is wrong, you'd save a quarter by not taking a sub....Bob Silverberg has called my attention to two or three mistakes, in the listing of prozines in the article "Going Up" in the last issue--corrections follow in the May issue of PEON with a revised and complete list. Same list will appear in PEONDEX....If new postal rates as asked by the Postmaster General of Congress go into effect, fanzine editors will be that much more in the red in the future. Regardless, PEON will still stay the same price--you ask for the next issue, or else get nine for a buck--and after the next issue, no more discount to NFFF'ers. See the next ish for further details....We made a mistake on the index page of the last PEON--that was Volume Three, not Volume Two! Another item we mentioned in the last issue also wrong was the change in paper size to 8 1/2 x 11--too many readers said they liked the present 8 x 10 1/2 size, so we'll stay the same way for a while. What the difference in size would make, I don't know....That is all for the time being. I've used up too much space already, but hope you liked this issue. How's about letting me know? The only way I can tell you like PEON is by your letters, and if I owe you one right now, I promise to answer it in the very very near future...see you all soon...

Lee

REPORT CARD---

Although we received back just about half of the cards we mailed out with the last issue of PEON, we did manage to get a good representation of what the readers of PEON like and want to see in the future. The results of the votes cast of the features in the last issue appear as follows:

PLACE	TITLE	POINTS
1	Going Up	1.61
2	Peon Notes	1.72
3	Kan Kan Kabitzer	2.00
4	Harmony	2.22
5	Gob	2.35
6	Menchune Mutterings	2.44

Regarding what they wanted to read in the future, the readers were very definite. Counting 1 point for first place, 2 points for second place, and so on, it ran like this: Articles (28); Fan News (45); Fiction (55); Book-Reviews (57); and definitely last, Poetry (79). Rest assured the editors of PEON have taken note of the certain stand, and will try to fill your wants in the future. You will notice this issue is based on that stand. Anyone want to do book review for us? And thanks a lot to those who voted first and second place to your editor's efforts in the last issue--or was it just because PEON is mailed too freely? We wonder...

BOOK REVIEWS

KINSMEN OF THE DRAGON

by Stanley Mullen
Shasta Publishers
Chicago, Ill...\$3.50

I wish I could recommend this book to you. The author, one-time editor of a popular fanzine from Denver, Colorado, deserves a chance to break into big-time, and I hope he gets it. But if you go by this book, he has a long ways to go. In this book, he has tried to weave into the 336 pages of large type, a story that best would have fitted the pages of WEIRD TALES. Stanley has had one privately printed book published before, "Moonfoam and Sereeries", which was fair, and what amazes me is that Shasta would take such a chance on an unknown writer.

Briefly this is the story of Eric Joyce who goes into a world that is "beside our own" (to quote from the dust wrapper). All the ingredients of a pulp thriller are here---a would-be dictator of the shadow world who is trying to conquer Earth, ancient priesthoods based on atomic energy and its byproducts, and for the love interest, a young girl who inherits a curse laid on one of her feminine ancestors. The story concerns itself with the trials and tribulations of Eric and the girl, Annwyn, their love and final happy ending.

Appearance-wise, the book is good looking, what with a handsome jacket designed by Hannes Bok, large clear print on the inside, and a neat format throughout. But \$3.50 is a godawful price to pay for just that. Oh well, every publisher must throw out a clinker now and then, and I guess this's Shasta's turn.

THE MAN WHO SOLD THE MOON

by Robert A. Heinlein
Signet (The New American
Library of World Literature,
Inc.) New York 22,
New York.....25¢

This is good--make no mistakes about it. It is a strange coincidence, indeed, when I just got through panning one Shasta book, and then turn around and give a good recommendation for another. But this pocket-book reprint of Shasta's best published book so far, deserves a big pat on the back. The one thing I can see wrong with this book is that it didn't include all of the stories in the original edition. Missing in this reprint are "Life-Line" and "Blowups Happen." The introduction by John W. Campbell, Jr., also, was omitted, but that wasn't missed. The book has an attractive cover, and for the price you can't go wrong. I still think the title story is the best that Heinlein has ever written.

Signet Books are beginning to reprint numerous fine sciencefiction titles and ask for recommendations from readers. I'd like to suggest that if you have any particular titles in mind, that you contact them right away; perhaps we will be able then to obtain some of the older titles at low cost!!