

the Monster Times



50c

ROACHES, ANTS,
FLEAS AND ME
ON PAGE 6

SPECIAL!
BUGS
ON PARADE
ISSUE...!!!

"THEM" ANTS EAT
CHICAGO!

HELLSTROM
CHRONICLE!

DO COMIX
BUG
YOU?

WELLS
ON
ANTS

GIANT
KONG POSTER
INSIDE



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KONG
SELLS OUT P14

MAN EATING
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ON SALE

EVERY 2 WEEKS

★ ★ ★ ★ ★
EXTRA

NEWS FLASH

★ ★ ★ ★ ★
EXTRA

HAVE YOU SEEN 'THEM'?

New York City Gripped by Crawling Giants!

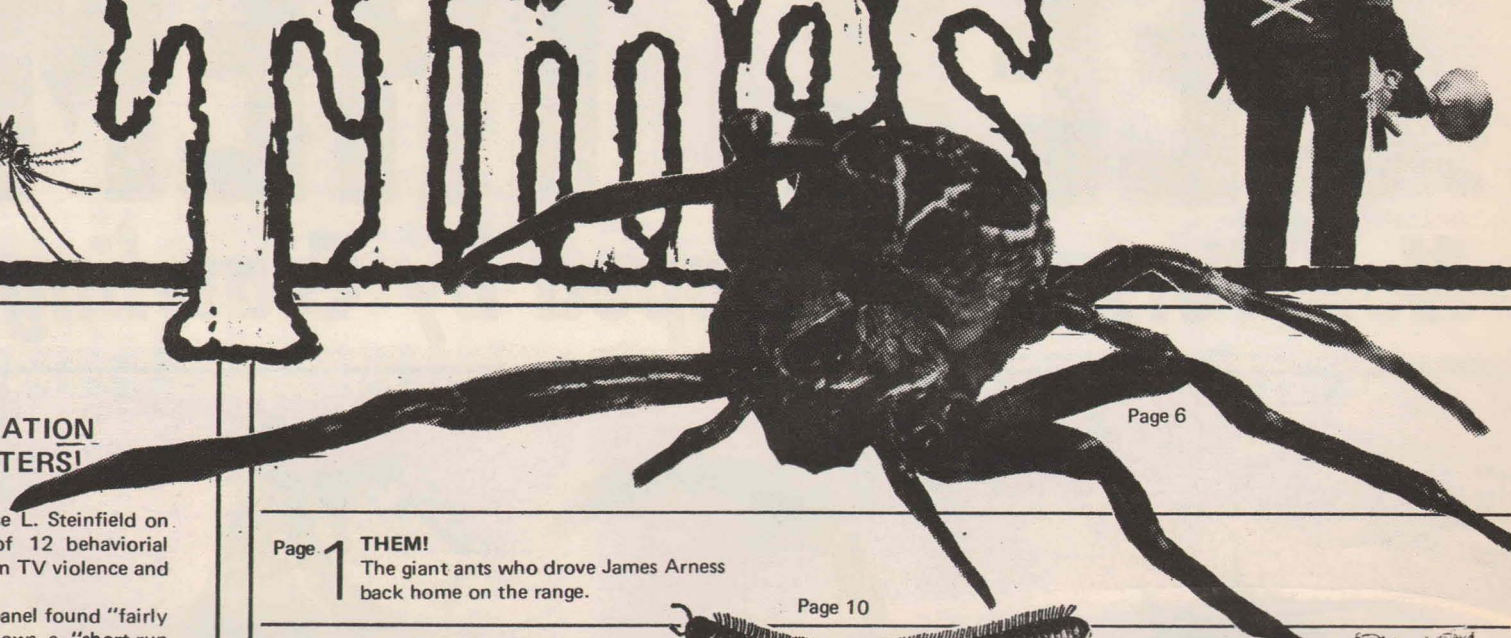
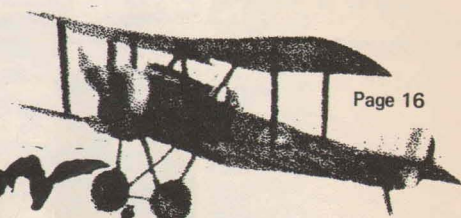
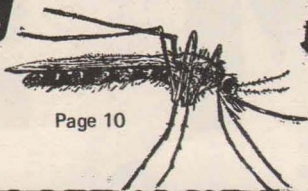


WEIRD crawl-and-crush frights clawing up from the earth's steaming depths! Creatures so astounding there was no word to describe "Them!"

The World's First Newspaper of Horror, Sci-Fi and Fantasy

The Monster Times

Volume 1, No. 3



NIXON'S ADMINISTRATION ATTACKS TV MONSTERS!

United States Surgeon General Jesse L. Steinfield on January 17th stated that a panel of 12 behavioral scientists have "detected a link" between TV violence and behavior.

Surgeon General Steinfield said his panel found "fairly substantial experimental evidence" shows a "short-run causation of aggression among some children by viewing violence on the screen. These children," he added, "are those who are already "predisposed" toward "aggressive behavior," due to "heredity, parental environment and other factors."

The study, called the Scientific Advisory Committee on Television and Social Behavior, was started two years ago and made no actual recommendations, though it stated some interesting things about TV violence:

That violence on TV does not allow people to "let off steam."

That a show called "Doomsday Flight," scripted by Night Gallery's producer, Rod Serling, about airplane bombings, triggered off five airline "bomb threats" within 24 hours.

And that girls are more violent than boys.

The study deliberately avoided commenting on news shows, which report of riots, bombings, murders, and war, "for First Amendment reasons" involving Freedom of Speech and Press.

THE MONSTER TIMES feels called upon to ask a few questions of the Surgeon General and anyone who takes him seriously:

First, what does this ominous report really say? Does it imply that the Federal Communications Commission will soon take action to reduce "violence" on TV? Will Nixon's Surgeon General Steinfield and the FCC apply pressure to suppress or censor some of these shows?

And what about these "findings," anyway? Rewritten by our Monster Times copywriters, they say (using all the government study's facts and news releases):

"Surgeon General Jesse L. Steinfield said today that he THINKS there's a link between violence on TV, and violence in real life, although the real-life people who are violent may be so, because of their environment, or (because of heredity), they were "born violent" in the first place; and maybe TV didn't make them violent at all. The Surgeon General of the United States also revealed that as many as five cranks can make bomb threats to airlines on the same day that plays about airplane bomb threats are shown. He *thinks* that TV violence doesn't let people "let off steam," and that girls seem more violent than boys. To top it all off, the Surgeon General said he didn't dare say anything about violence in real life causing violence, as with news programs, for that would interfere with Freedom of Speech and Press—a right guaranteed in the First Amendment, but which seems a right denied producers of television fiction shows."

There you have it—in 164 words, rather than the 275 pages which the committee's report took.

Monster fans beware! Our President's Surgeon General doesn't like monsters, it seems to us. Are we soon to see little signs flashed on our TV screens: "WARNING! Watching This Monster Movie May Make You VIOLENT!"? Instead of just violently ill.

chuck

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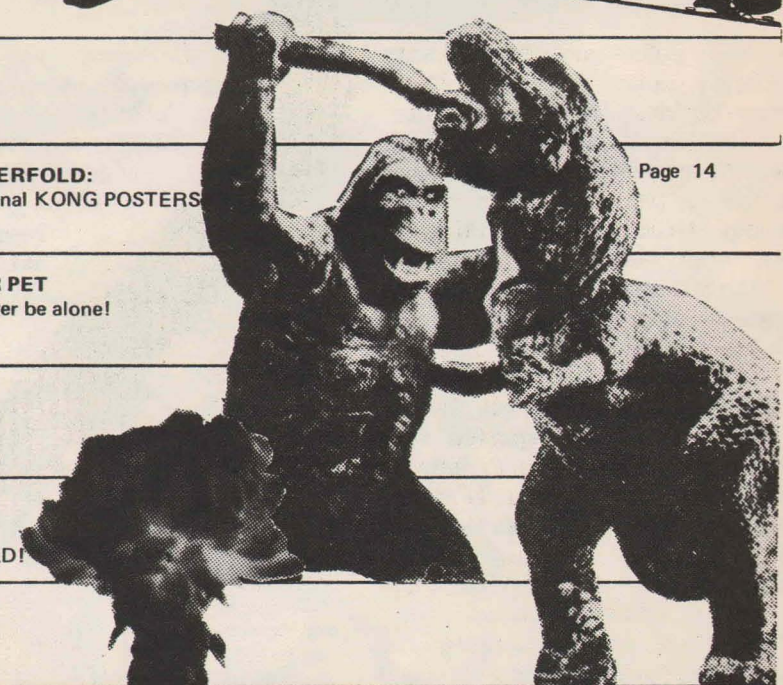
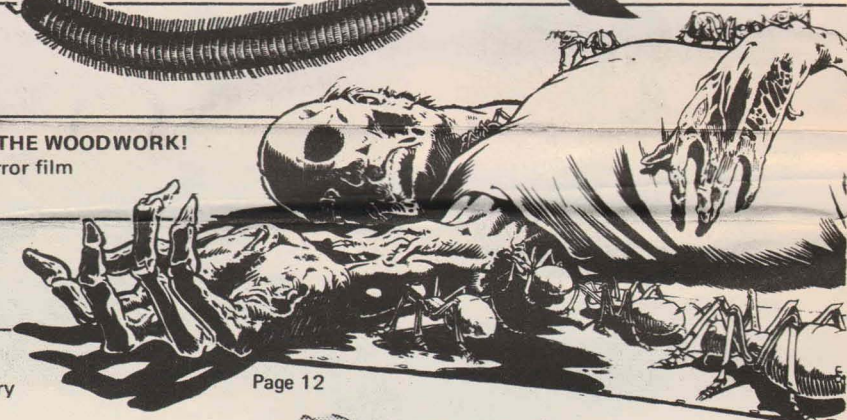
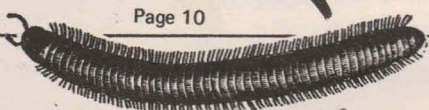
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THIS ISSUE'S COVER: is based on "THEM," conceived and executed by an illustratress named Wendy Wenzel, a MONSTER TIMES delineating discovery. 24-year-old Winsome Wendy comes from a family of illustrious artists. "I love crawly bugs," says Wendy, whose cover bears out this statement.

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The story you are about to read is true. I was there when it happened. My name is Steve Vertlieb, and I'm a newspaper reporter, specializing in human interest features to the *Alamagordo, New Mexico, Epitaph*, and occasional wire service extras.

I was covering a news story for which I took notes as I worked on it. The

search for Frank Vogel, an FBI agent, and his wife and child. These notes are printed now as I put them in my notebook. They are several different stories, all, until now, unpublished, suppressed by the FBI mostly — in the interest of national security, and they fit together to show the whole horrifying episode. These notes are as I wrote them . . . in these last few nightmarish days . . .



MYSTERIOUS deaths caused by inhuman objects lead Police Sergeant (JAMES WHITMORE) to gigantic footprints. Scientists (EDMUND GWENN) and daughter (JOAN WELDON) are called in.



INVESTIGATING the murders, Joan is panic-stricken as a high-pitched screech heralds the approach of something awesome clawing its way toward her. With machine gun, FBI agent (JAMES ARNESS) rushes to help.



AGAIN the monsters strike. Fear grips the country and martial law is declared. Following weeks of diligent search and questioning, a legion of the creeping frights is tracked to storm drains beneath the ground.



SOLDIERS, equipped with flame throwers, bazookas and cyanide gas bombs, are sped to the scene. Tracing a course through darkened labyrinths, they finally locate . . .

THEM

The state police car edges its way carefully along the hot, New Mexico highway. It is searching, searching for someone lost and alone. Overhead, the continual roar of a police search plane stirs the stillness of the Mojave desert and awakens long-sleeping inhabitants, birds, snakes, scorpions. Man has invaded Satan's sanctuary. But why does he dare?

An agent for the Federal Bureau Of Investigation is reported lost with his family while on a holiday camping trip in the desert. Now it's up to local authorities to find the missing campers. Probably just an empty gastank — though even that can mean life or death out here.

The plane reports finding an abandoned trailer camp a few miles off of the road and now Sgt. Ben Peterson and his partner, Ed Blackburn turn off in that direction. Hopeful.

Then we saw the Vogel girl. She's but a child of 7 or 8, and she stands on the scorching road as though frozen solid from some deadly fear. The car rolls up to her and stops. The two officers emerge from their car, wondered what had caused the separation of a lonely, frightened little

girl from her parents, especially out in the hellish desert.

"You're all right now. There's no need to worry," Peterson assures her "What's your name,

child? Where are your parents?"

His questioning is pointless, for the girl neither hears, nor replies to his prompting.

"She's in a state of shock, Ben,"

says Blackburn. "We'd better get her to a hospital and quickly!"

"Okay, but let the boys upstairs know that we've found her."

Peterson removes the radio receiver from its cradle and begins calling the search plane over head.

"Look, we've found their little girl but she's awfully bad off. She

can't talk, and she doesn't even seem to know that we're here! We'd better head back! Over?" The frustrating rigamaroles of police work!

An anxious voice from above filters, through the radio.

"Wait! we think we've sighted their trailer camp! It's about a mile down the road from you. You'd better take a look, Ben."

"Okay, we'll investigate," Peterson replied. "The girl couldn't have wandered very far in this heat. The camp must be where she's from."

The officers place their ward beside me in the back seat of the squad car and proceed in the direction of the camp site. Their ride was a short one. The little girl makes

This photo of FBI agent Bob Graham and Pat Medford was taken by means of a special telescopic lens from a police search helicopter. All newpix on these pages were supplied by special MT photographer on the scene: a scoop to THE MONSTER TIMES.



no other movements that to look furtively out the window through the sides of her eyes.

"There it is, there it is, Ed! I see it! It's just ahead."

The trailer comes into view as the car rumbles over a ravine, but the Mr. & Mrs. Vogel, the rest of the missing family are not to be seen. Peterson comforted the little girl, Blackburn investigates the site further, disappears from view as he turns off around the side of



VOGEL CHILD LOCATED BY BEN PETERSON. Missing child (Sandy Descher) calmed by Police Sgt. Peterson. She is in shock.

the trailer. A shout! Peterson runs when he hears his partner's call. I stay with the child.

Mystery Destruction

"Hey Ben, come here quick! You've got to see this! You too, Steve." I follow in bewilderment. The deceptive serenity that greets passers-by at the frontal end of the camp site changed dramatically: only a few feet away, the camp was in a shambles, completely wrecked — horrifiedly torn apart!

But the damnable thing about the whole wreck, the thing that threatens to keep all of us awake nights, maddenly, for weeks to come, is the apparently inescapable conclusion that the walls of the trailer have been pulled out, rather than caved in!

Clothing was carelessly strewn about the ground and furniture had been smashed into fire wood. No other sign of the parents. Child desertion? No, that's not it.

Blackburn retrieves a small article from the ground. He examines it. Looks in the trailer for more of the same.

"Hey, Ben, look at this."

Peterson joins him sits in the remains of what once was a chair.

"What you got, Ed?" he asks suspiciously.

"It's a cube of sugar."

"Well, what's so unusual about a sugar cube?"

"I don't know, Ben," he said. "Nothing, I guess, except that the ground's covered with them. Everywhere the damage is, I find dozens of these sugar cubes." The inside of the trailer is covered with them. Would any family normally have so many sugar cubes?"

"Listen, let's get back to town, Ed. That child needs medical attention, and from the look of this place I'd say that it's a safe bet her parents aren't going to turn up . . . at least not alive, anyway." The F.B.I. has a stake in this now. Vogel was one of their top men. They shall be notified. That was the reasoning which brought our government onto this case.

The officers start their car and roll off back in the direction of town and civilization.

At the deserted camp the wind

grows restless. As restless as we. The child sleeps, stiffly sitting up in the back seat. She looks wide awake . . . Poor child . . .

Local Merchant Mysteriously Murdered

"Pop" Smyth's local general store is on the way back to town. Ben Peterson figures the little girl's folks must have stopped there for supplies on their way out to the desert. If they had stopped, the chances are pretty good that "Pop" remembers them.

Getting twilight as the squad car pulls up in front of the small store. The lights are off inside. Pop never closes this early. Ben and Ed and I open the door and walk inside. The light switch on the wall wasn't working, so Ed pulls out his flash light, inventories the store.

In the eerie dimness the circle of light spots a weird tableau. Tables are over turned and merchandise savagely torn apart. The place looks like a hurricane had hit it. Blackburn noticed little white particles of dust scattered about the room/ Lifts a handful of the dust to his mouth. "It's not dust," he declares quickly. It's sugar! Ben finds the trap door to the cellar



SCIENTIST'S DAUGHTER FLEES RAVENOUS GIANT ANT-LIKE INSECT, BARELY ESCAPES. Patricia Medford flees ant-giant; newsphoto taken from Police Helicopter.

partially open. Opens it further, shines his flash light in. There is Pop. His body crumpled and lifeless, half on the steps and half off. He clutches a rifle in his arms, but even if he were still alive, that heavy metal rifle wouldn't do him much good. Turned and twisted into a shapeless heap of garbage. It seemed as if some giant vice had gotten at him.

Ed heard a sound. Investigates outside. Ben is still in the cellar with Pop and myself. A sort of high pitched whistling sound coming from outside. Instinctively, Ed unholstered his revolver as he creeps outside to the back of the store. We wait.

BULLETIN! Policeman Disappears

Whatever it was that he saw, Ed Blackburn will never tell. He was firing wildly at something that terrified him. The gun fire had no effect and Ed has disappeared, carried away by — WHAT?

He screamed, and then he was gone.

Ben found Ed Blackburn's cap lying in the blood-stained dirt. He heard the sound too. It was intensely loud. Whatever had made it



GOVT. SCIENTIST UNCOVERS 1st CLUE PRIOR TO DISCOVERY OF HIVE. Dr. Harold (Edmund Gwenn) Medford points to 38-inch insect-leg fragment.

was heading back into the desert. After a while it had gone entirely . . . The Vogel child was safe in the car unmoving. Eyes open!

Wednesday. Pop Smythe died no ordinary death. It has been determined by the police lab that the elderly man had enough Formic Acid in his body to kill ten men. Thus ends this first aspect of the story for the time being.

Formic acid has proven a clue to bring Vogel's child to awareness.

Doctors at the New Mexico Hospital had tried all afternoon to

abandoned when a quick-thinking nurse walked in carrying the vial of Formic Acid. It was only a chance, of course, but as everything else had failed there wasn't anything to lose by trying this. She removed the lid slowly and held the bottle under the little girl's nose. The effect was instantaneous. There was a slight movement in her eyes as she started to regain her awareness. All at once the Vogel child was screaming. She grew hysterical and couldn't be restrained. She was yelling it over and over again, just one word again and again.

"THEM.....THEM.....THEM!"

Authorities Investigate Crime Sight — New Clue Found

Thursday morning. The abandoned camp site covered with swarming investigators. Every inch of ground in the immediate area gone over and photographed. Sgt. Ben Peterson and I noticed the sound. It seems to blend in with the desert wind. So subtle and yet there, part of the desert and yet completely alien to the surroundings. All hear it soon.

"What the Hell is it," Police captain asks.

"It's nothing, nothing. The wind sometimes gets pretty freakish in these parts. That's all it is." Says Mayor (talking through his hat) Don't print!

It's almost like the sound of a thousand whistlers singing at once. The effect is awesome. It seems to come from all about. It grows louder. We are now surrounded by it. Then, as suddenly as it had started, the sound fades

FBI TO THE RESCUE! SPECIAL GOVT. AGENT ROBERT GRANT FELS GIANT ANT WITH PISTOL! "I took aim; fired," says Grant, "Hoping only to scare it. To my surprise, it died!"



away back into the desert. In a moment... gone!

"Hey, will you look at this?" someone said, "Is this a footprint, or what?"

A huge indentation in the sand. Peterson stares intently at the shape. Never seen anything like it, he says. Neither has anyone else. A plaster cast of the print is made to be sent to Washington. Whatever it was, they should have a record of it and be able to send back an identification.

were told that you would meet us. I'm Dr. Harold Medford, and this is my daughter, Patricia."

"I beg your pardon, sir, but this is going to be a dangerous job. You and your daughter will only get in the way. Frankly, I don't know why they sent you." — Ben says this. Is his territory threatened? Does he see this as an insult to his skill? — A job for an editorial writer this.

Patricia Medford glares at us as she speaks.

his "leg-girl." Pat Medford wanders away from the others, strikes out on her own...

It must have sensed our return for the strange, whistling sound returned. Pat was standing by a hill when she heard the sound for the first time. It was so intense now that she felt it must be quite near. She turned to start back and then she saw it Huge! A huge animal, larger than anything she had ever seen before. Its body seemed to be separated into three sec-

then inject fast-acting poison into the central nervous system." — Pat Medford.

Pat screamed as the animal lumbered up and over the hill. Graham appeared suddenly and started firing at the animal.

"Run, Pat"

The two sped from the hill; Graham continued firing bullets; emptying nearly two rounds of ammunition. The beast fell to the ground. Dead. Harold Medford left the jeep, and joined his daughter, and Bob Graham, and myself.

"What is it?" Graham.

"That," said the doctor coolly, "is an ANT!"

"But, so huge?" — Graham.

"This was approximately the site of those Atomic bomb testing blasts, wasn't it? Yes, of course it was. You know, children, we've entered a frightening age, this nuclear age of ours, and there's no telling what will come out of it. We're experimenting with energies that man has no experience with and our lessons will come hard, I'm afraid. I believe that these mutated ants — "Them," if you will — were created by the testing of Atomic bombs in this desert. We must claim the awesome responsibility for bringing them into our world." Thus spoke Professor Harold Medford.

2 hrs. later... It has been decided that the team fly over the site again in a helicopter to search for a hill in the shape of a huge cone. This would, inevitably, be the tunnel leading to the nest. General O'Brien and Major Kibbee are now in on this one. Kibbee flies along with Ben Peterson and myself. Alamogordo Air Force Base is cut into the game.

It looks like an ice cream cone sticking out in the desert. Dr. Medford's face is grim. His worst fears are coming true.

"That's it, gentlemen, that's your nest."

The helicopters are landed at the foot of the cone. The plan is a simple one: to shoot cyanide gas pellets into the nest with bazookas and

Continued on page 29



AUTHORITIES ROUND UP AND KILL VULNERABLE ANTS. HEARD REST INTO HIVE FOR GAS-SLAUGHTER: QUEEN ESCAPES!
Police and Army Helicopters use an old rodeo trick to herd up and kill the ants, then institute a search for missing Ant-Queen.

FBI Assigned to Killings

Thursday evening the F.B.I. has sent Robert Graham, a special agent from the Washington office to handle its interests in the case. Graham and Peterson will be working together for the first time. Ben doesn't mind the company. I tag along. It's been lonely on the job since Ed's been killed." — Peterson off the record.

Their first assignment; meet the plane of a specialist that the home office had sent down to assist in the investigation. They had just reached the air field as the plane was set down. A young woman's inescapably attractive legs begin descending the ladder. Peterson and Graham and Vertlieb exchange knowing glances. Graham reaches out his hands and helps the lady to the ground. Why don't I join the FBI? — Off the Record though.

"Please help my father down," she demands. "He's having trouble."

Graham walks up the ladder a bit, aides the old man down to a safe landing.

Old man? The sparkling Santa Claus white hair and a mischievous grin that shines when he introduced himself betraying a youthful, inquisitive, logical mind. Hardly an FBI agent!

"You're Graham, I take it. We

"Listen! my father is one of the country's leading Entomologists, and he's better equipped to deal with what's been happening out here than you are."

"Entomologist???" Now *What* is an entomologist?" Ben demands, irked.

"It's simply the study of insects, Sergeant," the elder Medford explains. If this weren't such a tragic case these quibbles would make a light feature story!

What do insects have to do with these unexplained deaths? Dr. Medford grows impatient at our puzzlement.

"Please, please, gentlemen... may I be taken out to the site of the first death. I want to see where the print was taken."

"I think that can be arranged, Doctor," offered Graham. "Do you have any idea what bug could have made a print like that?"

The doctor looked deep in thought and then looked at the three.

"I'd rather not say just yet, but if what I think has happened has happened it will be very serious indeed." We leave first thing in the morn.

Monster Ants Discovered

Friday 7 am. The jeep stops at the trailer site and a team of investigators got out. Dr. Medford can't walk very far; his daughter acts as

tions. "It had six legs, long tentacles reaching from between the eyes on the head, and huge pinchers that extended from the mouth and were evidently used by the creature to impale a victim and

NATIONAL GUARD PROWLS CHICAGO SEWERS, ORDERS: SHOOT TO KILL ALL THAT MOVES! As city quakes under martial law, Guardsmen traverse honey-comb sewer complex.

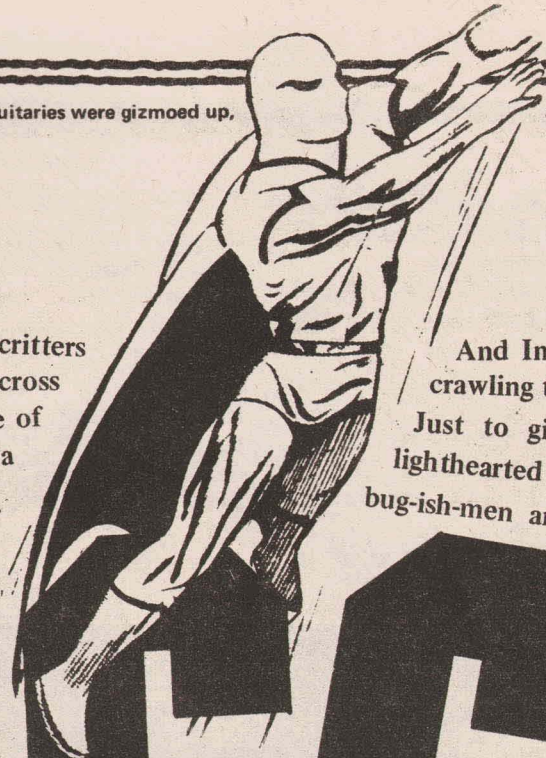


THE FLY MAN fought a lot of crooks, inconspicuously, as his pituitaries were gizmoed up,

and he shrunk down . . . The comic he premiered in, was only inches tall.

Insects and spiders and other bug-like critters have been creeping and crawling across palpitating pulp paper since the first bundle of comics was baled together and tossed on a newsie's curb way back in the 30's.

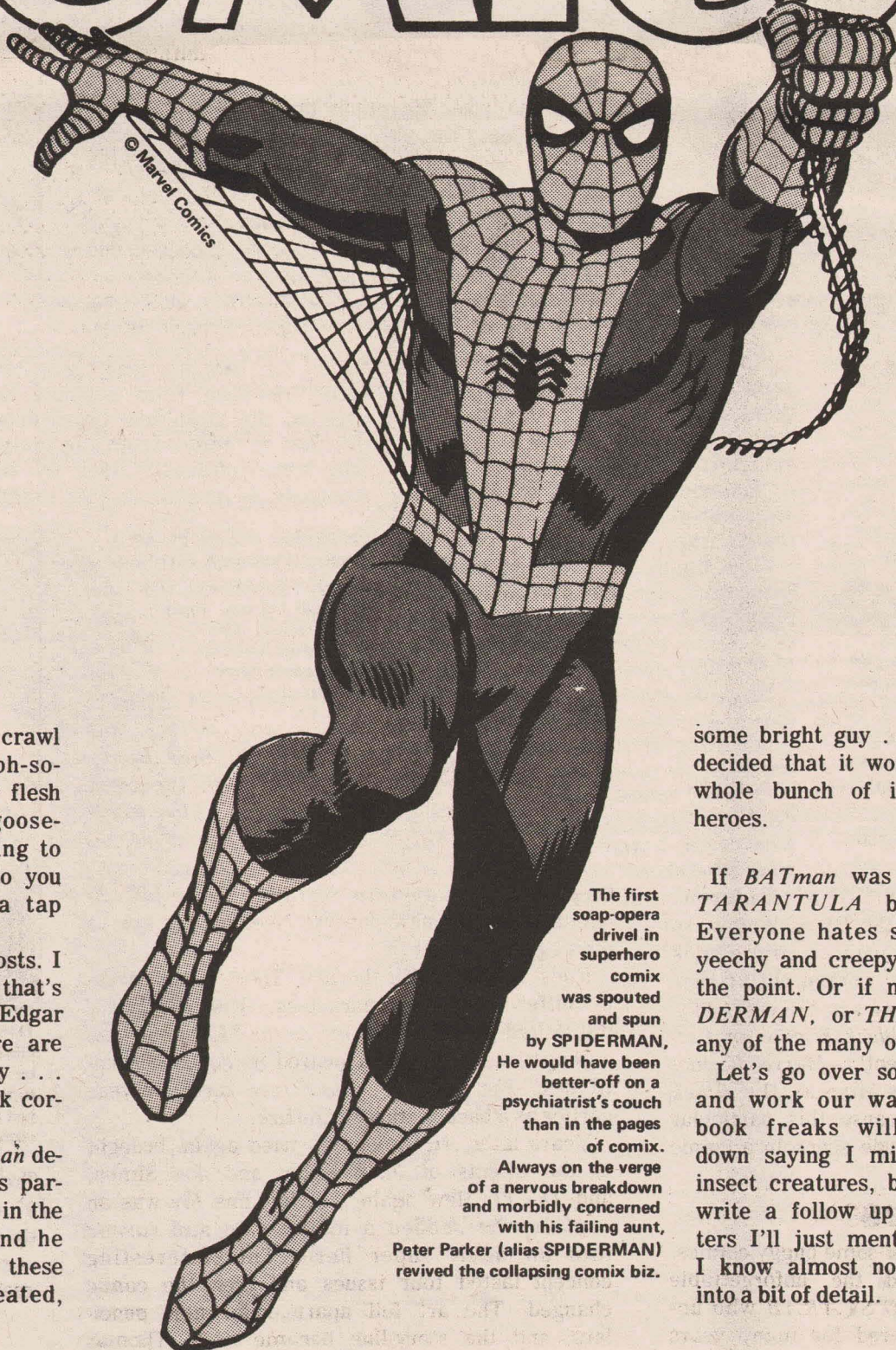
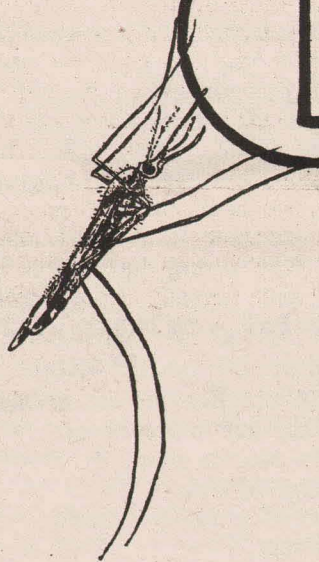
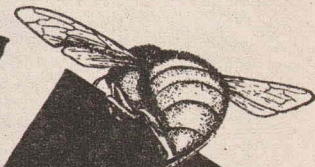
And Insectx in Comix are still creeping and crawling through comic book pages today. Just to give you the willies, we present a rather lighthearted (and lightheaded) survey of bug-ish-men and women who were super-heros



BUGGED

WITH

COMICS?



Insects **BUG** me. They really do. They crawl up and down your body, touching it oh-so-lightly that you shiver just a bit, and your flesh crawls ever so slightly, and you get goose-bumps and then you start to shake, trying to make it seem like nothing is happening to you so no-one knows that a bug is doing a tap dance in your armpit.

So insects bug me. I avoid them at all costs. I should say that I try to avoid them. But that's like trying to avoid the master-bugger, J. Edgar Hoover at an F.B.I. convention. But there are some insects that I don't get too bugged by . . . and they're the insects that inhabit the dark corridors of comics.

After *Superman* made it big . . . after *Batman* decided to seek revenge for the death of his parents, after *Captain Marvel* met some drunk in the subways who told him to say *Shazam* and he would have super powers . . . after all these normal type of characters had been created,

some bright guy . . . an exterminator probably, decided that it would be a good thing to give a whole bunch of insect names to comic book heroes.

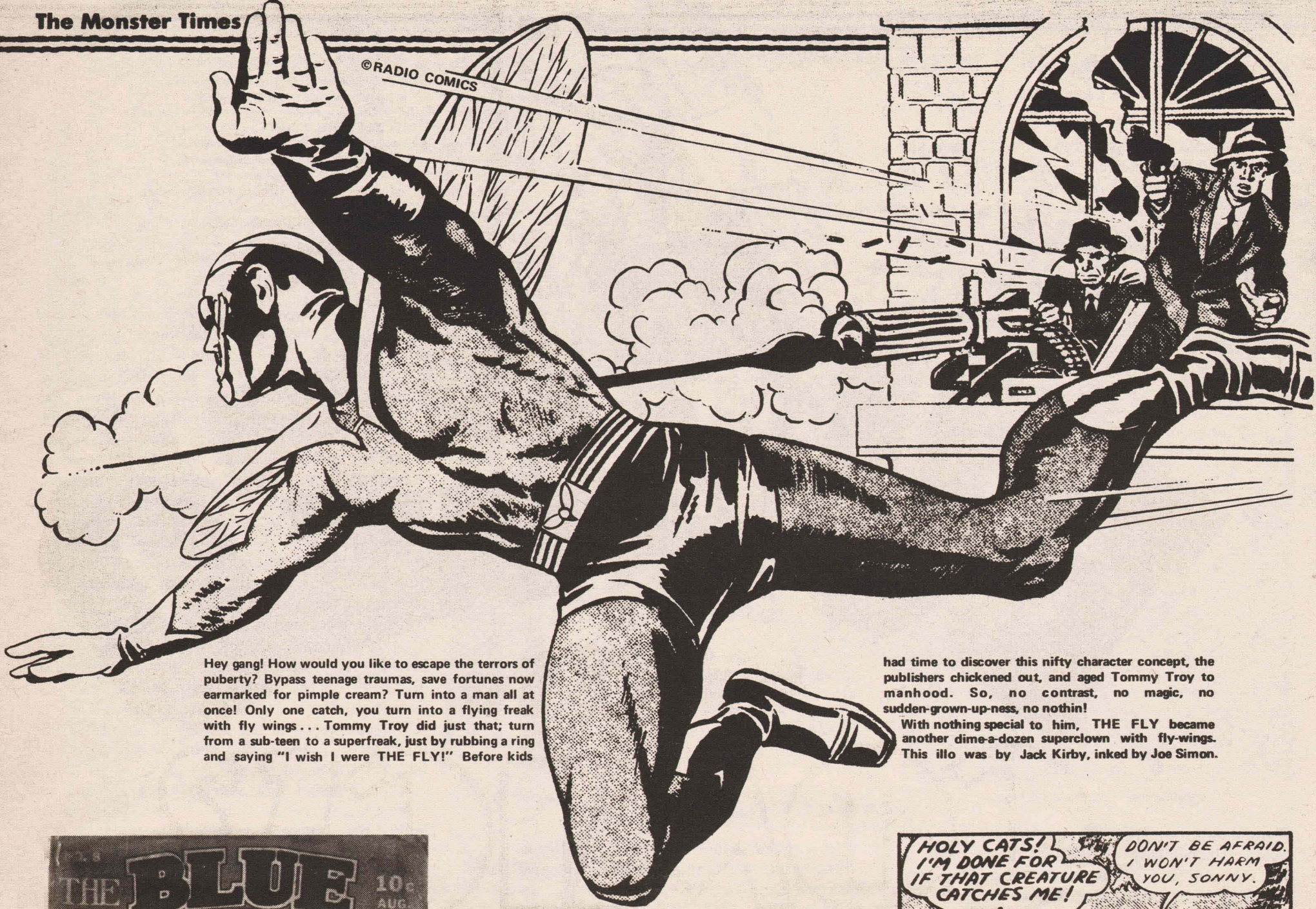
BUGS

If *BATman* was a terrifying name, wouldn't *TARANTULA* be even more frightening? Everyone hates spiders. They make you feel yeechy and creepy and crawly and . . . you get the point. Or if not *Tarantula*, how about *SPI-DERMAN*, or *THE FLY*, or *BLUE BEETLE* or any of the many other comic book characters.

Let's go over some of the earliest characters and work our way up to the present. Comic book freaks will probably scream up and down saying I missed a whole bunch of these insect creatures, but then who cares? Let them write a follow up article. Some of the characters I'll just mention by name, simply because I know almost nothing of them. Others I'll go into a bit of detail.

The first soap-opera drivel in superhero comix was spouted and spun by SPIDERMAN. He would have been better-off on a psychiatrist's couch than in the pages of comix. Always on the verge of a nervous breakdown and morbidly concerned with his failing aunt, Peter Parker (alias SPIDERMAN) revived the collapsing comix biz.

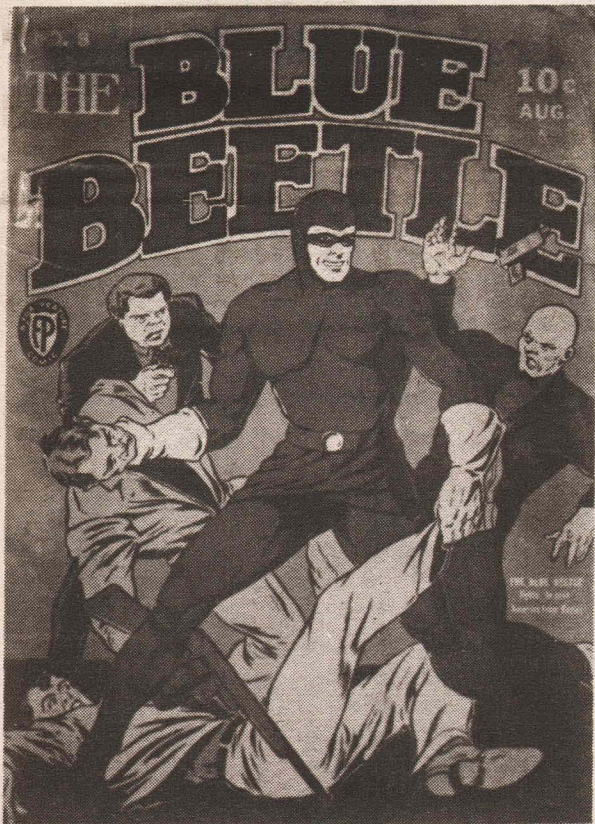
©RADIO COMICS



Hey gang! How would you like to escape the terrors of puberty? Bypass teenage traumas, save fortunes now earmarked for pimple cream? Turn into a man all at once! Only one catch, you turn into a flying freak with fly wings... Tommy Troy did just that; turn from a sub-teen to a superfreak, just by rubbing a ring and saying "I wish I were THE FLY!" Before kids

had time to discover this nifty character concept, the publishers chickened out, and aged Tommy Troy to manhood. So, no contrast, no magic, no sudden-grown-up-ness, no nothin!

With nothing special to him, THE FLY became another dime-a-dozen superclown with fly-wings. This illo was by Jack Kirby, inked by Joe Simon.



THE BLUE BEETLE of 1941 was a buggish form of the cornball comic strip character, THE PHANTOM. The costume was the same except for a loin-cloth instead of striped swim-trunks. The character was just as dumb.

to come. His career lasted for five exciting stories in *Champion Comics*, 1939 to 1940.

Whereas one Egyptian created hero lasted but one year, the career of the *BLUE BEETLE* spanned comic book history. Fox Features created the first *Blue Beetle*, whose identity was Dan Garrett. Holyoke took the feature over several years later in 1942. This character appeared not only in his own book, but also as a character in *Mystery Men*, *Big Three*, *Real Hit*, *Phantom Lady*, *All-Top*, *Zegra*, and *Variety*. Though his own book didn't last long, he was making appearances elsewhere until the early fifties.

AND EVEN MORE BUGS

In the Mid-fifties, *Charlton Comics* got the rights to the character and published it for awhile, and then he was again dropped. In the early sixties he was brought back again in a disastrous comic published by Charlton, and was quickly cancelled once more. A few years later, under the artistic hand of Steve Ditko, a man responsible for another buggy hero, *Spiderman*, the character was refurbished, given a new costume, a new identity, and, in fact, was accused of murdering the original *Blue Beetle*. This series, though short lived, was the most creative and best written of all the *Blue Beetle* stories. One side note. *Fox Features*, in an attempt to cash in on *Blue Beetle's* popularity, tried to peddle a comic strip featuring his adventures to the newspapers. Needless to say, it didn't go too far.

Flies also got into the act. There were several different flying characters. The *FIREFLY* published by *MLJ*, later *Archie Comics*, was amongst the first. He appeared in *Top-Notch* until 1942. *The Fly Man*, *Clip Foster*, died one year earlier as a back feature in *Spitfire*.

Years later *Archie Comics* tried again, brought in the talents of Jack Kirby and Joe Simon, and *The Fly* flew again... but this *Fly* was an orphan who rubbed a magic ring and turned into an adult super hero. This interesting concept lasted four issues and then the comic changed. The art fell apart under new pencilers, and the story-line became zilch. Thomas



THE SPIDER WOMAN of *MAJOR VICTORY COMICS* was a minor disaster. We charitably help the old girl keep up her image, by NOT showing much of her "Terrifying Costume" which supposedly scared crooks. That was her shtick. No super-powers, just a bug-eyed costume to scare crooks. And as for that (ho-ho!) costume—twas a real scream!

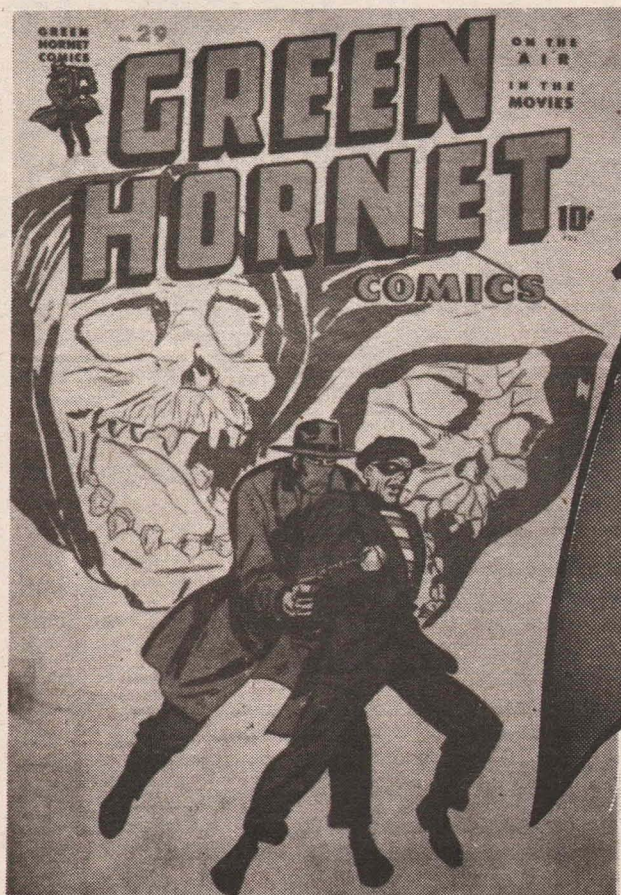
Troy, the orphan, grew up, became dull, met a *Fly-Girl*, and finally changed his own name to *Fly Man*. Riding the crest of camp super-heroes, he died shortly afterwards. No one mourned his passing.

Continued on next page

BUGS= BUGS=

Egypt became the source of some buggy comics. The holy insect prompted the unforgettable character, *THE BLAZING SCARAB* who undoubtedly will be remembered for many years

The Hooded Wasp appeared in *The Shadow*, and he, too, had a partner . . . *Wasplet*. Never let it be said that comics tried to be original! If the Hooded



And then there was The Green Hornet . . .

Wasp didn't turn you off, the *MOTH* probably would. Undoubtedly the *Moth's* power was to eat the clothing off of your back. *Moth* appeared in the back of *Mystery Men* comics.

While *The Moth* was burning up in the lime-light, *THE SCARAB* appeared. One thing about comics is, if a name proves interesting, everyone will soon use it. Better Publication, a conglomerate name for several other comic houses, published this character during the late 1940's.



This mysterious creature isn't (regretfully) on the checklist below (alas, poor oversight! We're known by them well!). The lady is called *THE SPIDER QUEEN* (God knows why?!), and she first appeared in a comic book called "The Eagle" (No. 2). Her real name was Shannon Kane, and "enemies of his country" murdered her hubby, a "brilliant young government chemist on a special assignment". She sought *VENGEANCE* with a vengeance, by George!



crises and frequently don't know who they are). *Ant-Man* married another insect, *The Wasp*, not related to *The Hooded Wasp* and *Wasplet* mentioned earlier, nor *The Wasp* that appeared in *Silver Streak* comics, nor the *other Wasp* that fought crime and stuff in *Speed* and *Champ* comics . . . I think that comics have seen enough wasps for awhile. *National (DC) Comics* entered the scene in the early forties with *Tarantula*, whose secret identity was, get this, *John Law!* *Tarantula* chased villains using his "web-gun," walked up and down the sides of buildings, and, at times, was called *Spider-Man*. *Marvel's* Stan Lee "came up with" his own *Spiderman*, Peter Parker, in the early sixties.

Finally we come to *Yellowjacket*. *Yellowjacket* appeared in the late forties under the secret identity of Vince Harley. *Yellowjacket* was also one of the names that *Marvel* used in connection with their character, *Ant-Man*.

That about ends the listing of insect heroes in comics. If you should know of any others — forget it. I'm not interested.

When I began this article I said comic book insect heroes were okay . . . that they didn't bother me. I take that back. After going over a list that includes names like *The Blazing Scarab*, or *Wasplet*, or the *Moth*, comic book insect characters bug me as much as real insects do.

Anyone have a can of *Raid*?

—Marvin Wolfman

ABOUT THE AUTHORS: MARV WOLFFMAN is a pro satire-magazine writer, and writer-editor at DC Comics. JIMMY THORNTON is a mild-mannered doorman for a large, metropolitan apartment house, who, in his spare-time identify is the country's most fan-atical enthusiast for *The Green Hornet*.



A SHORT HISTORY OF BUGGY COMIX

ANT MAN: He was in reality Henry Pym, a scientific chemical genius; who discovered a way to shrink down to ant-size and communicate with the insects. His female partner was the 'Wasp.' Together, they fought crime in *Marvel Comics*.

The **BLACK WIDOW:** She was really Miss Linda Masters. As the Black Widow, she set out to avenge the death of her husband. Her only disguise was a mask. Though she wore clothes. She first appeared in *CATMAN COMICS* No. 1. (In 1941, she was drawn by Allen Ulmer.)

The **BLUE BEETLE:** In reality, he was Dan Garrett. His uniform was blue, skin-tight, chainmail armor - with a blue mask. He used a magic blue lamp or lantern as a weapon. He first appeared in *Mystery Men Comics* and then got his own comic book later on. Many comics used him as a guest star, along with their regular super heroes. The artist that drew him was Charles Nicholas.

The **FIREFLY:** He wore a costume something like Air-Wave's uniform. One of his special gifts was the artificial power to glow in the dark, in order to surprise criminals. Like many in the 1940's, he fought Nazi agents.

The **FLY-MAN:** Was really Clip Foster, a prizefighter. His father, who was an inventor, created a serum that could shrink humans to the size of a fly. He was never able to regain his normal size. (He was in 'Family Comics'.)

The **FLY:** He was no relation to 'Fly Man.' In the beginning, he fought alone; but later on he adopted a female partner who came to be known only as

Fly Girl. Together, they fought internal and international wrong-doers.

The **GREEN HORNET:** In reality, he's Britt Reid; young publisher of the newspaper known as the 'Daily Sentinel.' He chose the name and emblem of the Green Hornet, because this type of insect is the angriest when aroused.

The **HOODED WASP:** The Hooded Wasp first appeared in *SHADOW COMICS* in the year 1942. He had a young teenage partner known as 'The Wasplet', who was in reality Jim Martin. They fought crime and Nazi agents.

The **MOTH:** He made his first appearance in *MYSTERY MEN Comics* in 1940. Not much is known of him. . . though he probably beat up plenty of bad guys.

The **RED BEE:** In reality, he was Rick Ralieg; and was in *Hit Comics*. Another man-of-mystery, known but to God and the 3 people in the world who must have read him.

The **SCARAB:** He was named after the mystical, sacred Scarab; an insect considered holy in ancient Egypt. He wore the magic Scarab medallion around his neck at all times; for protection. He used mind and magic to fight crime.

The **SILVER SCORPION:** She was really Betty Barston, and she made her first appearance in *Daring Mystery Comics* in 1941 as a guest star.

The **SPIDER:** Like the Shadow, he was a rich playboy on the side. His black costume was like the Shadow's except that it was lined with webs. His partner was an East Indian named Ram Singh. As a

team, they fought Nazis n' criminals.

SPIDER MAN: Peter Parker was bitten by a spider crawling with atomic radiation, and became Spider Man; with all of the powers of a spider. His greatest nemesis was the editor of the newspaper he worked for. (*Marvel Comics*.)

The **SPIDER WIDOW:** She began her crime-fighting career in *Feature Comics* No. 57. In reality, she was really Dianne Grayton; she had no particular powers. She used spiders to frighten her enemies. (As early as 1942 - drawn by Frank Borth.)

SPIDER WOMAN: She was really Helen Goddard, and she made her first appearance in *Major Victory Comics* No. 1 in 1944. She also fought Nazis n' Japs.

The **TARANTULA:** was really John Law and first appeared in 1941, in DC's *Star Spangled Comics*.

The **WASP:** She was the female assistant of Ant Man. With the scientific help of Henry Pym (Ant Man), she could be reduced to the size of a wasp; — wings n all. The Wasp first made her appearance in *Marvel Comics* in 1965.

The **WASP:** (Not the *Marvel* version), was really Burton Slade; and made his first appearance in 1939 in *Silver Streak Comics*. Drawn by J. Fletcher.

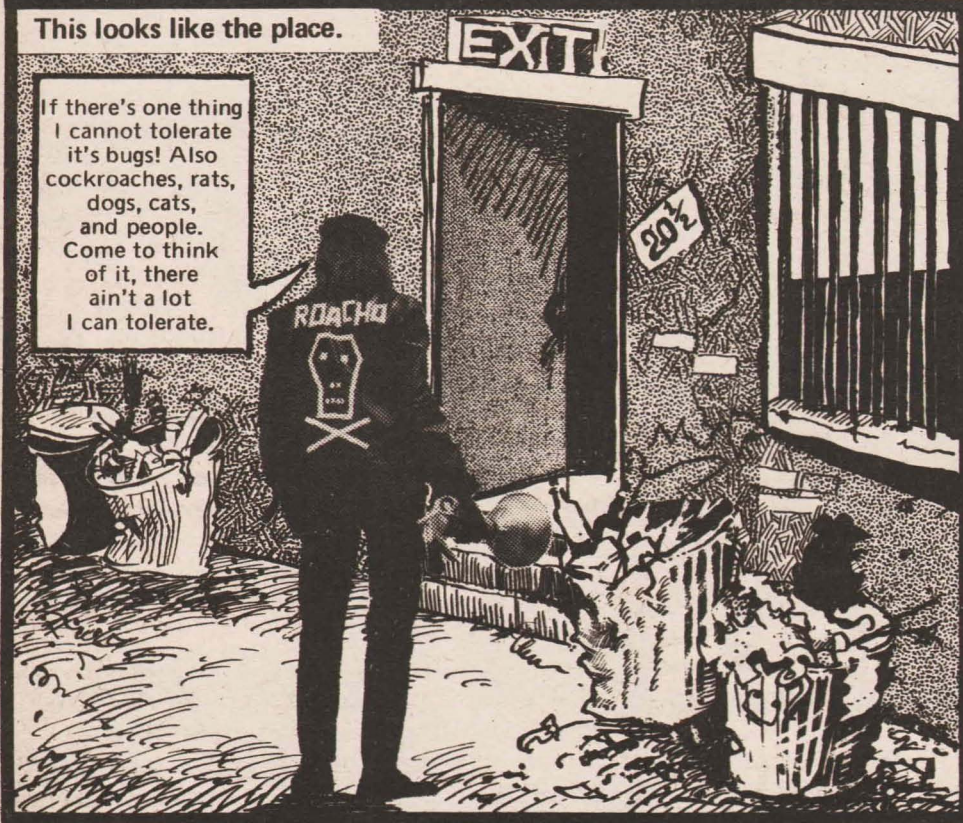
YELLOW-JACKET: Here was an unusually colorful comic book super hero. His costume was modeled after a giant bumble bee. It was mostly composed of black and yellow stripes, from head to toe; with an eye mask attached to it.

Jimmy Thornton

IT CRAWLED FROM OUT OF THE WOODWORK!

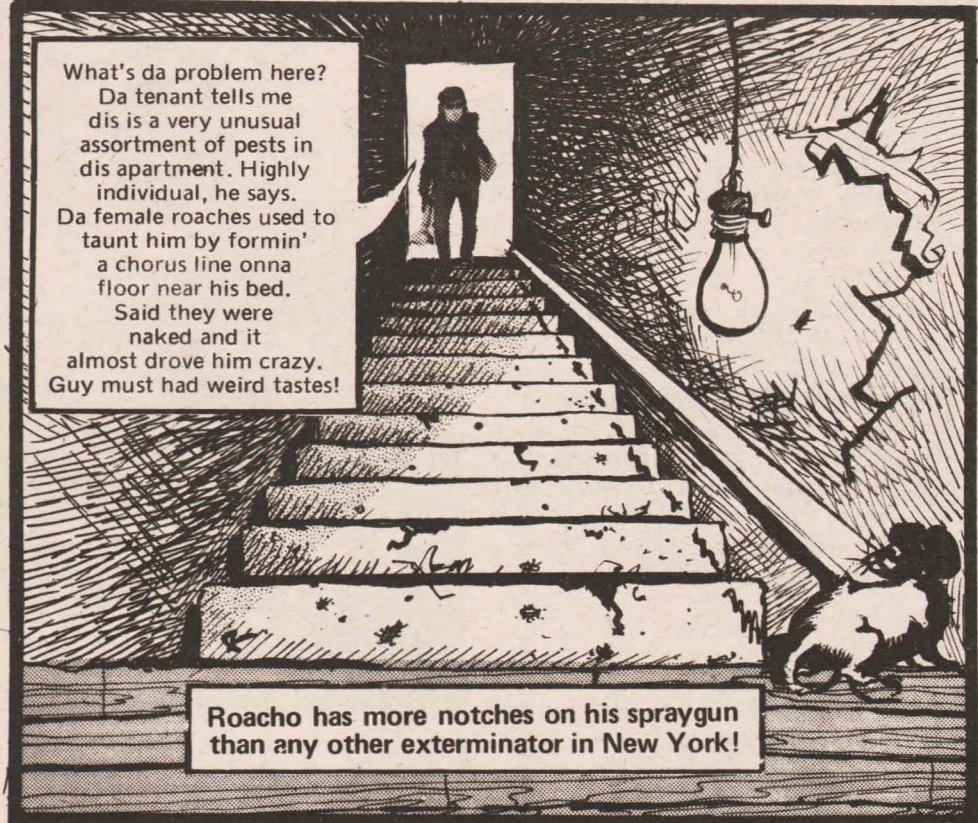
It was a typical winter's day in New York City's exotic Lower East Side when exterminator Roacho Rizzo began his daily rounds. Somewhere, beyond a gray veil of pollution, the sun was shining and the

temperature stood at a pleasant, air-inverted 95 degrees, as Roacho took several giant steps throughout the litter-strewn streets to get to his first destination.



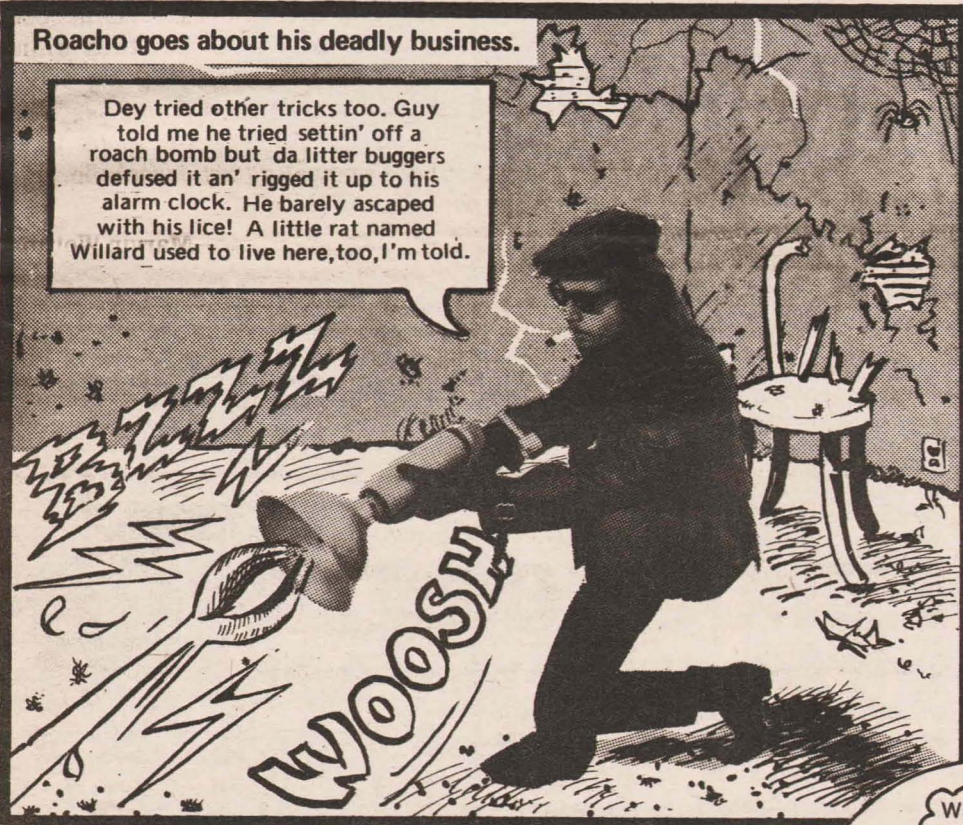
This looks like the place.

If there's one thing I cannot tolerate it's bugs! Also cockroaches, rats, dogs, cats, and people. Come to think of it, there ain't a lot I can tolerate.



What's da problem here? Da tenant tells me dis is a very unusual assortment of pests in dis apartment. Highly individual, he says. Da female roaches used to taunt him by formin' a chorus line onna floor near his bed. Said they were naked and it almost drove him crazy. Guy must had weird tastes!

Roacho has more notches on his spraygun than any other exterminator in New York!



Roacho goes about his deadly business.

Dey tried other tricks too. Guy told me he tried settin' off a roach bomb but da litter buggers defused it an' rigged it up to his alarm clock. He barely escaped with his lice! A little rat named Willard used to live here, too, I'm told.



But there ain't a roach alive whose feeler don't twitch at the name of Roacho Rizzo. They oughtta learn their place, ya know what I mean?



But Roacho's foes are a clever lot.

Say, what goes here? Some kinda gag?



Why, the little...



Roacho follows them into another room where ...

Can't you guys take a joke?

END

page 1
The Monster Times Teletype

... is our way of getting the latest hot-off-the-wire info to you; reviews, previews, scoops on horror films in production, newsworthy monster curiosities, bulletins, and other grues-flashes. There are several contributors to our hodge-podge Teletype page... **BILL FERET**, our man in Show Biz (he's a professional actor, singer, dancer with the impressive resume list of stage, film and TV credits to his name), makes use of his vast professional experiences and leads to Feret-out items of interest to monster fans, and duly report on them in his flashing Walter-Wind-chill manner.



The Apeman swings again. Tarzan is not dead, nor do I hope he ever dies. M-G-M has in the works a "new" TARZAN feature film to be done in period costume and shot in East Africa. Would that the public really new what Burroughs' Tarzan was really like. If Hollywood had only done an authentic version of the novels, they might, but the typical



National Comics' new Tarzan - to be reviewed soon.

image of the "Me, Tarzan... You, Jane" jungle man is dimwittedly false.

Did you know that he spoke fluent English, and even before he spoke English, he spoke *fluent French*, not to mention dozens of African dialects and some German too? That he lived in London for many years as Lord Greystoke, and owned a tremendous plantation in Kenya?

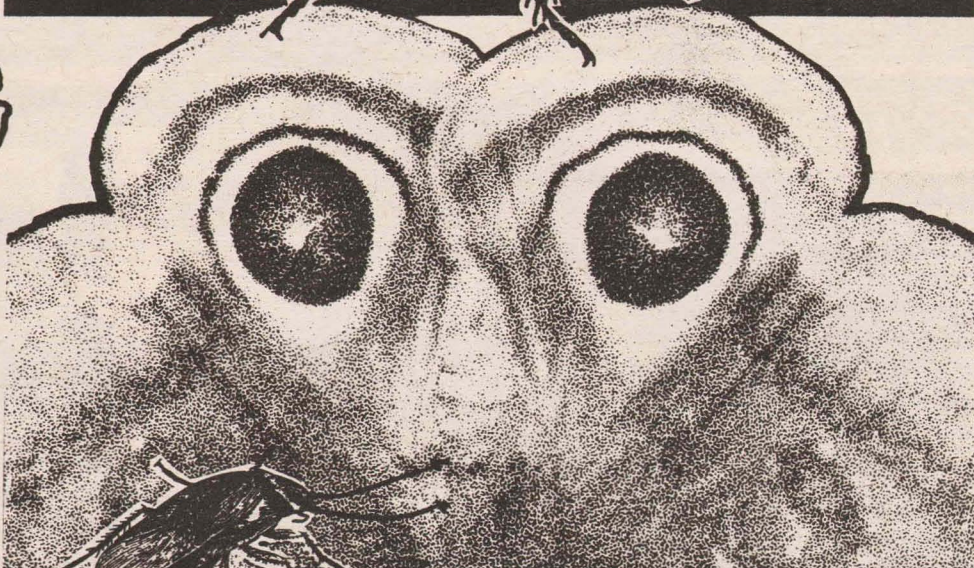
Allan Balter and William Read Woodfield are writing the screenplay. They worked on the ABC-TV film "EARTH II." Please let them keep from mulching out more "processed" Edgar Rice!

And if you think Tarzan doesn't belong in the Monster genre, you're mistaken. He has been to more lost lands (Pal-U-Don), more lost civilizations (Opar, city of Atlantis with La, it's high priestess), encountered more monsters (the prehistoric inner world of Pellucidar) and been to countless other horrific places and met more beings of Monsterdom... than Conan, Back Rogers or Richard Nixon

While were on Burroughs, isn't it

SOME HELLSTROM CHRONICLE FACTS TO BUG YOU

Science Fiction? No. Science Fact.



THE HELLSTROM CHRONICLE



David L. Wolper, long-time producer of documentaries has out-done himself on THE HELLSTROM CHRONICLE, which is still playing local theatres across the country. Although it is factual, it's conclusions are more chilling than most science fiction and horror novels.

The conclusion? That we will someday be replaced by insects. That insects are the really superior life species, and will out live and out last and out eat us, some day not too far away. How did they come up with such a conclusion? Well, here are the facts which THE HELLSTROM CHRONICLE portrays for us on the moth-eaten silver screen...

Fifty million years before the first bird appeared on earth, the insect had accomplished flight.

Today, as most other animal species are diminishing in population, only two—MAN and INSECT—are definitely on the increase. Man, because he is the only creature able to change his environment and the insect, because he is the only creature who can adapt to any changes man can make.

Insects can pull objects a hundred times their weight, jump a distance fifty times their size, consume as much as a hundred times their weight each day. The longest jump by a man is 29 feet, 2½ inches.

In the time it will take a single human embryo to develop, the coddling moth could reproduce 401,306,000,000 of his kind.

The African termite carefully cultivates an underground mushroom garden for its food supply.

about time someone thought about filming the "Mars" Books. (A princess of, warlord of, etc.) That would be the greatest accomplishment to see filmization in decades. (Whatever happened to the filming of Bradbury's MARTIAN CHRONICLES?)

Deborah Kerr may star (hopefully) in AIP's new screen version of "THE HOUSE OF THE SEVEN GABLES," Robert Fuerst, who just did AIP's "WUTHERING HEIGHTS," is directing. Miss Kerr, besieged by offers from every medium, is wuthering if she'll accept.

A plague of locusts can be considered a single animal; its body covers 400 miles, its mouth consumes 80,000 tons of food each day.

The queen termite, solely responsible for reproducing the species, can lay up to an egg a second—86,400 eggs a day. She has a normal size head and thorax, but her abdomen is 500 to 1,000 times larger than the normal termite.

When one bee finds a rich bounty of nectar, she shares it with all. In a dance of exacting language, she informs the tribe of its precise location—the distance, the direction, even the particular variety of flower.

When an ant wants to pass on important information, such as the news that a large amount of food has been discovered, it performs a kind of dance, akin to those used by bees to tell each other about the direction and distance of a good source of nectar.

On the march in their never-ending search for prey, the driver ants form a column one mile long, twenty million strong.

If our world was destroyed and only one man and one woman were left alive, it would take over a million years to put it back together the way it is today. Ants can re-create their society in two weeks.

Science has identified more than 600,000 species of insects, yet is estimate that only two-thirds are known and one-third is yet to be discovered.

These facts are distributed in lobbies by the producers of THE HELLSTROM CHRONICLE to those who see the film. We suppose they're true, and have no reason to doubt, but gee! We sure hope they're lying!

THE GREEN SLIME: Green and slimy — the picture, not the monster. American actors Richard Jaeckel and Robert Houton, abetted by a Japanese crew and director, do heroic battle with a pool of lime Jello. They win. The audience doesn't.

Scheduled for a Broadway opening on April is a new "Supernatural drama" titled "A GHOST STORY."

DIE SCREAMING, MARIANNE, is due out of Britain. Starred in the contemporary suspense drama are Leo Genn and Susan George.

From Britain's Hammer Prod. will

be unleashed **COUNTESS DRACULA**, starring Ingrid Pitt. "The old bat is on the wing."

Watch for an all Black Horror film entitled "BLACULA." Strictly straight and scary, no camp.

And an entirely different production company is readying, **BLACK DRACULA**. Sounds interesting...

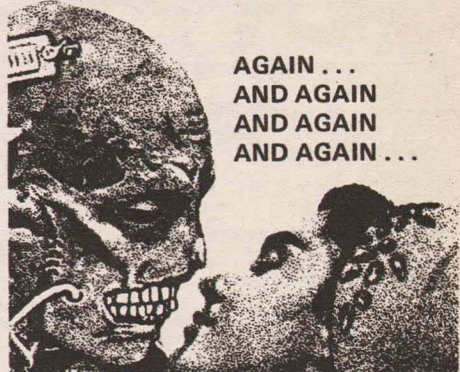
The First Annual Star Trek Convention (issue No. 2) was a resounding success. Over 3,500 starrey-eyed Trekkies and Trekkie-eyed starers attended and met and congratulated the editors, publishers and staff of THE MONSTER TIMES, and, (if they weren't too star-struck), also series producer Gene Roddenberry and his wife,



Madjel Barret, who played nurse Christine Chapel on the series. D.C. Fontana, who wrote the ST rule book was there, as well as Isaac Asimov & Hal Clement, noted SF authors.

That 3,500 attendance figure is greater than any science fiction or comics convention ever, by the way. The Con made history, was written up in Variety, was covered on local news shows, and, of course, in THE MONSTER TIMES.

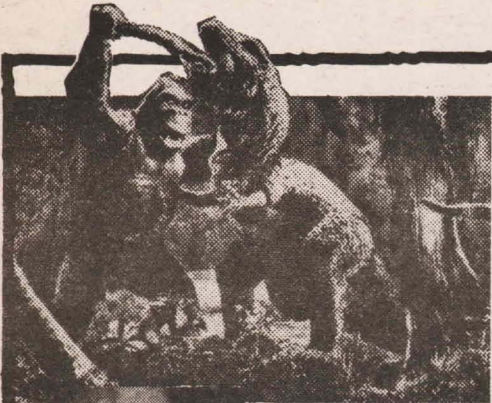
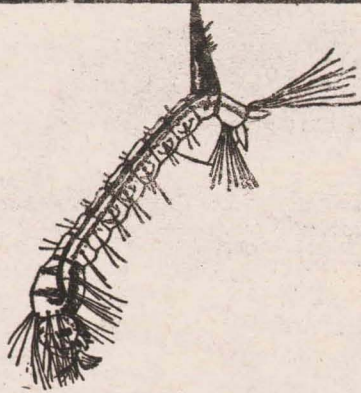
Roddy McDowall will be starring in a new teleseries titled "TOPPER RETURNS." It'll be great having the gregarious ghosts back in our midst (or, rather, mist?) Roddy once cut the definitive (memo) regarding of H.P. Lovecraft's THE OUTSIDER... scour the old record shops for it.



AGAIN... AND AGAIN AND AGAIN AND AGAIN...

'Dr. Phibes' will return-again, and again, and again. Even before the sequel has been released, a third (sequel to the sequel) has been planned.

They're casting now for a future Broadway play entitled "SYDNEY AND THE WEREWOLF'S WIDOW." Auditions will be held only during the light of the full moon. As New York's pollution index is rising, it could be years before it gets staged. Gotham has Batman, anyway.



MAX STEINER
BORN:
May 10,
1888
DIED:
Dec 29,
1971

When the tragic news of Max Steiner's death reached this reporter, my initial reaction was one of deep sorrow. The feeling that I had lost an old and dear friend somehow stayed with me throughout that evening for, like all of us, I had grown up with Max Steiner.

I had heard his warm, unforgettable melodies played a thousand times and more. And now the man who created so much beauty, so much joy is gone. My head is filled with his music, and it's a concert on a grand scale. I can hear the full, rich strains of "Gone With The Wind," and Tara; the terrible coming of "King Kong"; the eloquent simplicity of "The Life Of Emile Zola"; the painful beauty of "Dark Victory" and "Now Voyager"; the thrilling "Charge Of The Light Brigade"; the wonderful suite from "The Big Sleep"; the exciting theme from "A Dispatch From Reuters"; and the breath-taking score of "The Most Dangerous Game."

All these and so many more sing in my mind tonight. These are but a part of the precious legacy of a giant among artists, a man who truly could be called The Father Of Film Music.

Max Steiner has left us at last, but not alone. He has bequeathed us his music, and I assure you that no millionaire ever left as rich a legacy to his heirs.

Goodbye, Max.

(The "Are you ready?" item) Gazotskie (?) Films are presently lensing **SCHLOCK**. That is not a bastardized version of Shleppy Shock, but rather a shortened form of 'Schlockthropus.' The **SCHLOCK** is described as a missing link. Veteran make-up artist, John Chambers, turns actor in this anthropological opus. Mr. Chambers won an Oscar for his ape artistry in **THE PLANET OF THE APES**, and also heads the make-up department at Universal.

Lensing right now is the film adaptation of Tom Tryon's horror novel, "THE OTHER". Robert Mulligan, who did just a terrific job

with "Summer of '42," and "To Kill a Mockingbird," is directing. That superb actress, Uta Hagen is one of the co-stars. Twin-brothers (this one is split scream), one of which is nice, and good, and kind to animals, and 'the other' is a murderer . . . several times over. (That sounds so familiar). Regardless, with Mulligan behind the project, you can count on a chilling fi

MALPERTIUS, stars Orson Welles and Susan Hamshire (of 'The Forsythe Saga' fame). Continental songstress, Sylvie Varion will co-star. It's described as a mystery thriller to be shot on location in Belgium.

Rosemary Murphy is joining Joseph Campanella in the sequel to "WILLARD", called "BEN", a Bing Crosby Production. All we can say is: "Rat-on!" Now if Hope & Crosby would only team up with the cheesy nibblers and produce "The Road to Switzerland."

AIP will produce **DEVILDAY**, about a Horror movie actor who takes his roles a little too seriously. Now if they'd only do one about a Hammer screen-writer-hack who does likewise — call it **DRIVEL-DAY**.

Watch for "WHO KILLED MARY WATSHER-NAME?," with Red buttons and Sylvia Miles, "TALES FROM THE CRYPT" (of relation to the belated EC comix) with Joan Collins and Peter Cushing (who?); "TOWER

OF EVIL" with Jill Haworth; "BARON BLOOD" with Joseph Cotton and Elke Sommer . . . Miss Sommer is one of Hollywood's most notable character assassins according to Roman Polanski.



THIS FILM CONTAINS MATERIAL NOT GENERALLY SUITABLE FOR PRE-TEENAGERS

There was a rating dispute concerning AIP's shocker "WHOEVER SLEW AUNTIE ROO?", formerly the "GINGERBREAD HOUSE," starring Shelley Winters. It will be released under the rating "Not for sub-teenagers."



Art from Berni Wrightson's **BAD-TIME STORIES** . . .

Due out this week is a **BADTIME STORIES** special treat for horror, monster and sci-fi fans — a book, written and drawn by the dean of doom & death-wish, Berni Wrightson. We will be reviewing **BADTIME STORIES** in an upcoming issue, printing sample pages of

its horrific art, and all that there good stuff.

The piece of art excerpted here is from a wrenching Wrightson yarn of an alien "Slayer" who hunts other aliens — and hangs their heads on his trophy-room wall. More info in the coming review.

CON-CALENDAR



DATE	CONVENTION	LOCATION	PRICE	FEATURES
MARCH 12, APRIL 9, MAY 14	THE SECOND SUNDAY PHIL SEULING 2883 W. 12 B'KLYN, N.Y. 11224	STATLER-HILTON 33rd ST & 7th AVE. NEW YORK CITY	\$1.00 (10 A.M. to 4 P.M.)	COMIC BOOK DEALERS & COLLECTORS No Special Guests
MARCH 3-5 FRI., SAT., SUN.	CANADA CON TOM ROBE V.W.O. 594 MARKHAM ST. TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA	INFO. NOT AVAILABLE WRITE CONVENTION	Info Not Available Write Con.	Comic Books, S.F. Pulps, Nostalgia-oriented.
MARCH 25-27 FRI., SAT., SUN.	L.A. CON JERRY O'HARA 14722 LEMOLI AVE. GARDENIA, CALIF. 92249	L.A. HILTON, LOS ANGELES.	Info. Not Available Write Con.	Comic convention; comic books, strips, Guest speakers, Cartoonists.
MARCH 11 APRIL 8	LUNA-CON DEVRA LANGSAM 250 CROWN ST. BKLYN, N.Y. 11225	STATLER-HILTON 33rd ST. & 7th AVE. NEW YORK CITY	\$5.00 Per Person	New York's Biggest Annual Sci-Fi Convention Big-Time Writers Galore!

The **CON-CALENDAR** is a special exclusive feature of **THE MONSTER TIMES**. Across this great land of ours are quaint and curious gatherings of quaintly curious zealots. The gatherings called "conventions," and the zealots, called "fans," deserve the attention of fans and non-fans alike, hence this trail-blazing reader-service.

To those readers who've never been to one of these hair-brained affairs, we recommend it.

Detractors of such events put them down by saying that they're just a bunch of cartoonists and science fiction writers and comic book publishers talking, and signing autographs for fans who, like maniacs, spend sums on out-of-date comics, science fiction pulps, and monster movie stills. But that's just the reason for going. If you want a couple of glossy pictures of Dracula or King Kong, or a 1943 copy of **Airboy Comics** (God alone knows why)

or if you wish to see classic horror and science fiction films, or meet the stars of old time movie serials, or today's top comic book artist and writers—or if you just want to meet other monster or comics science fiction freaks, like yourself, and learn you're not alone in the world, OR if you want to meet the affable demented lunatics who bring out **THE MONSTER TIMES**, go ahead and visit one of those conventions. We dare ya!

British TV will be having what we don't. Hope someone gets wise and sends it our way, that is a new tele-series, "THEATRE MACABRE" starring the grand monarch Christopher Lee. Maybe if it does well there, they'll repeat it here. One cannot have enough corn on the Macabre.

And I finally got a little scoop (no, not of plasma ice cream). Just talked to Mr. John Flory, formerly with Paramount and now Eastman Kodak, who will be filming several new sciencefiction films under his new company, Spacefilms, Inc. Mr. Flory will be filming such well known authors as L. Ron Hubbard, Lloyd Biggle, Jr. and . . . James Blish.

Mr. Flory, told me briefly of his ambitious future plans, and informed me, that he was the first photographer to utilize the Hale Telescope at Mt. Palomar commercially, even though it had a waiting list of several YEARS.

Enough for now! My carrier-bat just died of exhaustion.



When Captain Gerilleau received instructions to take his new gunboat, the *Benjamin Constant*, to Badama on the Batemo arm of the Guaramadema and there assist the inhabitants against a plague of ants, he suspected the authorities of mockery.

He was a Creole, his conceptions of etiquette and discipline were pure-blooded Portuguese, and it was only to Holroyd, the Lancashire engineer who had come over with the boat, and as an exercise in the use of English — his “th” sounds were very uncertain — that he opened his heart.

“It is in effect,” he said, “to make me absurd! What can a man do against ants? Dey come, dey go.”

“They say,” said Holroyd, “that these don’t go. That chap you said was a Zambo—”

“Zambo — it is a sort of mixture of blood.”

“Zambo. He said the people are going!”

The captain smoked fretfully for a time. “Dese tings ’ave to happen,” he said at last. “What is it? Plagues of ants and suchlike as God wills. Dere was a plague in Trinidad — the little ants that carry leaves. Orl der orange-trees, all der mangoes! What does it matter? Sometimes ant armies come into your houses — fighting ants; a different sort. You go and they clean the house. Then you come back again; — the house is clean, like new! No cockroaches, no fleas, no jiggers in the floor.”

“That Zambo chap,” said Holroyd, “says these are a different sort of ant.”

Afterwards he reopened the subject. “My dear ‘Olroyd, what am I to do about dese infernal ants?”

The captain reflected. “It is ridiculous,” he said. But in the afternoon he put on his full uniform and went ashore, and jars and boxes came back to the ship and subsequently he did. And Holroyd sat on deck in the evening coolness and smoked profoundly and marvelled at Brazil. They were six days up the Amazon, some hundreds of miles from the ocean, and east and west of him there was a horizon like the sea, and to the south nothing but a sand-bank island with some tufts of scrub. The water was always running like a sluice, thick with dirt, animated with crocodiles and hovering birds, and fed by some inexhaustible source of tree trunks; and the waste of it, the headlong waste of it, filled his soul. The town of Alemquer, with its meagre church, its thatched sheds for houses, its discoloured ruins of ampler days, seemed a little thing lost in the wilderness of Nature, a sixpence dropped on Sahara.

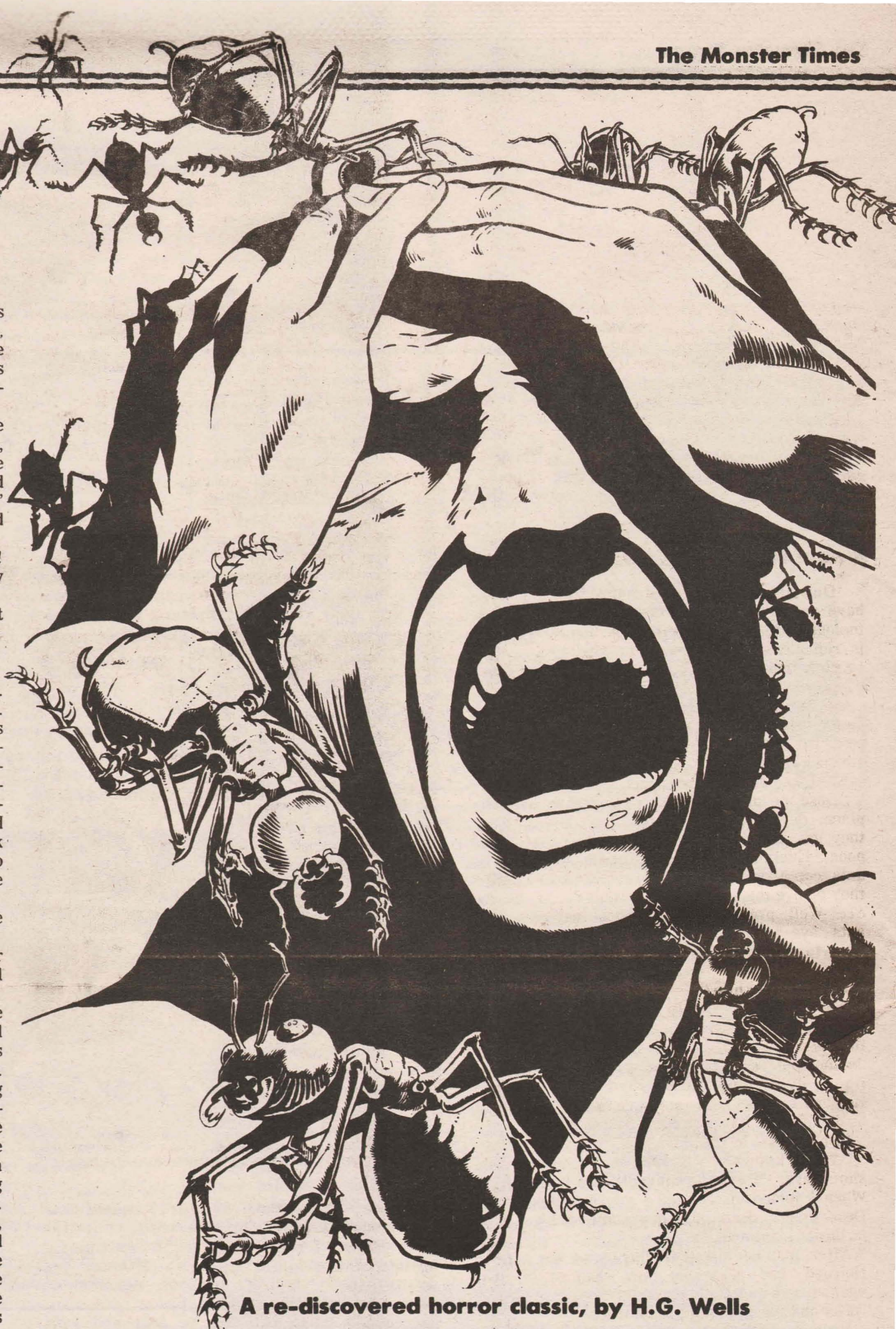
He was a young man, this was his first sight of the tropics, he came straight from England, where Nature is hedged, ditched, and drained into the perfection of submission, and he had suddenly discovered the insignificance of man. For six days they had been steaming up from the sea by unfrequented channels, and man had been as rare as a rare butterfly. One saw one day a canoe, another day a distant station, the next no men at all. He began to perceive that man is indeed a rare animal, having but a precarious hold upon this land.

He perceived it more clearly as the days passed, and he made his devious way to the Batemo, in the company of this remarkable commander, who ruled over one big gun, and was forbidden to waste his ammunition. Holroyd was learning Spanish industriously, but he was still in the present tense and substantive stage of speech, and the only other person who had any words of English was a negro stoker, who had them all wrong. The second in command was a Portuguese, da Cunha, who spoke French; but it was a different sort of French from the French Holroyd had learned in Southport, and their talk was confined to politenesses and the weather. And the weather, like everything else in this amazing new

world, the weather had no human aspect, and was hot by night and hot by day, and the air steam, even the wind was hot steam, smelling of vegetation in decay: and the alligators and the strange birds, the flies of many sorts and sizes, the beetles, the ants, the snakes and monkeys seemed to wonder what man was doing in an atmosphere that had no gladness in its sunshine and no coolness in its night.

To wear clothing was intolerable, but to cast it aside was to scorch by day and expose an ampler area to the mosquitoes by night; to go

on deck by day was to be blinded by glare and to stay below was to suffocate. And in the daytime came certain flies, extremely clever and noxious about one’s wrist and ankle. Captain Gerilleau, who was Holroyd’s sole distraction from these physical distresses, developed into a formidable bore, telling the simple story of his heart’s affections day by day, a string of anonymous women, as if he was telling beads. Sometimes he suggested sport, and they shot at alligators, and at rare intervals they came to human aggregations in the



A re-discovered horror classic, by H.G. Wells

THE EMPIRE OF THE ANTS!

H.G. WELLS is without doubt the granddaddy-longlegs of modern science fiction. He was writing SF before the field even got its name—’twas called “Scientific Romances” then, back in the late 1880’s, when shoot-em-up adventures were called “Romances” and mushy and trivial hearts-and-flowers drivel was called “Literature”. Times sure change. The following story was written 3/4 of a century ago and was forgotten until your editor chanced upon it by accident, in his subterranean library, and figured it might well fit into this issue. It makes a prophecy which is quite interesting . . . and horrifying . . .

waste of trees, and stayed for a day or so, and drank and sat about; and, one night, danced with Creole girls, who found Holroyd's poor elements of Spanish, without either past tense or future, amply sufficient for their purposes. But these were mere luminous chinks in the long grey passage of the streaming river, up which the throbbing engines beat.

But Gerilleau learned things about the ants, more things and more, at this stopping-place and that, and became interested in his mission.

a new sort of ant, he says . . .

"Dey are a new sort of ant," he said. "We have got to be — what do you call it? — entomologie? Big. Five centimetres! Some bigger! It is ridiculous. We are like the monkeys — sent to pick insects . . . But dey are eating up the country."

He burst out indignantly. "Suppose — suddenly, war flares in Europe? Here am I — soon we shall be above the Rio Negro — and my gun, useless!"

He nursed his knee and mused.

"Dose people who were dere at de dancing place, dey 'ave come down. Dey 'ave lost all they got. De ants come to deir house one afternoon. Everyone run out. You know when de ants come one must — everyone runs out and they go ove the house. *If you stayed they'd eat you, See?* Well, presently dey go back; dey say, 'The ants 'ave gone.' . . . De ants 'aven't gone. Dey turn to go in — de son, 'e goes in. De ants fight."

"Swarm over him?"

"Bite 'em. Presently he comes out again — screaming and running. He runs past them to the river. See? He get into de water and drowns de ants — yes." Gerilleau paused, brought his liquid eyes close to Holroyd's face, tapped Holroyd's knee with his knuckle. "That night he dies, just as if he was stung by a snake."

"Poisoned — by the ants?"

"Who knows?" Gerilleau shrugged his shoulders. "Perhaps they bit him badly When I joined dis service I joined to fight men. Dese things, dese ants, dey come and go. It is no business for men."

After that he talked frequently of the ants to Holroyd, and whenever they chanced to drift against any speck of humanity in that waste of water and sunshine and distant trees:

He perceived the ants were becoming interesting, and the nearer he drew to them the more interesting they became. Gerilleau abandoned his old themes almost suddenly, and the Portuguese lieutenant became a conversational figure; he knew something about the leaf-cutting ant, and expanded his knowledge. Gerilleau sometimes rendered what he had to tell to Holroyd. He told of the little workers that swarm and fight, and the big workers that command and rule, and how these latter always crawled to the neck and how their bite drew blood. He told how they cut leaves and made fungus beds, and how their nests in Caracas are sometimes a hundred yards across. Two days the three men spent disputing whether ants have eyes. The discussion grew dangerously heated on the second afternoon, and Holroyd saved the situation by going ashore in a boat to catch ants and see. He captured various specimens and returned, and some had eyes and some hadn't. Also, they argued, do ants bite or sting?

"Dese ants," said Gerilleau, after collecting information at a rancho, "have big eyes. They don't run about blind — not as most ants do. No! Dey get in corners and watch what you do."

"And they sting?" asked Holroyd.

"Yes. Dey sting. *Dere is poison in the sting.*" He meditated. "I do not see what men can do against ants. Dey come and go."

"But these don't go."

"They will," said Gerilleau.

Past Tamandu there is a long low coast of eighty miles without any population, and then one comes to the confluence of the main river and the Batemo arm like a great lake, and then the forest came nearer, came at last intimately near. The character of the channel



"They were very like ordinary ants, except for their size, and that SOME OF THEM BORE A SORT OF CLOTHING!"

changes, snags abound, and the *Benjamin Constant* moored by a cable that night, under the very shadow of dark trees. For the first time for many days came a spell of coolness, and Holroyd and Gerilleau sat late, smoking cigars and enjoying this delicious sensation. Gerilleau's mind was full of ants and what they could do. He decided to sleep at last, and lay down on a mattress on deck, a man hopelessly perplexed; his last words, when he already seemed asleep, were to ask, with a flourish of despair: "What can one do with ants? . . . De whole thing is absurd."

Holroyd was left to scratch his bitten wrists, and meditate.

It was the inhuman immensity of this land that astonished and oppressed him. He knew the skies were empty of men, the stars were specks in an incredible vastness of space; he knew the ocean was enormous and untamable, but in

England he had come to think of the land as man's. In England it is indeed man's, the wild things live by sufferance, grow on lease, everywhere the roads, the fences, and absolute security run. In an atlas, too, the land is man's, and all coloured to show his claim to it — in vivid contrast to the universal independent blueness of the sea. He had taken it for granted that a day would come when everywhere about the earth, plough and culture, light tramways, and good roads, and ordered security, would prevail. But now, he doubted.

This forest was interminable, it had an air of being invincible, and Man seemed at best an infrequent precarious intruder. One travelled for miles amidst the still, silent struggle of giant trees, of strangulating creepers, of assertive flowers, everywhere the alligator, the turtle, and endless varieties of birds and insects seemed at home, dwelt irreplaceably — but Man, Man at most held a footing upon resentful clearings, fought weeds, fought beasts and insects for the barest foothold, fell a prey to snake and beast, insect and fever, and was presently carried away. In many places down the river he had been manifestly driven back, this deserted creek or that preserved the name of a *casa*, and here and there ruinous white walls and a shattered tower enforced the lesson. The puma, the jaguar, were more the masters here

Who were the real masters?

In a few miles of this forest there must be more ants than there are men in the whole world! This seemed to Holroyd a perfectly new idea. In a few thousand years men had emerged from barbarism to a stage of civilization that made them feel lords of the future and masters of the earth! *But what was to prevent the ants evolving also?* Such ants as one knew lived in little communities of a few thousand individuals, made no concerted efforts against the greater world. *But they had an intelligence!* Why should things stop at that any more than men had stopped at the barbaric stage? *Suppose presently the ants began to store knowledge, just as men had done by means of books and records, use weapons, for great empires, sustain a planned and organized war?*

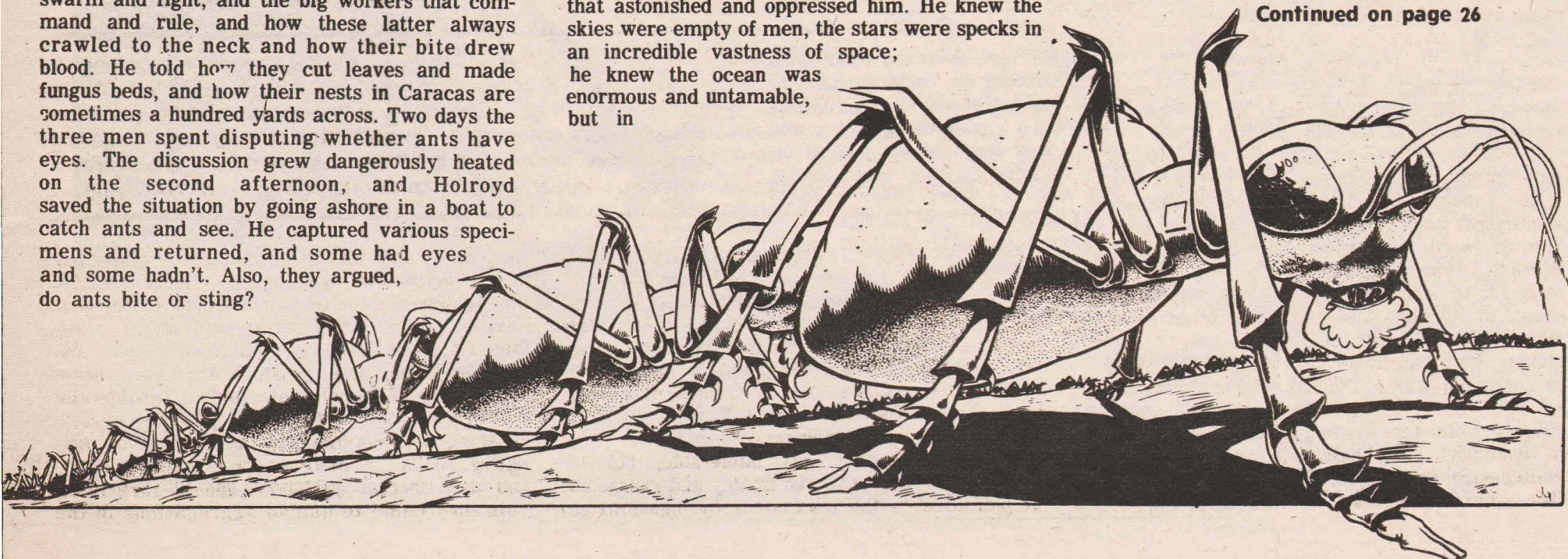
Things came back to him that Gerilleau had gathered about these ants they were approaching. They used a poison like the poison of snakes. They obeyed greater leaders even as the leaf-cutting ants do. They were carnivorous, and where they came they stayed

The forest was very still. The water lapped incessantly against the side. About the lantern overheard there eddied a noiseless whirl of phantom moths.

Gerilleau stirred in the darkness and sighed. "What can one *do?*" he murmured, and turned over and was still again.

Holroyd was roused from meditations that were becoming sinister by the hum of a mosquito.

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I WANT YOU TO BUY THIS GORILLA

BY STEVE VERTLIEB

THE MEN WHO SAVED KONG, PART 2

In our first issue, author Steve Vertlieb told us of THE MEN WHO SAVED KING KONG! In this second installment of the Kronicals of Kong, Steve shows us little-known facets of the most amazing of gems, the 20th-Century motion picture ad campaign. Ad promo is a fine science, and almost as creative and expensive as the movie itself. Sometimes more so, if a pretty bad movie is being pumped into the American public's minds.

So, in HOW TO SELL A GORILLA, Steve tells us some interesting

sidelights that make us drool with envy, wishing we could go back to that wonderful year, 1933, Great Depression notwithstanding, and watch how some of the largest cities in America went Kong-Krazy. But since we can't, Steve's article must serve as a time machine.

First Stop, ol' Tinseltown itself Hollywood, California, March 24th, 1933.....



King Kong" had his Hollywood premiere at Grauman's Chinese Theatre on Friday evening, March 24th, 1933. The souvenir-program book contained the following publicity blurb: "Out of an uncharted, forgotten corner of the world, a monster . . . surviving seven million years of evolution . . . crashes into the haunts of civilization . . . onto the talking screen . . . to stagger the imagination of man." *Mystery* magazine celebrated the event by beginning a serialization of the story in their February, 1933 issue. Bruce Cabot and Fay Wray were on the cover, and the cover blurb billed the tale as "The last and the greatest creation of Edgar Wallace."

On opening night in Hollywood the Premiere jitters were building and managed to leave practically no one untouched. But this night was not the beginning of the suspense, only the climax, for rumors had been circulating for months as to who and what King Kong was to be. R.K.O. Radio Pictures purchased one of the longest commercials in advertising history when, on February tenth, 1933, the National Broadcasting Company aired a thirty minute radio program to let America know of the impending birth of King Kong. It was a show within a show; a sort of coming attraction, complete with specially tailored script and realistic sound effects. Reaction to the broadcast was exactly as hoped for — merely tremendous!

Original publicity releases and newspaper ads gave out verbal previews of what was to come: "Monsters Of Creation's Dawn Break Loose In Our World Today" . . . "Never before had human eyes beheld an ape the size of a battleship" . . . "They saw the flying lizard, the fierce brontosaurus, big as twenty elephants . . . and all the living, fighting creatures of the infant world." . . . "The giant ape leaped at the throat of the dinosaur and the death fight was on. A frightened girl, in 1933, witnessed the most amazing combat since the world began."

Trailers (Coming Attractions) at the time, normally accustomed to previewing the most exciting scenes in a picture in order to entice a given audience, were deliberately secretive and non-committal. Only a huge, frightening shadow was seen by theatre goers, accompanied by warnings like "This is only the shadow of King Kong . . . See the greatest sight that your eyes have ever beheld at this theatre — beginning Sunday!"

**for one night only
the KING KONG Ballet!**

Sid Grauman was a showman and

had earned his reputation from years of inventive staging. On this night of all nights he wasn't going to be caught with his curtains down. Grauman arranged for a very special seventeen act extravaganza to precede the first showing of "King Kong." He hired dancers, singers and musicians for the gala evening. To be sure, it was a night that no one who was there would ever forget. Recreated in these pages is the original program produced for that memorable evening thirty eight years ago. Outside Grauman's Chinese Theatre, that opening night was a life-size replica of Kong's head! Kneat!

Finally, the moment that the huge audience in Hollywood had waited for was at hand. The house lights dimmed, the projectionist started his machine and a hush fell over the crowd. On screen, the mammoth Radio Pictures tower beeped excitedly atop a spinning globe. It faded out and into a *Radio Pictures Presents* plaque. Finally, the logo faded out and onto the waiting screen came the title, in great block lettering, "KING KONG." And, did it come? From the background, the title suddenly zoomed up front to take its rightful place, prominently, in the foreground. It might almost have been an early form of 3-D!

It was rumored several years ago that a special fifteen minute, introductory film was made for the premiere showing of the feature in Hollywood that explained, basically, how the technical wizardry in "King Kong" was accomplished. Supposedly, the "prologue" was never again seen outside of the "Official" premiere.

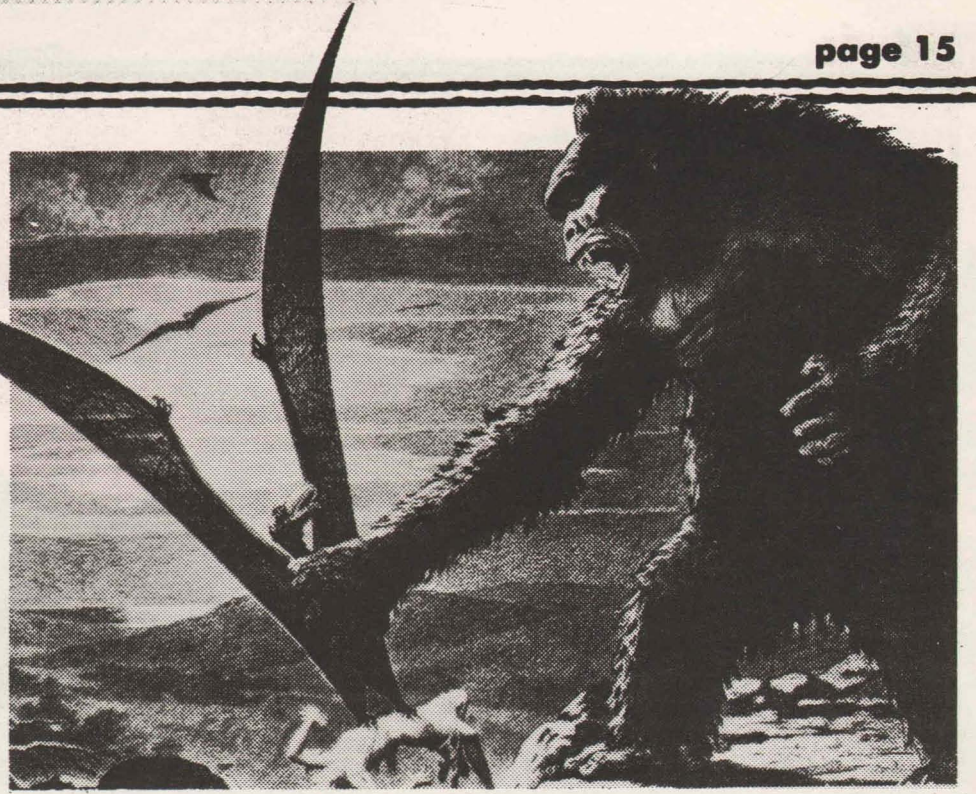
Yet, according to the man behind the ape, Merian Cooper, no such film was ever made.

Your author spoke to Mr. Cooper about this, and "Coop" emphatically states that the film in question does not now, and never has existed. The studio wanted to keep their new discoveries private. After all the work and risks involved in the making this revolutionary film, *no one* at R.K.O. (least of all General Cooper), was about to advertise their secrets.

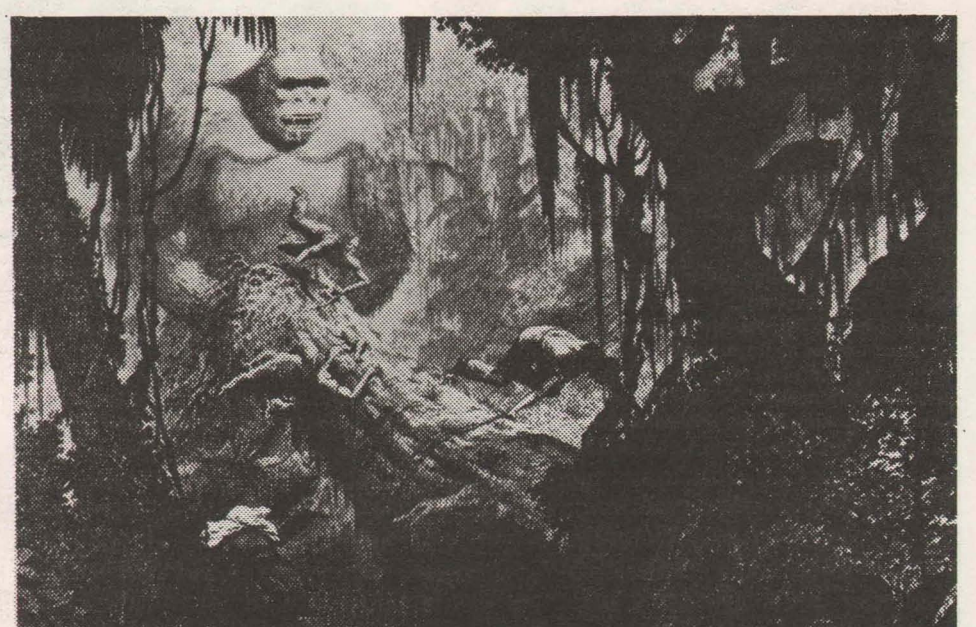
those censored scenes of rude, krude K

It has been said that newly re-discovered "Censored" scenes from "Kong" were snipped by Censors scissors in time for the big theatrical reissue in 1952 because they were too brutal and . . . well . . . sexy. Scenes were of King Kong playfully and naively inspecting the torn dress worn by Fay Wray, and then removing parts of it, lifting them to his nose and sniffing the strange scent; hold-

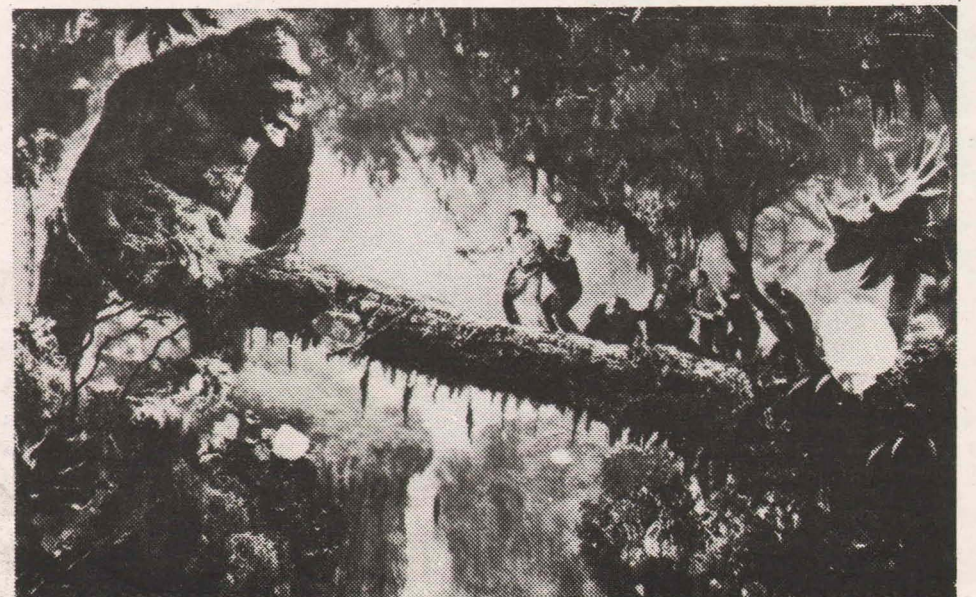
Continued on page 18



THE MEN WHO SAVED KING KONG, saved him before he was even born. To convince studio big-wigs that KONG would be great, merian Cooper and special-effects wizard Willis O'Brien presented a remarkable display of pre-production artwork of scene from KONG. A test reel of film and the sketches on this page helped turn the trick. Note the similarity of the above sketch and the scene from the finished film, below.



Above is sketch visualizing the famous KONG log-shaking scene, in which the exploration crew are tumbled mercilessly off an enormous log-bridge, into a pit of spiders. (By the way, THE MONSTER TIMES mya soon be running TWO stills of the censored scene in which the crew are gobbled by spiders—and you thought KONG had nothing to do with BUGS!) . . . In the scene from the finished film, below, we see the log-logged crew hedged by KONG on one end, and by a Styracosaurus on the other.





Continued from page 15

ing a villager between his teeth; smashing down violently a structure upon which natives were standing and hurling spears; grinding the head of a writhing native into the mud on the ground with his foot; climbing the outer wall of a New York hotel at which Ann Darrow (Fay Wray) was staying, in search of his captive at large, and finding the first woman he sees asleep in her bed, then drawing her to him out through the window, examining her in mid-air and, realizing that he has picked the wrong girl, callously allowing her to slip through his fingers and fall to the ground below; and, lastly, chewing casually on a native New Yorker. It's surprising he didn't break his teeth!

It may now be wondered, however, if those sequences weren't actually discarded in 1933 after the first run engagements, and when the film went into general release, for the recorded "running time" listed in the original studio Press Book is one hundred minutes — some five minutes less than the film would last with the additional "Censored" scenes left intact. In 1952 it was still 100 minutes.

As big and exciting as the Hollywood premiere was, "King Kong" really gave its world premiere some three weeks earlier to the city that graciously destroyed itself for movie history. It was fitting and proper that New York City host the unveiling of Carl Denham's Monster, King Kong, the eighth wonder of the world!

And so it was that on March 2nd, 1933, "King Kong" created almost as much chaos for real as he did in the film. This was no ordinary premiere for, so great was the demand to see the new film that, in the midst of America's worst and most tragic Depression, two enormous theatres were required to play the film simultaneously in order to fill the public's demand for seats. Both the Radio City Music Hall and The Roxy Theatre, with a combined seating capacity of ten thousand people, were filled for every performance of the film from the moment when the doors opened at ten thirty A.M. on Thursday, March 2nd. Both theatres took out combined ads in The New York Times the day preceding the opening. Kong, himself, was pictured atop the Empire State Building holding Fay Wray in one paw, and crushing a bi-plane in the other. The caption next to the ape and atop the title read:

"KONG THE MONSTER!"

Huge as a skyscraper . . . crashes into our city! See him wreck man's proudest works while millions flee in horror! . . . See him atop the Empire State Tower! Battling planes for the woman in his ponderous paw! "KING KONG" outleaps the maddest imagination!"

As in Hollywood there were stage shows here also. "Stage Shows As Amazing As These Mighty Theatres," proclaimed the advertisement. "Jungle Rythms" - brilliant musical production! Entire singing and dancing ensemble

of Music Hall and New Roxy! Spectacular dance rhythms by ballet corps and Roxyettes! Soloists, Chorus, Symphony, Orchestras, Company of 500!" "Big enough for the Two Greatest Theatres at the same time!"

"Kong" played to standing crowds for ten complete performances daily. On the day of the opening a second Ad appeared in New York's entertainment pages. The publicity blurbs read, in part, "Shuddering terror grips a city . . . Shrieks of fleeing millions rise to the ears of a towering monster . . . Kong, king of an ancient world, comes to destroy our world — all but that soft, white female thing he holds like a fluttering bird . . . The arch-wonder of modern times."

When, in 1933, President Roosevelt declared a Moratorium and closed the banks, the following Ad appeared in New York's papers: "No Money . . . yet New York dug up \$89,931.00 in four days (March 2, 3, 4, 5) to see "KING KONG" at Radio City setting a new all-time world's record for attendance of any indoor attraction." This is all the more startling considering that general admission prices were far less expensive (10c to 50c) than they are today.

Full page ads in the trade journals were headed by the impressive lead-in, "The Answer To Every Showman's Prayer." And it was. This was no case of attempting to sell a loser, for "Kong" was truly a box office bonanza for all film exhibitors sharing in the feast.

how to spread a gorilla-pic thin

Fay Wray's awesome scream is equalled in its popularity only by Johnny Weismueller's well known cry as Tarzan, The Ape Man. No one has ever attempted a guess at why Fay's screaming should have so completely overshadowed the tries of all other actresses through-out the thirty-eight years since "Kong"'s first release but few would doubt her right to the title of the world's most celebrated screamer. So, it is not surprising to learn that R.K.O. used that contract scream in the voices of countless other actresses who were not as healthily endowed. When Helen Mack opened her fragile lips to cry out in "The Son Of Kong" it was not her voice audiences heard but that of Fay Wray. As late as 1945 Fay's scream could be heard for Audrey Long in the remake of "The Most Dangerous Game," "Game Of Death."

But, of all of the memorable sounds to come from "King Kong," the immortal music score by Max Steiner has been heard the most. "Kong"'s thrilling and intricate themes have been played in such later films as "The Son Of Kong," "The Last Days Of Pompeii," "Becky Sharpe," (the first FULL Technicolor feature) "The Last Of The Mohicans," "The Soldier And The Lady," (from Jules Verne's

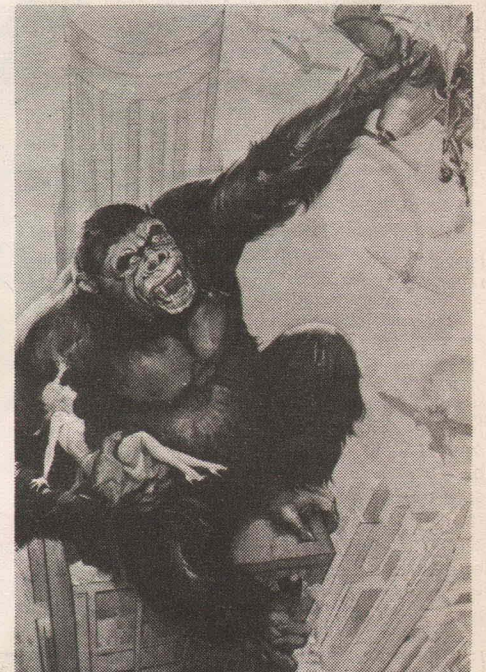


"Would your home be safe without one?"

When the GREAT KONG KAMPAIGN was on, promotional stills like this one were run in newspapers and magazines all across America. A "KONG Komparison Chart" was made, showing KONG's height as compared to the height of EIGHT actual gorillas, giving more credence to the claim that he was "The EIGHTH WONDER of the WORLD!" How's that again?



MYSTERY MAGAZINE, February, 1933 timed the release of the text story version of KING KONG with the film's release to pick up on the publicity of the film, and plug the film at the same time. The novelization of KONG was by Edgar Wallace, who originally brain-stormed the plot of KONG with Merian C. Cooper (pictured to right of magazine) Wallace died before the film's release, and his old friend, Merian Cooper made sure that the credits of the film read; "Based on an Idea by Edgar Wallace."



What's a Kong Kampaing without terrific original oil paintings for the posters?! Luckily for monster fans, there were several great paintings made for the original ad campaign, some of which have never been seen in print. In our first issue, we promised something of that nature, and here it is . . . a reproduction of the original painting of a KONG poster—WITHOUT LETTERING CREDITS! For comparison, something you've all seen before; the finished poster with the lettering; sold practically everywhere these days. Our centerfold, by the way, is a special FULL-COLOR MONSTER TIMES POSTER BONUS of KING KING, which was devised by our own art department, using more art from the original campaign. The painting we made use of was also used on the original 1933 lobbycards, which are practically impossible to acquire . . . though we intend to run them in an upcoming ish.

Continued on page 25

The Monster Market

Grave-robbing may be out of style, but fan exploitation isn't. Monster fans deserve a reliable market-test to rely upon before sending money to all-too monstrous manufacturers. Therefore, to dull the fangs of some vampires of our industry, we at MT innovate The Monster Market to product test items, and report accurately on them—and about the bargains, too!

IMPORTANT! If we are really going to be able to keep the monster magnates in line, we'll need your help. Please write in and tell us of your experience in the monster market, whether it be good, bad or none of the above. Write to THE MONSTER TIMES, c/o The Monster-Market, P.O. Box 595, Old Chelsea Station, N.Y. 10011.

Product Tested: Venus Fly Trap.
Available from: Various mail-order houses (see list).
Price: (see price comparison chart).

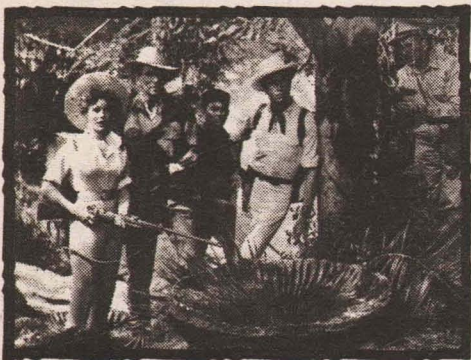
"Horticulturists Unite! Beware of the man-eating plants!" How many times should this phrase have been uttered to groups of B-Movie safaris, as they enter the darkened jungles, or have been said softly by Hollywood style natives as they reluctantly pushed on to lands unknown? The answer would be countless; and although it sounds quite ridiculous, it may come as a shock to learn that man-eating plants actually do have a sound basis in fact.

"Complete rubbish, bah, humbug," I hear you mentally shouting as you read, but have you ever heard of the Venus Fly Trap? If you haven't then perhaps you should know about this unusual Mediterranean plant that draws its nourishment from two highly different sources: (1) the normal way through its system of roots and fibers, and (2) the more deadly way of entrapping small insects and devouring them whole!

And it goes about this second action in a very clever way — especially for what (we hope) is non-thinking vegetable matter. The Fly Trap can usually stand from one to five feet tall and is adorned with an abundance of round prickly flowers all colored in varieties of rich red hues.

These flowers are open wide with usually a thin crease down the center and surrounded on the circumference with a throng of sharp and prickly bristles. All through the hot Mediterranean days, these flowers remain open to the air — exuding a noticeably sweet and pungent odor that can carry many yards from the plant's rooted base.

Besides activating the olfactory glands in humans, this pleasant smell also beckons to the many forms of bugs and insects which inhabit the mass growth of the forested areas. Thusly, the Venus Fly Trap attracts its insect prey through the sense of smell as well as through its alluring highly colored petals — two almost unfightable inducements for an unsuspecting moth or gnat.



Michael Rennie and chlorophyllated friend, a giant VFT, in THE LOST WORLD!

When the unwary insect is drawn to the planet, he will no doubt attempt a landing on one of the many sweet and colored flowers — this being his first, and final fatal mistake. For when the bug lights on the plant, the petals immediately close tight entrapping the insect between the two inside walls of the flower. And then to compound the horror that the excited bug must surely be experiencing, the walls emit a sticky acid-like substance which at first stops the insect cold — prohibiting him from any further attempt at escape. The victim must then lie helpless as more fluid is secreted through the inside walls until the bug is completely eaten away, with the

You've seen it advertised!
Terrifying...
Horrifying...
...eats flies & scraps of meat!
Get it before it gets you!



CARE & FEEDING OF YOUR PET VENUS FLY TRAP

acid returning to the body of the plant.

This, of course, does not happen within just minutes; the process usually takes approximately twelve hours, and before the next day can dawn the Fly Trap's flowers are all open for business again — ready for another day of fun and profit.

And just think, you too can have a Venus Fly Trap in your own home. Just imagine the savings on insect sprays and room fresheners, when you have a sweet-smelling Fly Trap in your indoor garden to do all the dirty work. Just remember to keep the temperature up, and allow the plant to get plenty of sunshine. Being from the very southernly regions, the Fly Trap literally thrives on the heat and ultra-violet rays of the sun — aside from its bug catching operation of course.

And in case your home is free of flies and other roaming pests, the Fly Trap also enjoys munching on small pieces of raw steak, lamb, pork, with an occasional nip out of a stray cat.

And if you seem to be remembering some variations on the Venus Trap from your cinema viewings, try recalling Irwin Allen's well-publicized remake of THE LOST WORLD back in 1960. This film features a host of man sized plant traps that lay close to the ground somewhat like the tops of inverted mushrooms.

English sci-fi author John Wyndham's novel THE DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS sparked the film of the same name that displayed herds of man-eating plants that even had the power of root movement. An excellent story in book form, the 1963 British offering failed to come up to the printed page's high standard.

Two classic vegetable films would have to be Howard Hawks' THE THING FROM ANOTHER WORLD and action director Don Seigel's INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS. Both films took new and innovative looks at the idea of intelligent vegetable life that could exist on other worlds than our own. Each is regarded as masterpiece in the fantasy genre and both are continually being

placed on top ten fantasy film lists everywhere.

To a somewhat lesser degree we also could take a look at Roger Corman's LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS. This picture, turned out in the still unbroken record time of 2½ days, centered around a dingy restaurant with a very unusual conversation; a seven foot tall talking plant that would devour anything from a salami sandwich to a copy of yesterday's Daily News. And you can well believe how hard that is to swallow!

Last and least among dangerous plants is a toss-up between two TV offerings. The better of the two appeared on ABC's now defunct adult science-fiction series THE OUTER LIMITS. Titled "Space



Wina Toch in "Space Seed"

Seed", the episode was a direct copy from John Wyndham's DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS — right down to the same destroying agent, H₂O.

The other nameless plant personality resided in the garden of Morticia Addams of that infamous Charles Addams' Family. You may recall with fondness or disgust the Fly Trap arrangement she cultivated to ensnare unwanted victims as well as sing "My Wild Irish Rose" in the key of "C!"

In any case, it's clear to see that the Venus Fly Trap, in one form or another, is here to stay for a long time. So why not get out there in your garden and get growing!

Jim Wnoroski

SOME MT TIPS TO VFT OWNERS:

Keep your VFT very warm ... like about 75 to 85 degrees, and at about 90% humidity (near a leaky radiator or steam pipe in your comfy crypt, will mildly do). But make sure also (Vampires take belated note:) that it's at a sunny window with a SOUTH exposure. Ask your friendly neighborhood flower-shop or greenhousekeeper what exactly "acid" soil with "low pH, half sphagnum and half peat moss" is. It's too complicated, and would take a mad doctor or an hour to explain here, but that's the type of soil you need. It's said that the best way is to keep the plants in a brandy snifter with one or two inches of gravel at the bottom, for drainage.

What do you say about a lovely Venus-Fly-Trap that died?—"It should have been kept in the light!" that's what you say. Heed this advice, and you need never worry about all them Giant Bugs on the Munch, in this here Creepish-Crawl-Ish. So dig in!

GRIPES AND GRUMBLES DEPARTMENT

Dear Monster Market,

Shades of Great Expectations, whatever happened to Sterankos "History of the Comics" Vol. 2? Everyone in fandom, including my humble self, has been champing at the bit these many months just waiting for it to be published. Whoever dreamed up the ads for it, must have also composed the musical score for the Broadway play - "Promises, Promises!" Dig? I don't know how long you other cats have been waiting, but I forked over my gelt nine months ago. Count um'--nine. You can give birth to a baby in that amount of time!-----so, shouldn't Steranko's lil' brainchild be aborning - by now? I don't know how he's been spending this vast amount of time - or our money - but if he can drag himself out of Disneyland long enough, maybe we might get our goodies.

So please, Mr. Steranko, how's about it? Since Washington crossed the Delaware - no matter how cold it was - why don't you come across? Before we're left cold! Thank you, and well-seasoned greetings from.....

Jimmy Thornton
New York City

THE FACTS OF THE CREEPY CASE:

We set our researchers about, nosing for news of Mr. Steranko's book. Jimmy — and it seems, according our best info, that History of the Comics, Volume II is at the printers, and has been there for some months. We wrote Jim Steranko about a month ago, and as of presstime, we've still no reply. We have to admit, we're also curious about the second volume of History of The Comics, as the first book is a visual treat, and we intend to review it rather favorably in an upcoming issue of MT.

Perhaps Mr. Steranko didn't reply to our letter because he couldn't believe a newspaper called "THE MONSTER TIMES" could be for real ... but we are! If any other readers have ordered the second volume and think Mr. Steranko might take them for real, and answer them, they might write him, c/o SUPERGRAPHICS, 501 Spruce Street, Reading, Pa. 19602, and ask him the status of his long-publicized "new" book.

VENUS FLY TRAP PRICE COMPARISON CHART:

FIRM	PER 3	POSTAGE	PER 6	POSTAGE
JOHNSON-SMITH, 16535 E. Warren Ave., Detroit, Mich. 48224	\$1.00	NONE	\$2.00	NONE
PLANT WORLD, P.O.Box 10066, Newark, New Jersey, 07101	\$1.00	25¢	\$1.75	25¢
HORROR HOUSE, 235 Park Ave. South, New York, N.Y. 10003	\$1.00	25¢	\$1.75	25¢
CAPTAIN COMPANY, P.O.Box 430, Murray Hill Sta., N.Y., N.Y.	\$1.00	39¢	\$1.75	45¢

COMES THE GREY DAWN!

Someday bugs really may evolve past us, and devour us, and dance merrily on our half-eaten carcasses and surely they will keep evolving. Perhaps they will take on more humanoid characteristics, as well as keep their insect-like attributes. Author Marvin Wolfman and illustrator Rich Buckler speculated on this theory and came up with this special comic strip, which shows what life will be among insect-people.

Marv and Rich experimented in this strip, trying a new direction in storytelling, showing the dying thoughts of one insect-man who mourns for his insect-humanoid wife, for she has just been slain by marauding pillagers of another phylum. The last hope and thought of the dying insect-creature is that the insect-child he and his wife created, which is about to hatch from its cocoon, will be safe in a world of hostile warring petty tribal groups of humanoid insects.

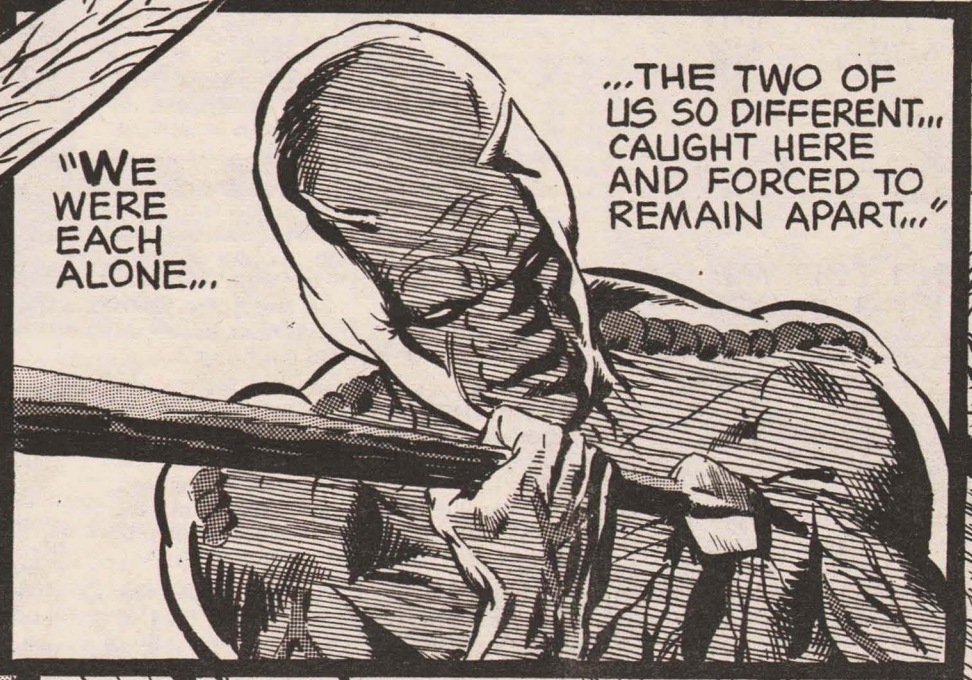


"MY LIFE LOVE AND I ARE GONE, AND AGAIN WILL COME THE SCAVENGERS IN THEIR DUSK-BORN RAIDING PARTY..."

"WOEFUL MORNING YOU CRY, BLEAKNESS TO MY SOUL!"

"WHY DID YOU GO, MY LIFE-LOVE? ONCE WE WERE TWO..."

"...AND NOW I AM ALONE. ONCE WE HAD HAPPINESS TOGETHER, AND NOW ONLY DISPAIR."



"WE WERE EACH ALONE..."

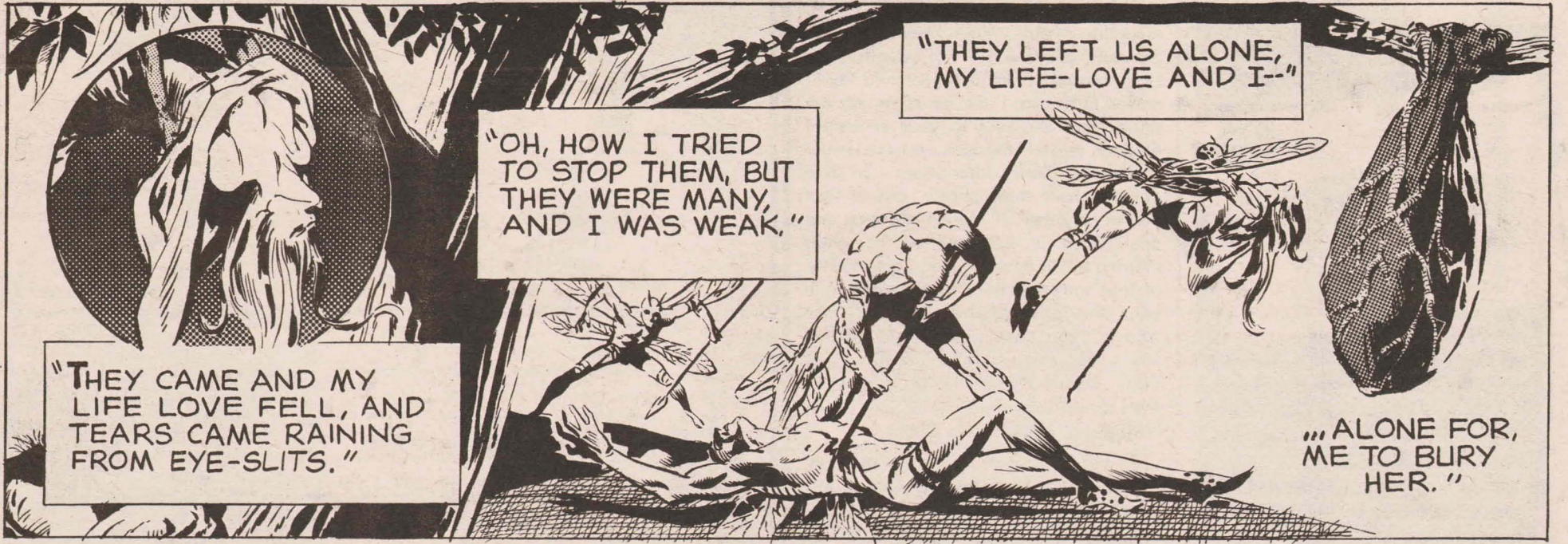
"...THE TWO OF US SO DIFFERENT... CAUGHT HERE AND FORCED TO REMAIN APART..."

"...FROM OTHERS OF OUR KIND BUT WE FOUND EACH OTHER."



"HOW DIFFERENT WE FIRST WERE, AND HOW MUCH THE SAME WE SOON BECAME."

"BUT THE SCAVENGERS CAME AND RIPPED A HOLE IN OUR HAPPINESS!"

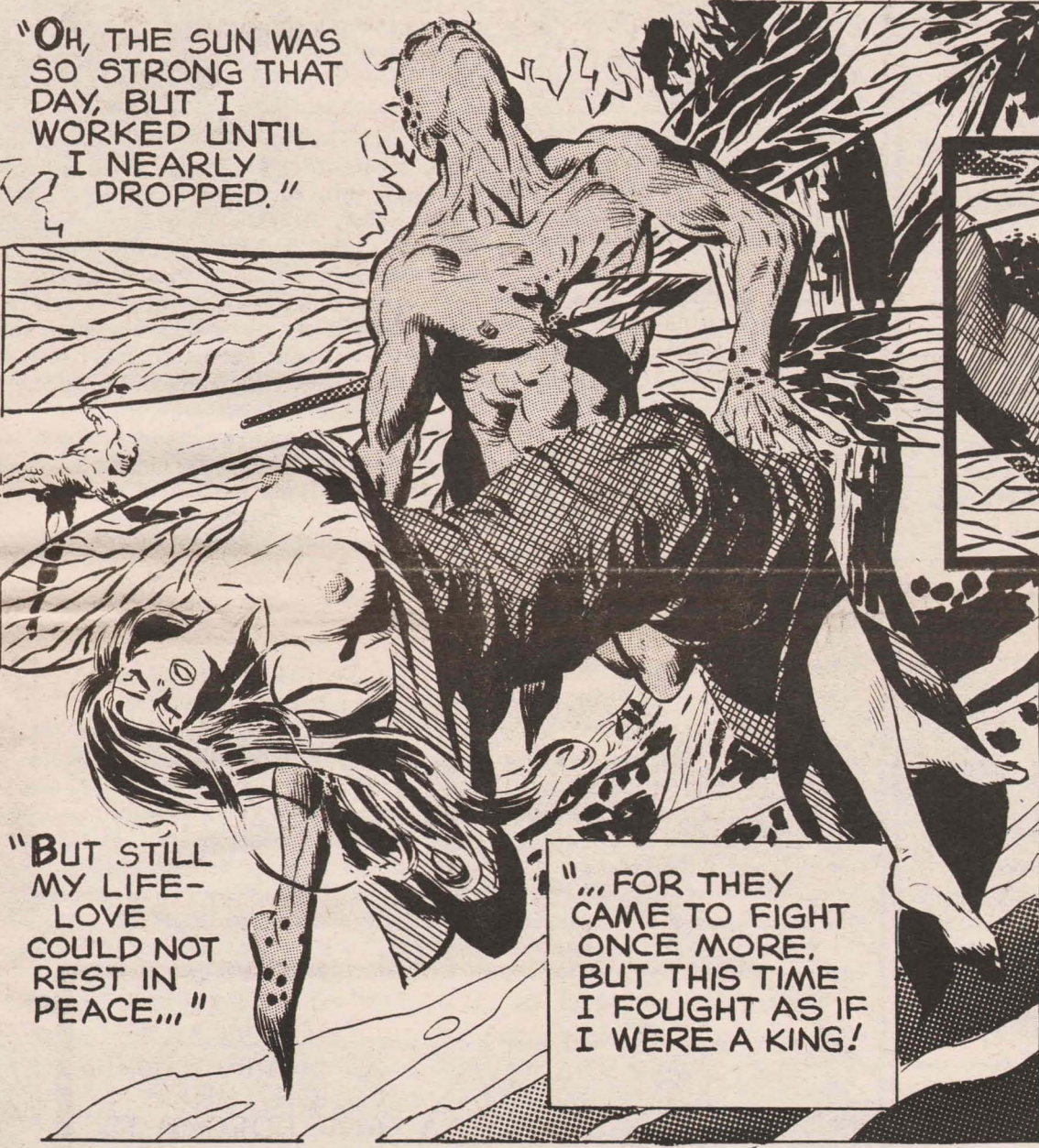


"THEY LEFT US ALONE, MY LIFE-LOVE AND I--"

"OH, HOW I TRIED TO STOP THEM, BUT THEY WERE MANY, AND I WAS WEAK."

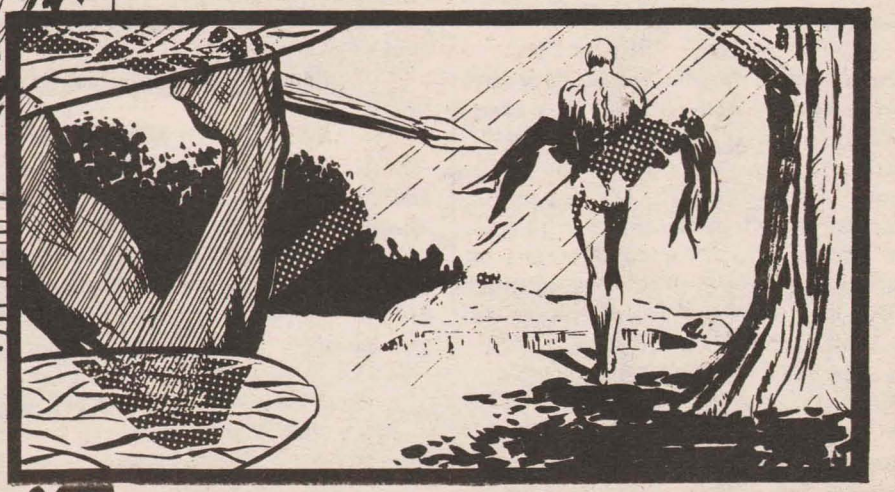
"THEY CAME AND MY LIFE LOVE FELL, AND TEARS CAME RAINING FROM EYE-SLITS."

"... ALONE FOR, ME TO BURY HER."



"OH, THE SUN WAS SO STRONG THAT DAY, BUT I WORKED UNTIL I NEARLY DROPPED."

"AND I FOUGHT LIKE ONE WHO WAS MAD. AND I DREW BLOOD ON THIS PANET SO ALIEN TO MY OWN!"



"STRANDED HERE, I LOVED AND LOST..."



"BUT I HAD MY REVENGE AND KILLED THEM ALL, THOSE SCAVENGERS OF HELL! I FOUGHT, AND THOUGHT I WON: BUT ONE OTHER REMAINED--"

"BUT STILL MY LIFE-LOVE COULD NOT REST IN PEACE..."

"... FOR THEY CAME TO FIGHT ONCE MORE, BUT THIS TIME I FOUGHT AS IF I WERE A KING!"

"--AND SLIT ME THROUGH MY LIFE COVERING."

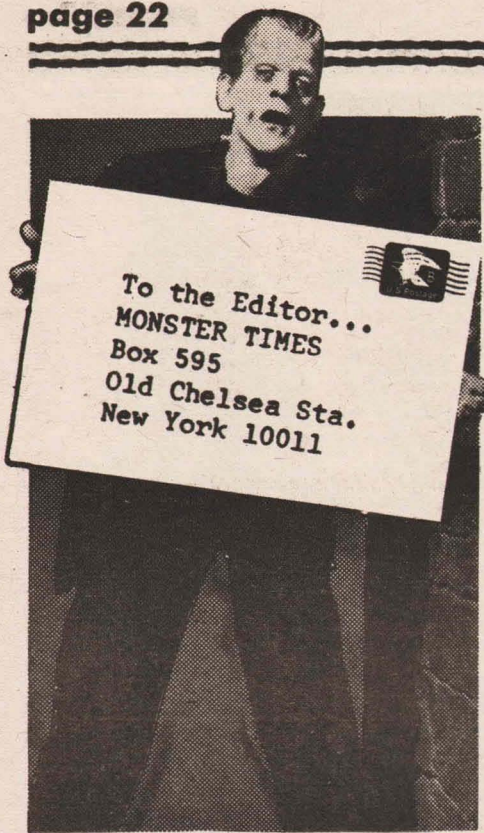
"WE ARE NO LONGER, MY LIFE-LOVE AND I, BUT PART OF US REMAINS ALIVE... FREE TO ROAM THE WILDS..."



"BUT I DID NOT CRY OUT, FOR MY LOVE WAS BEFORE ME."

"...TILL IT, TOO, SHALL FIND, ITS LOVE."

"AND UNTIL IT FORGETS THE SORROW OF ITS BIRTH."



HE LOST HIS LUNCH FOR "MT"

Dear "Monster Times" staff,

As a student of film (particularly the horror-science fiction genre), I was thrilled to see "The Monster Times". Needless to say, it was worth the lunch money I spent on it. It's got more information and good reading in it than any two issues of "Famous Monsters in Filmland".

I've been planning to write an article on Sci-fi of the '50's for quite a while, but you beat me to the punch with "Mushroom Monsters". I was pleased to see that I am not the only one who recognizes the clear cut characteristics that the '50's horror films displayed. I was also greatly pleased to find articles on two of the best films of the genre, King Kong and Things to Come. They are, in my opinion, the two best films of the '30's. I think that the Nosferatu comic strip did not belong.

I think you should invite reader participation. Offer a test on horror film history each issue. Have a Q & A column where readers can answer other readers' queries about certain films. Ask interested readers to submit lists of their ten favorite horror - sci-fi - fantasy films and publish a list of the most popular films.

Subjects I would like to see covered in future issues: Ray Harryhausen's work, the Planet of the Apes trilogy, Rod Serling, Universal's Monsters, Jack Arnold's films, British, Italian and Japanese works in the field, special effects, composers and their music in the field, and actors like John Carradine, Claude Rains and Vincent Price.

One more question: How can I get to write for "Monster Times"?

A Fellow Aficionado,

P.S. I have a pretty good still collection.

The way you can write for us is this: send us a resume, samples of your writing, paragraphs describing several articles you want to write about... and include a list of the photos you have to illustrate them. It's important that you include return postage, to insure speedy reply.

We're already working on most of the articles you suggest except for perhaps the Planet of the Apes "Trilogy," which would have been better titled: The Dignity of the Apes; Beneath the Dignity of the Apes; and Escape from Beneath the Dignity of the Apes.

THEY HATE US!

Dear Sirs:

I welcome you to the monster

magazine field. Your newspaper is generally good, and I like your format. Only because I am a horror and Sci-Fi movie buff can I dislike some of the things that are said in your articles. I noticed several mistakes in the paper concerning photo descriptions. On page one you have three photos, one of Max Steiner, another of Merian Cooper, and one which is supposed to be Willis O'Brien but is actually Don Post, creator of fine horror masks. On page eighteen in your description of the new book "The Ghoul" you have a picture of Karloff which you state is from the film "The Body Snatcher" but which is actually from the Karloff film "The Ghoul" which Boris made in England in 1933.

While Mr. Allan Asherman properly praised the classic "Things to Come," Mr. David Izzo tried to put down the equally great classic above Lugosi's triumph. Mr. C.M. Richards, in his nonsense-studded article on the films "The Golem," also puts down another classic, calling "The Golem" the first "Frankenstein," therefor degrading Karloff's classic. He has no evidence whatsoever to back up his "claim" that Mary Shelly was inspired by the Golem's legend.

Hoping to see improvement, I am,
Yours truly,
William J. Meyer

THE MONSTER TIMES tells it like it is, whenever possible. Many people in "Monstertom" feel (and it is their right!) that Lugosi's DRACULA was pure ham, and nowhere near the authenticity which the Hammer "remake" achieved. They deserve a "voice," too! C.M. Richards is sorry you couldn't be along with him when he took his class back to 1816 to witness the Mary Shelley "Golem" reading event. But it's just as well. He'd probably have left you there. But you are right about the "O'Brien" photo. We'll run a correct picture in a future Encyclopedia Filmfannica page about Willis O'Brien. OK?

STAR TREK WILL NOT DIE!

Dear Editor:

In reference to Chuck McNaughton's article about "Star Trek" returning to the air with new shows, I would like to know if you could inform me of *which* network to write to about returning "Star Trek." Any help in this matter will be greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Wayne Pesqueira

P.S.

Your magazine is greatest in Science Fiction since the Frankenstein Monster.

Thanx. NBC ran STAR TREK one and a half seasons too many. They murdered the integrity of the show about halfway thru the 2nd season. It may sound preposterous, but it's possible that STAR TREK could well be picked up by one of the "rival" networks, ABC or CBS. As CBS seems about the most intelligent of the three, these days (you can guess this, because Vice-Prez Agnew wants to talk them to death for running shows like "The Selling of the Pentagon"), it's not unbelievable that they might be willing to take "the thinking-man's Buck Rogers" into their stable of shows, some near season.

Send us so many letters, postcards, boosts, detractions, bomb threats, etc., that the Post Office will have to deliver our mail with a bulldozer. Address all correspondence to: THE MONSTER TIMES, Box 595, Old Chelsea Station, N.Y., 10011.



If you liked the way the world ended and ended and ended issue before last, you'll Love the way it ends and ends and ends yet ever again, this one, as Joe Kane gleefully examines the freaks and mis-shapen human-critters who resulted from man's toying with elements beyond his control, elements like U-235, nuclear warheads, and alcoholic Hollywood screenwriters.

SEE! Joe Kane chuckle as he tears apart rotten movie scripts!

SEE! Joe Kane laugh uproariously as he tramples dumb Hollywood monster-movie-making cliches!

SEE! Joe Kane cackle with glee as he describes human mutations who resembled walking-dead pizza-pies!

SEE! Joe Kane himself in our special MT photo-comix (page 9) try to do better in a low-budget cheapie mini-movie produced and directed by the great team of Brill & Waldstein!

The subject, I believe, was the end of the world. A pleasant enough topic, that, and an event that, if Hollywood had its way, would have happened years ago. In fact, it *did* happen... and not once, but many times. But never fear, the set directors have always managed to scotchtape Earth together again in time for the next film and that old stock footage of the atomic explosion. It's



THE FIRST MAN INTO SPACE became radiation-bloated. Doesn't everybody?

even worse in Tokyo, that miniature city that had been blown up, destroyed, disintegrated, and scattered to the atomic winds in film after film. You wouldn't want to open an insurance office there.

some mushrooms, most toadstools

Last time out I discussed a few examples of the various ways filmmakers dealt with the new and terrifying pres-

ence of nuclear energy. While most of the films dealing with the destructive aspects of nuclear energy could, by their very subject chilling matter, be classed as horror films, a few overlapped into other genres.

THE ATOMIC KID, a 1954 fiasco about a pair of (oy!) bumbling uranium-hunters (played by Mickey Rooney and Robert Strauss), was a so-called "comedy" that had Rooney transform from a jittery loser into a Las Vegas gambling shark through the effects of radioactivity — I don't remember the exact details, let it suffice to say that that's what happens in the film. If you've been fortunate enough to miss this flick so far, your luck (if you're an inveterate TV-watcher) might very well run out, since THE ATOMIC KID is a television staple, frequently dug out of Metromedia's scaly stockpile on Saturday afternoons. Be forewarned!

Other nuclear films that crossed over from the strict horror genre include Peter Watkins' frightening simulated documentary, THE WAR GAME, a harrowing look at chaotic conditions in Britain after the hard rain has finally fallen; SPLIT-SECOND, a hydrogen-hyped 1953 remake of the PETRIFIED FOREST, with gangsters and hostages frantically fleeing through the desert when they discover that their hide-out is situated smack in the center of a nuclear testing ground!; the paranoid FAIL-SAFE and SEVEN DAYS IN MAY; and the satirical DR. STRANGELOVE, OR HOW I LEARNED TO STOP WORRYING AND LOVE THE BOMB.

References to the Bomb are heard in a great number of other post-war films in which it is not dealt with directly but felt instead as an ominous presence, as it was throughout the 50's in both reel and real life.

Issue before last we took a brief look at Arch Oboler's *Five*. If *Five* represented the first honest screen attempt to successfully exploit a vision of self-induced global massacre, DR. STRANGE-LOVE carried the machinations be-



By JOE KANE

MUSHROOM MONSTERS

or: The Day The World Ended & Ended Part 2

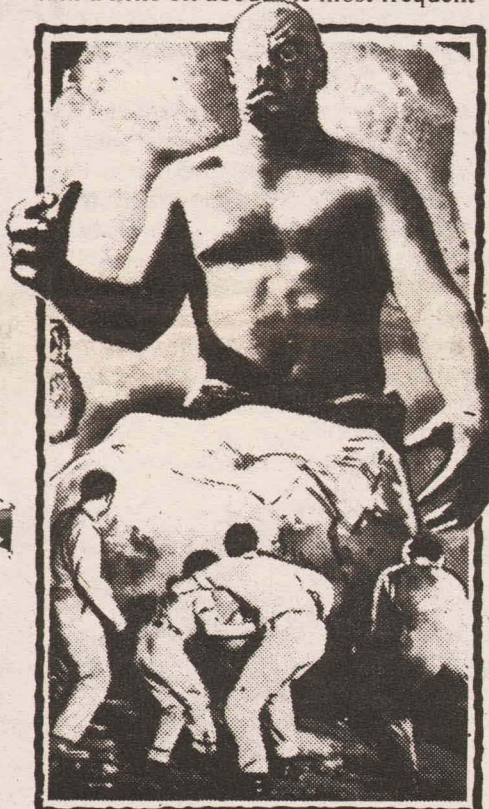
hind that drastic move of world-wide suicide to their logical, and therefore most absurd, extensions. More than any other single work in this genre, Kubrick's film exposes the kind of competitive paranoia that accompanied the potentially deadly discovery of the Bomb and the self-destructive appetites it whets. The world of the deranged Dr. Strangelove is inhabited by powerful paranoids (Gen. Jack D. Ripper), pompous patriots (Gen. Buck Turgidson), inept aimless administrators (Pres. Merkin Muffley), hawks hell-bent on war at any cost (Maj. Bat Guano), and high-level lunatics of all stripes, and it was Kubrick's special skills that made this film both funny

and unsettling at the same time. DR. STRANGELOVE emerged (so far, at least) as the ultimate statement on the Bomb and its destructive effects on the mind and body of Man. Within several months of Strangelove's release, two other major studio productions, FAIL-SAFE (dealing with the possibility and penalties of accidental nuclear attack) and SEVEN DAYS IN MAY (about an attempted military coup in Washington) hit the screen, but after that the status of the atomic bomb as 20th Century ogre began to diminish as the threat of world obliteration gradually became accepted as just another part of life. Nuclear films of the 50's and early 60's not only fed the hysteria of a frightened

movie-going public, but eventually starved it out as well through formula repetition. When you keep getting the same stale, ghastly, unsatisfactory answer, you tend to lose interest in the question.

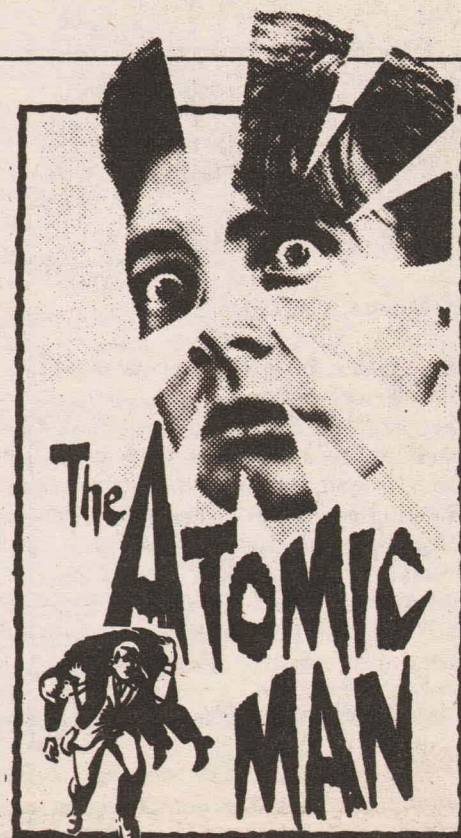
the monster that turned into Brooklyn

One of my favorite harmless past-times is making up categories to put things in, a hobby that isn't unique unto me. Having established that, I'd like to talk a little bit about the most frequent-



THE CYCLOPS was so much like THE AMAZING COLOSSAL MAN/BEAST, it was frightening!

ly re-occurring theme in nuclear films, the Human-Mutation theme. Last time I cited briefly AIP's THE AMAZING COLOSSAL MAN as an example of this type of film. Like that one, most of the Human-Mutation films were concerned with computing the possible effects that wayward radioactivity might have on an isolated man. Stretching the imagi-



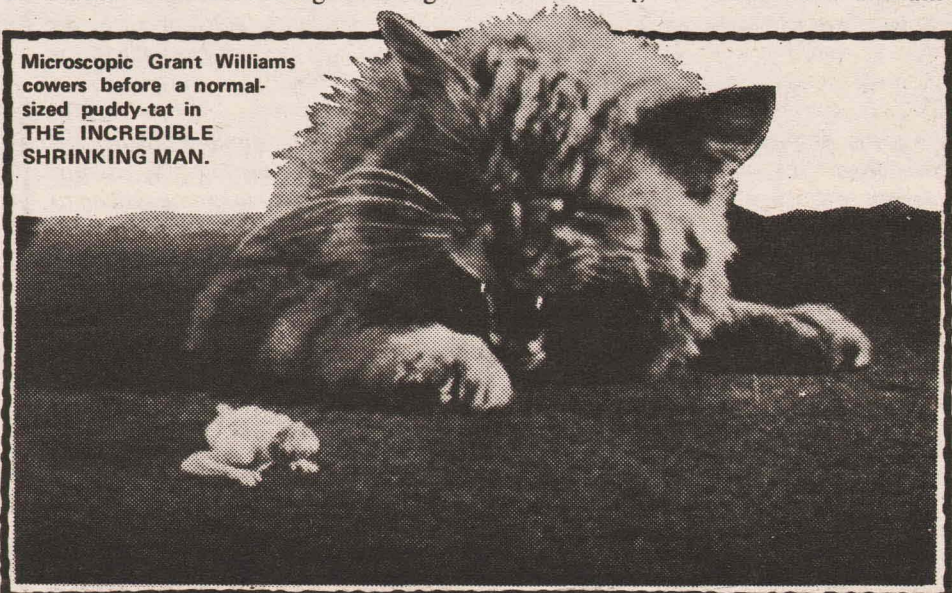
Woe unto THE ATOMIC MAN, whose radioactive brain made him unpopular.

nation half-heartedly in certain limited and all too often patently predictable directions, and spawning after each successful film a litter of imitations, THE TYPICAL HUMAN-MUTATION FILM.

Oh boy! We soon saw features of atomic pioneers (THE CREEPING UNKNOWN) or escaped convicts (THE MOST DANGEROUS MAN ALIVE — director Allen Dwan's unfortunate screen farewell) or some other wandering worthy who accidentally absorbs radioactive particles and subsequently grows tall (THE AMAZING COLOSSAL MAN) or small (THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING MAN) or zombie-like (CREATURE WITH THE ATOM BRAIN) or scaly (FIRST MAN INTO SPACE) or metallic (THE MOST DANGEROUS MAN ALIVE) or bloated & disfigured (HAND OF DEATH) or beast-like and unruly (BEAST OF YUCCA FLATS). All these heroes share two things in common — all are stripped of their original identities and all exhibit a marked tendency towards freaking-out after the transformation.

Following the usual ironic and am-

Microscopic Grant Williams cowers before a normal-sized pudgy-tat in THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING MAN.





John Agar definitely wishes he could use some cold-cream on his HANDS OF DEATH.

biguous (to allow for a possible sequel) destruction of the civilization-stripped mutant, the formula film usually coughs to an end with a 'heavy' message along the order of: When will "We" or "Mankind" or "Russia" learn to stop messing with the forces of "Nature" or "God" or the "United States?" — the culprits subject to change according to the "philosophical" bent of the filmmaker. The answer to this thought-provoking query is a rueful shake of some survivor's head, a final, distanced shot of the fallen monster — a victim of forces beyond his control and understanding — not to mention God and Nature's and America's and Russia's! And we see a slowing title . . . a ponderous **THE END???** across the darkening screen. It looks like a winner, C.B.!

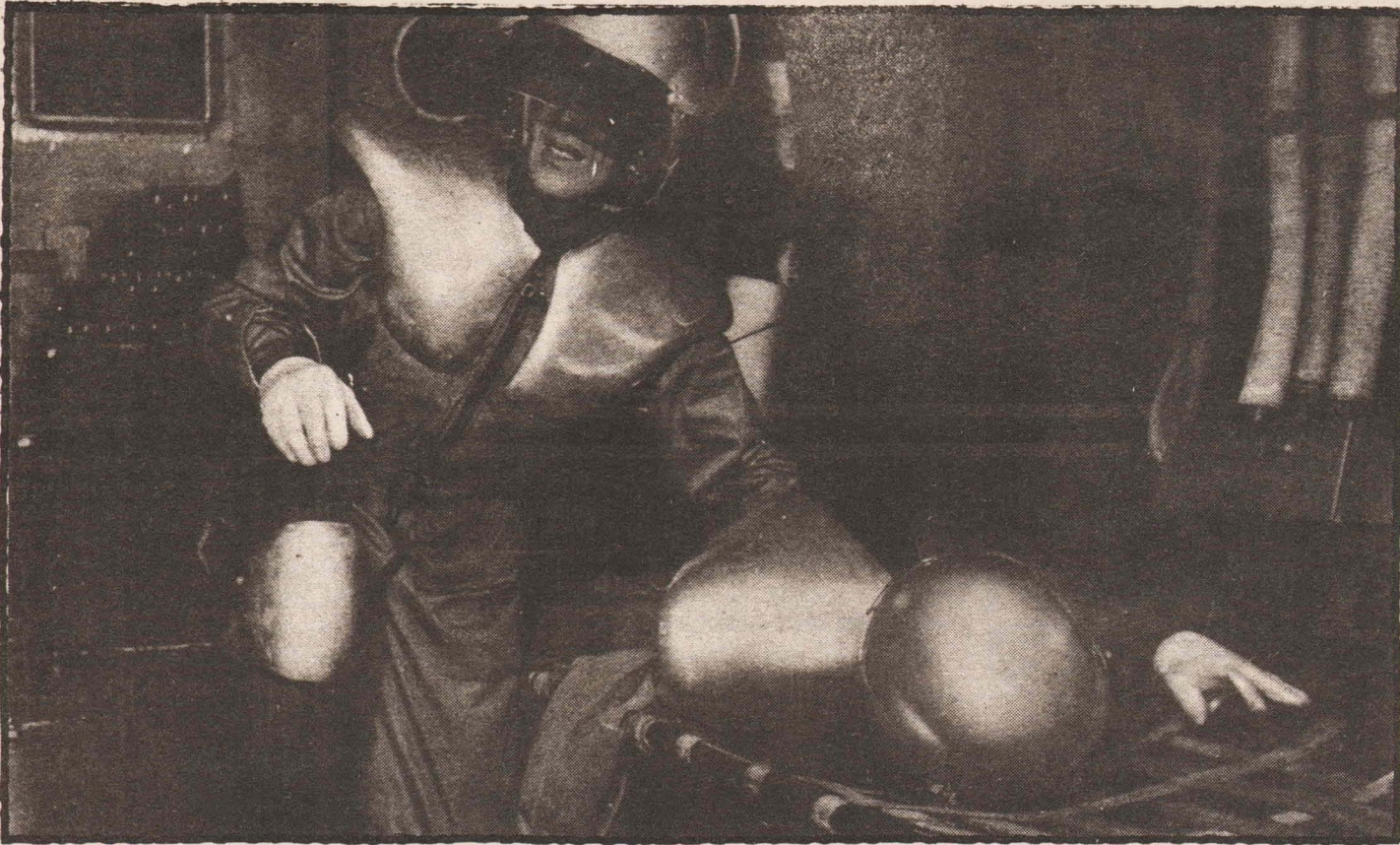
quaint, quaking equation:

Just about all the films dealing with nuclear energy are based roughly on the same monsteriffic equation: *advanced technology + primitive emotions = disaster*. While most of the Human-Mutation films served primarily as a chance to turn a quick buck by springing a

a legitimate exploration of how a radical reduction in both size and identity might affect a human mind. Scott Carey's (Grant Williams) gradual diminution seems to parallel the individual's decreasing influence over his world and over the future of an increasingly push-button, media-dominated, urbanized world-on-the-edge, and the film ably follows Carey's forced retreat through *his* ever-diminishing worlds — through a normal, well-adjusted Middle-American domestic life, through hospitals

ceeds in making Carey's terrifying trip seem very real indeed at times.

I think that the best explanation of the success of **THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING MAN** was turned by Carlos Clarens in his book, **AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF THE HORROR FILM**. According to Clarens, the film is terrifying "because it introduced a very different type of fear into the dark solitude of movie houses, not instant annihilation but a gradual inexorable descent into no-



THE CREEPING UNKNOWN was a spaceman who got radiated on and monsterized about a bit.

make-up man's monster on an undemanding audience, one film that towered above the rest was Jack Arnold's **THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING MAN** . . . a 50's classic of horror and mind-boggling special-effects.

Here the mutated character is not a lumbering movie monster stumbling dumbly through the dark. Instead, he is a man, a man who manages, after wrestling with the terrifying changes he is undergoing, to hold on to his sanity. Richard Matheson's script allows for

and treatments, an affair with a female midget ("I felt puny and absurd," the 36" Scott understates while glancing up at his now foreign and gargantuan spouse), battles with giant cats and monstrous spiders before he simultaneously dissolves and evolves into a microscopic kernel of pure, disembodied consciousness — a metaphor for the wholesale devaluation of human flesh in an automated atomic age. The film's special effects, aside from an occasionally lame back-projection shot, suc-

thingness." **THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING MAN** relied far less on cheap gimmicks to achieve its effects than most other films in this genre. Instead, its development hinges on Carey's narration, his own description of his existential evolution as he emerges from the ashes of anger, frustration, and despair to a feeling of religious union with the cosmos, a feeling of being a naked, infinitesimal, but still invaluable link in the great circle of being. For some folks, that's worth being short for. ■

memorable mini-reviews of forgettable films

For any of our readers who might want to catch some of the films mentioned in this article, consider the following first:

THE CREEPING UNKNOWN — Spacemen turns into space beast and demonstrates his resentment by trying to destroy London.

MOST DANGEROUS MAN ALIVE — Escaped con is exposed to radiation and turns into iron man. Impressed by his new powers, he returns to lean on the Italian gangsters who framed him. Tense scene transpires when Debra Paget attempts to seduce him even though he has no feelings.

THE AMAZING COLOSSAL MAN — Army officer turns into deranged giant and demonstrates his resentment by trying to destroy Las Vegas . . . unsuccessfully, alas.

CREATURE WITH THE ATOM BRAIN — Deadmen are turned into violence-crazed robots who demonstrate their resentment by trying to destroy Richard Denning . . . also unsuccessfully.

FIRST MAN INTO SPACE — Test pilot is exposed to radiation and tries to destroy everybody.

HAND OF DEATH — John Agar exposes himself to radiation and becomes bloated, ugly, and anti-social. This takes place before the popularization of computer dating so the monster grows despondent and dies.

BEAST OF YUCCA FLATS — Tor Johnson is exposed to radiation and loses what's left of his mind, much to the dismay of everyone around him.

a list of mutation

"Turn-To" films to turn-to

THE AMAZING COLOSSAL MAN — AIP — 1957. Director: Bert I. Gordon. Screenplay: Mark Hanna, Bert I. Gordon. With: Glenn Langan, Cathy Downs, William Hudson.

THE AMAZING TRANSPARENT MAN — AIP — 1960. Director: Edgar G. Ulmer. Screenplay: Jack Lewis. With: Douglas Kennedy, Marguerite Chapman, James Griffith, Ivan Triesault, Red Morgan.

THE ATOMIC BRAIN (MONSTROSITY) — Emerson — 1964. Director: Joseph Mascelli. With: Frank Gershle, Erica Peters, Judy Bamber, Frank Fowler.

THE ATOMIC KID — 1954. Director: Leslie H. Martinson. With: Mickey Rooney, Robert Strauss, Elaine Davis, Bill Goodwin.

THE ATOMIC MAN — 1956. Director: Kenneth Hughes. With: Gene Nelson, Faith Domergue, Peter Arne.

BEAST OF YUCCA FLATS — 1961. Director: Coleman Francis. Screenplay: Coleman Francis. With: Douglas Mellor, Tor Johnson, Larry Aten, Barbara Francis.

CREATURE WITH THE ATOM BRAIN — 1955. Director: Edward L. Cahn. With: Richard Denning, Angela Stevens, Gregory Gaye, Tristram Coffin.

THE CREEPING UNKNOWN (in Britain **THE QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT**) — 1956. Director: Val Guest. With: Brian Donlevy, Margia Dean, Jack Warner.

CYCLOPS — Allied Artists — 1957. Director: Bert I. Gordon. With: James Craig, Gloria Talbot.

FIRST MAN INTO SPACE — 1959. Director: Robert Day. Screenplay: John C. Cooper, Lance Z. Hargreaves. With: Marshall Tompson, Marla Landi, Bill Edwards.

4D MAN — Universal — 1959. Director: Irwin Yeaworth. Screenplay: Theodore Simonson, Cy Chermak. With: Robert Lansing, Lee Meriwether, James Congdon, Robert Strauss.

HAND OF DEATH — Fox — 1962. Director: Gene Nelson. Screenplay: Eugene Ling. With: John Agar, Paul Raymond, Steve Dunne, Roy Gordon.

THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING MAN — Universal — 1957. Director: Jack Arnold. Screenplay: Richard Matheson. With: Grant Williams, Randy Stuart, April Kent, Paul Langton.

MOST DANGEROUS MAN ALIVE — Columbia — 1961. Director: Allen Dwan. Screenplay: James Leicester, Phillip Rock. With: Ron Randall, Debra Paget, Elaine Stewart, Anthony Caruso, Gregg Palmer.

WAR OF THE COLOSSAL BEAST — AIP — 1958. Director: Bert I. Gordon. Screenplay: George W. Yates. With: Dean Parkin, Sally Fraser, Roger Pace, Russ Bender.



LARRY TODD



Illo from "Famous Fantastic Mysteries," Feb. '42, "The Citadel of Fear."

LEGACY OF A MASTER!

VIRGIL FINLAY. (Donald M. Grant, Rhode Island, 1971) 153 pp. Introduction by Donald M. Grant, Checklist by Gerry de la Ree, Biography by Sam Moskowitz. \$11.95

Virgil Finlay's illustrations covered three decades of science-fiction. Perhaps other artists have worked as long in the field, but what surprises about Finlay's work is that it is as appropriate to the moody fantasies of A.E. Merritt as to the space opera of Cordwainer Smith or to the modern day abstractions of Philip Jose Farmer. Or even more surprising is the unmistakable individual character of each of his illustrations, allowing each to stand apart from the text it was made to accompany, a whole upon itself. Finlay was a unique phenomenon, not easy to emulate or imitate. He was almost without peer, though such minds and talents as those of Ed Emshwiller and Kelly Freas are contemporary to Finlay's

Virgil Finlay died in January of 1971 and now a book of his work has been printed. Entitled simply Virgil Finlay, the book reaches us as we are in the midst of regret at his passing. We might suspect that so quick an anthology would be

slap-dash and superficial. We would be very very wrong.

The book is a labor love, obviously (or loves, plural, since three minds concentrated their fine efforts to produce it). Physically it is lovely and graceful, green in a white dust jacket. Esthetically, it is well selected and representative of Finlay's varied approaches. There is an extensive and easy-to-absorb checklist compiled by Gerry de la Ree. So well prepared is this volume that there is even an index to the checklist for easy reference. There is a biography and appreciation of Virgil Finlay by the dedicated Sam Moskowitz, thirty pages of factual analysis of Finlay's progress within (and outside) the science-fiction world. It is a thorough and decidedly worthwhile research tool for anyone interested in Finlay's work.

However, the book's great strengths are also its chief weakness. The checklist is fifty-five pages long, and that gives us fifty pages of Virgil Finlay art. I was tempted to say "a mere fifty pages" but to be just, there are handsome, well-reproduced pages which comprise some brilliant concepts, examples of his multi-textured techniques, a good

cross-section of his efforts and a few luscious color plates. There is nothing "mere" about the pages. But a taste of Finlay whets the appetite, and I could have wished the book to be 150 pages of his work, or even 500. On the 50 pages are 37 illustrations, some of which spread across two pages.

A few artists who are friends of mine have seen the book in my presence. Their comments were similar and very positive. It is a beautiful book containing some of Finlay's finest work, they decided, and they could only have been happier with more, more and more.

Count on this book for some pyrotechnics of style. The linework of Virgil Finlay is astonishing. Looking at a piece such as the illustration for "A Fog Was Blowing," I'm awe-struck at the patience of a man who could assemble those thousands of thick and thin lines into not only a whole, finished picture, but one with flair and style and imagination! And there are dozens of illustrations included here which strike the same chord.

The book is \$11.95, a considerable price. But consider it well: your library could use this volume. Hard-cover, of course.

■ Phil Seuling



Longfellow's "Skeleton in Armor" strode out of the sea in *Weird Tales*, June, 1938.

King Kong

Continued from page 15

"Michael Strogoff") and John Wayne's "Back To Bataan."

Sets and props used in "Kong" also had ways of turning up before the cameras of other pictures. The huge log that Kong hurled furiously into the spider pit was seen in the very same jungle in "The Most Dangerous Game."

The doors that Cooper had built into the heart of DeMille's Roman wall were transposed two years later from the tropical heat of Skull Island in the East Indies to the Artic wastelands for duty in the second filmed version of H. Rider Haggard's classic fantasy, "SHE."

"Kong," unlike many other elder film favorites seems to grow in stature with the passing years and is more cherished today than when it was first released back in the midst of the depression. At the box office "King Kong" grew more financially rewarding with every new release and must come second to "Gone With The Wind" in its number of new re-releases. It continued to come back to first-run theatres in 1938, 1942, 1947, 1952, 1956 and finally in 1970 for a limited engagement at "Art Theatres" across the country. Today's film fans and critics have begun noticing all manner of subtle sophistications that totally escaped the more naive film-goers of the thirties.

the Merian who saved KING KONG

In 1932 the cast and crew of "King Kong" sent a Christmas card to Merian Coldwell Cooper that portrayed him, in caricature, shouting "Make it bigger. Make it bigger." Well, the prophesy was realized and Coop got his wish. Carl Denham, a thinly disguised replica of Cooper himself, said on the eve of their coming adventure, "I'm going out and make the greatest picture in the world, something that nobody's ever seen or heard of. They'll have to think up a lot of new adjectives when I come back!" Denham kept his word, and so did Cooper. He gave the world the finest, best loved and remembered fantasy in the history of Motion Pictures. And they did have to think up a lot of new adjectives when he came back.

Were it not for Cooper and his deeply rooted faith in "Kong" the movie might never have been made. . . or, worse, it would have been made without its gifted creator continually at the helm. Without his belief in the possibilities of animator Willis O'Brien's Stop Motion; his insistence that Max Steiner create an original music score for the film when the "Money Men" were against the idea; his feeling for authentic, far off adventure, "Kong" would have turned out a different film indeed and, quite probably, would be long forgotten by this time.

However, Merian C. Cooper was very much behind the making of the movie and he, more than Willis O'Brien and Max Steiner, was responsible for saving "KING KONG."

EDITOR'S NOTE: Max Steiner, composer of the shuddering music of KING KONG, has died. His obituary is on MT Teletype, page 11. ■

Continued from page 13

THE EMPIRE OF THE ANTS

the monitor boat's deathly cargo

The next morning Holroyd learned they were within forty kilometres of Badama, and his interest in the banks intensified. He came up whenever an opportunity offered to examine his surroundings. He could see no signs of human occupation whatever, save for a weedy ruin of a house and the green-stained facade of the long-deserted monastery at Moju, with a forest tree growing out of a vacant window space, and great creepers netted across its vacant portals. Several flights of strange yellow butterflies with semi-transparent wings crossed the river that morning, and many alighted on the monitor and were killed by the men. It was towards afternoon that they came upon the derelict cuberta.

She did not at first appear to be derelict; both her sails were set and hanging slack in the afternoon calm, and there was the figure of a man sitting on the fore planking beside the shipped sweeps. Another man appeared to be sleeping face downwards on the sort of longitudinal bridge these big canoes have in the waist. But it was presently apparent, from the sway of her rudder and the way she drifted into the course of the gun-boat, that something was out of order with her. Gerilliau surveyed her through a field-glass, and became interested in the queer darkness of the face of the sitting man, a red-faced man he seemed, without a nose — crouching he was rather than sitting, and the longer the captain looked the less he liked to look at him, and the less able he was to take his glasses away.

But he did so at last, and went a little way to call up Holroyd. Then he went back to hail the cuberta. He hailed her again, and so she drove past him. *Santa Rosa* stood out clearly as her name.

As she came by and into the wake of the monitor, she pitched a little, and suddenly the figure of the crouching man collapsed as though all its joints had given way. His hat fell off, his head was not nice to look at, and his body flopped lax and rolled out of sight behind the bulwarks.

"*Caramba!*" cried Gerilliau, and resorted to Holroyd forthwith.

Holroyd was halfway up the companion. "Did you see dat?" said the captain.

"Dead!" said Holroyd. "Yes. You'd better send a boat aboard. There's something wrong."

"Did you — by any chance — see his face?"

"What was it like?"

"It was — ugh! — I have no words." And the captain suddenly turned his back on Holroyd and became an active and strident commander.

The gunboat came about, steamed parallel to the erratic course of the canoe, and dropped the boat with Lieutenant da Cunha and three sailors to board her. Then the curiosity of the captain made him draw up almost alongside as the lieutenant got aboard, so that the whole of the *Santa Rosa*, deck and hold, was visible to Holroyd.

He saw now clearly that the sole crew of the vessel was these two dead men, and though he could not see their faces, he saw by their outstretched ands, which were all of ragged flesh, that they had been subjected to some strange exceptional process of decay. For a moment his attention concentrated on those two

enigmatical bundles of dirty clothes and laxly flung limbs, and then his eyes went forward to discover the open hold pile high with trunks and cases, and aft, to where the little cabin gaped inexplicably empty. Then he became aware that the planks of the middle decking were dotted with moving black specks.

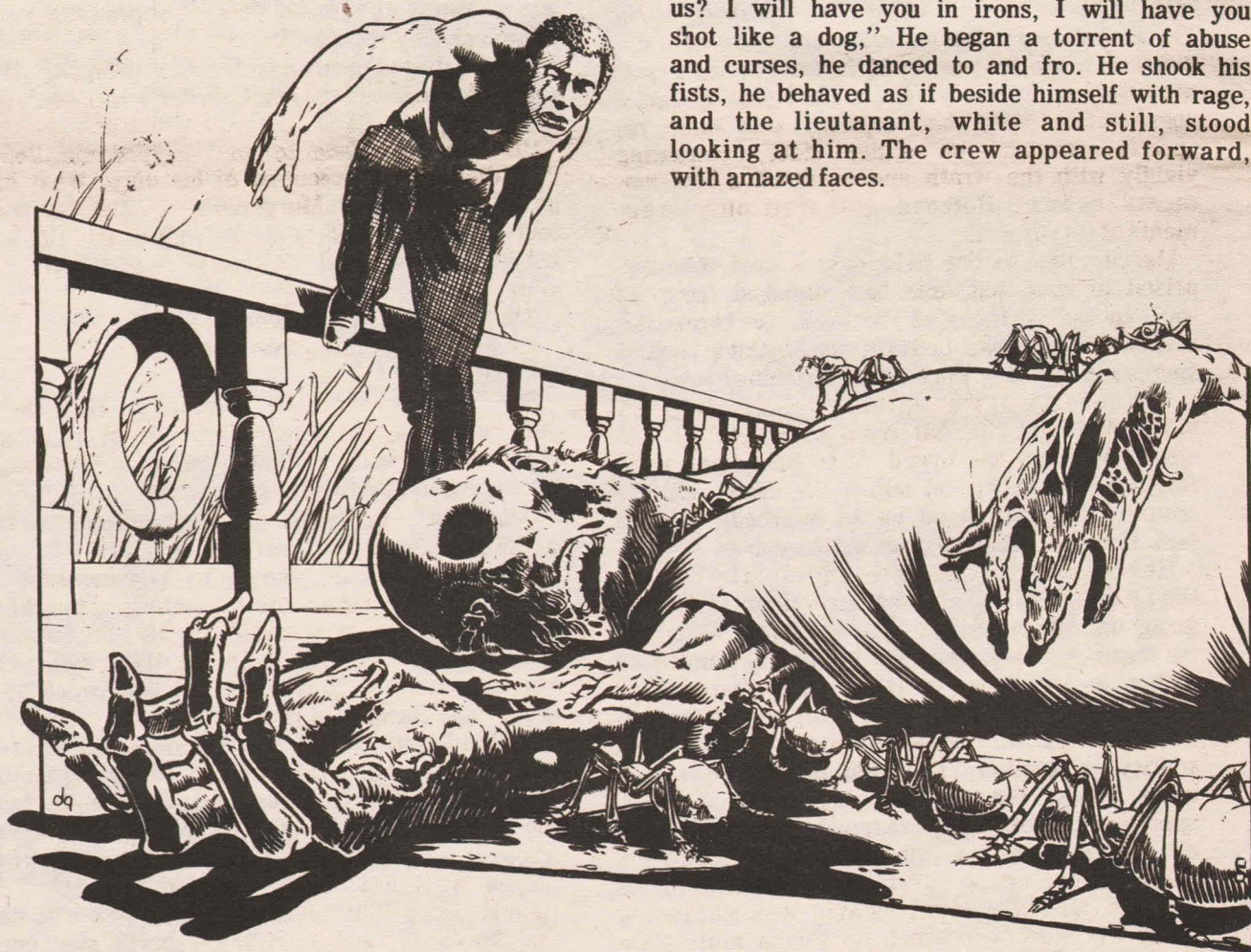
His attention was riveted by these specks. They were all walking in directions radiating from the fallen men in a manner — the image came unsought to his mind — like the crowd dispersing from a bull-fight.

He became aware of Gerilliau beside him. "Capo," he said, "have you your glasses? Can you focus as closely as those planks there?"

Gerilliau made an effort, grunted, and handed him the glasses.

There followed a moment of scrutiny. "It's ants," said the Englishman, and handed the focussed field-glass back to Gerilliau.

His impression of them was of a crowd of large black ants, very like ordinary ants except for their size, and for the fact that some of the larger of them bore a sort of clothing of grey. But at the time his inspection was too brief for particulars. The head of Lieutenant da Cunha appeared over the side of the cuberta, and a brief colloquy ensued.



"You must go aboard," said Gerilliau.

The lieutenant objected that the boat was full of ants.

"You have your boots," said Gerilliau.

The lieutenant changed the subject. "How did these men die?" he asked.

Captain Gerilliau embarked upon speculations that Holroyd could not follow, and the two men disputed with a certain increasing vehemence. Holroyd took up the field-glass and resumed his scrutiny, first of the ants and then of the dead man amidships.

battallions of ANTS with ARMOR!

He has described these ants to me very particularly.

He says they were as large as any ants he has ever seen, black and moving with a steady deliberation very different from the mechanical fussiness of the common ant. About one in

twenty was much larger than its fellows, and with an exceptionally large head. These reminded him at once of the master workers who are said to rule over the leaf-cutter ants; like them they seemed to be directing and coordinating the general movements. They tilted their bodies back in a manner altogether singular as if they made some use of the fore feet. And he had a curious fancy that he was too far off to verify, that most of these ants of both kinds were wearing accoutrements, had things strapped about their bodies by bright white bands like white metal threads . . .

He put down the glasses abruptly, realizing that the question of discipline between the captain and his subordinate had become acute.

"It is your duty," said the captain, "to go aboard. It is my instructions."

The lieutenant seemed on the verge of refusing. The head of one of the mulatto sailors appeared beside him.

"I believe these men were killed by the ants," said Holroyd abruptly in English.

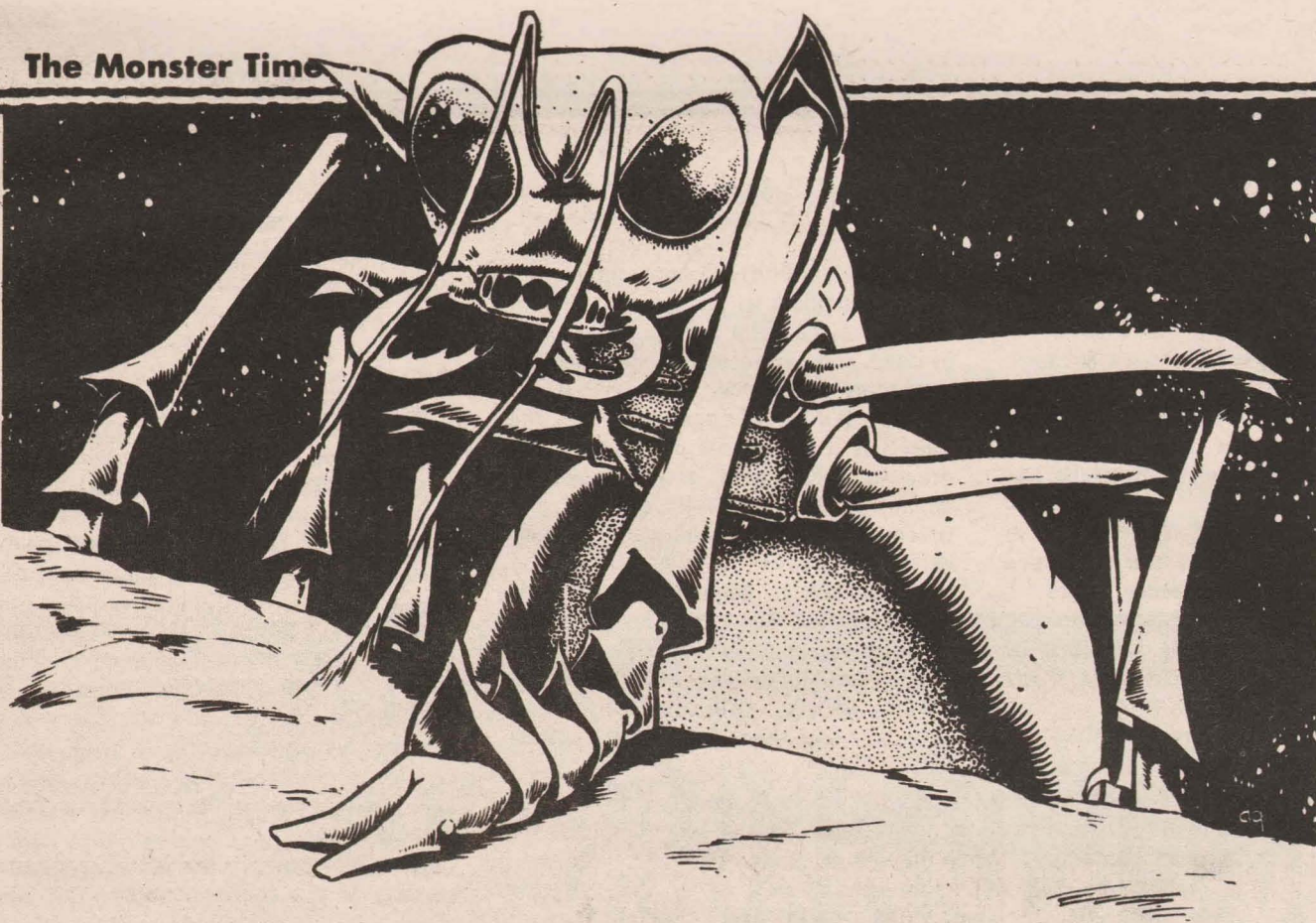
The captain burst into a rage. He made no answer to Holroyd. "I have commanded you to go aboard," he screamed to his subordinate in Portuguese. "If you do not go aboard forthwith it is mutiny — rank mutiny. Mutiny and cowardice! Where is the courage that should animate us? I will have you in irons, I will have you shot like a dog," He began a torrent of abuse and curses, he danced to and fro. He shook his fists, he behaved as if beside himself with rage, and the lieutenant, white and still, stood looking at him. The crew appeared forward, with amazed faces.

Suddenly, in a pause of this outbreak, the lieutenant came to some heroic decision, saluted, drew himself together and clambered upon the deck of the cuberta.

"Ah!" said Gerilliau, and his mouth shut like a trap. Holroyd saw the ants retreating before da Cunha's boots. The Portuguese walked slowly to the fallen man, stooped down, hesitated, clutched his coat and turned him over. A black swarm of ants rushed out of the clothes, and da Cunha stepped back very quickly and trod two or three times on the deck.

Holroyd put up the glasses. He saw the scattered ants about the invader's feet, and doing what he had never seen ants doing before. They had nothing of the blind movements of the common ant; they were looking at him — as a allying crowd of men might look at some gigantic monster that had dispersed it.

"How did he die?" the captain shouted.



Holroyd understood enough Portuguese to say the body was too much eaten to tell.

"What is there forward?" asked Gerilleau.

The lieutenant walked a few paces, and began his answer in Portuguese. He stopped abruptly and beat off something from his leg. He made some peculiar steps as if he was trying to stamp on something invisible, and went quickly towards the side. Then he controlled himself, turned about, walked deliberately forward to the hold, clambered up to the foredecking, from which the sweeps are worked, stood for a time over the second man, groaned audibly, and made his way back and aft to the cabin, moving very rigidly. He turned and began a conversation with his captain, cold and respectful in tone on either side, contrasting vividly with the wrath and insult of a few moments before. Holroyd gathered only fragments of its purport.

He reverted to the field-glasses, and was surprised to find that ants had vanished from all the exposed surfaces of the deck. He turned towards the shadows beneath the decking, and it seemed to him they were full of watching eyes.

The cuberta, it was agreed, was derelict, but too full of ants to put men aboard to sit and sleep: it must be towed. The lieutenant went forward to take in and adjust the cable, and the men in the boat stood up to be ready to help him. Holroyd's glasses searched the canoe.

He became more and more impressed by the fact that a great if minute and furtive activity was going on. He perceived that a number of gigantic ants — they seemed nearly a couple of inches in length — carrying oddly-shaped burthens for which he could imagine no use — were moving in rushes from one point of obscurity to another. They did not move in columns across the exposed places, but in open, spaced-out lines, oddly suggestive of the rushes of modern infantry advancing under fire. A number were taking cover under the dead man's clothes, and a perfect swarm was gathering along the side over which da Cunha must presently go.

He did not see them actually rush for the lieutenant as he returned, but he has no doubt they did make a concerted rush. Suddenly the lieutenant was shouting and cursing and beating at his legs. "I'm stung!" he shouted, with a face of hate and accusation towards Gerilleau.

Then he vanished over the side, dropped into his boat, and plunged at once into the water. Holroyd heard the splash.

The three men in the boat pulled him out and brought him aboard, and that night he died.

a waiting game - anxiety and fear

Holroyd and the captain came out of the cabin in which the swollen and contorted body of the lieutenant lay and stood together at the stern of the monitor, staring at the sinister vessel they trailed behind them. It was a close, dark night that had only phantom flickering

of sheet lighting to illuminate it. The cuberta, a vague black triangle, rocked about in the steamer's wake, her sails bobbing and flapping, and the black smoke from the funnels, spark-lit ever and again, streamed over her swaying masts.

Gerilleau's mind was inclined to run on the unkind things the lieutenant had said in the heat of his last fever.

"He says I murdered 'im," he protested. "It is simply absurd. Someone *ad* to go aboard. Are we to run away from these confounded ants whenever they show up?"

Holroyd said nothing. *He was thinking of a disciplined rush of little black shapes across bare sunlit planking.*

"It was his place to go," harped Gerilleau. "He died in the execution of his duty. What has he to complain of? Murdered! . . . But the poor fellow was — what is it? — demented. He was not in his right mind. *The poison swelled him . . . U'm.*"

They came to a long silence.

"We will sink that canoe — burn it."

"And then?"

The inquiry irritated Gerilleau. His shoulders went up, hid hands flew out at right angles from his body. "What is one to do?" he said, his voice going up to an angry squeak.

"Anyhow," he broke out vindictively, "every ant in dat cuberta! — I will burn dem alive!"

Holroyd was not moved to conversation. A distant ululation of howling monkeys filled the sultry night with foreboding sounds, and as the gunboat drew near the black mysterious banks this was reinforced by a depressing clamour of frogs.

"What is one to do?" the captain repeated after a vast interval, and suddenly becoming active and savage and blasphemous, decided to burn the *Santa Rosa* without further delay. Everyone aboard was pleased by that idea, everyone helped with zest; they pulled in the cable, cut it, and dropped the boat and fired her with tow and kerosene, and soon the cuberta was crackling and flaring merrily amidst the immensities of the tropical night. Holroyd watched the mounting yellow flare against the blackness, and the livid flashes of sheet lightning that came and went above the forest summits, throwing them into momentary silhouette, and his stoker stood behind him watching also.

The stoker was stirred to the depth of his linguistics. "*Sauga go pop, pop,*" he said, "*Wahaw!*" and laughed richly.

But Holroyd was thinking that these little creatures on the decked canoe had also eyes and brains.

The whole thing impressed him as incredibly foolish and wrong, but — what was one to do? This question came back enormously reinforced on the morrow, when at last the gunboat reached Badama.

This place, with its leaf-thatch-covered houses and sheds, its creeper-invaded sugar-mill, its little jetty of timer and canes, was very still in the morning heat, and showed never a sign of living men. Whatever ants there were at that

distance were too small to see.

"All the people have gone," said Gerilleau, "but we will do one thing anyhow. We will 'oot and vissel."

So Holroyd hooted and whistled.

Then the captain fell into a doubting fit of the worst kind. "Der is one thing we can do," he said presently.

"What's that?" said Holroyd.

"'Oot and vissel again."

So they did.

The captian walked his deck and gesticulated to himself. He seemed to have many things on his mind. Fragments of speeches came from his lips. He appeared to be addressing some imaginary public tribunal either in Spanish or Portuguese. Holroyd's improving ear detected something about ammunition. He came out of these preoccupations suddenly into English. "My dear 'Olroyd!" he cried, and broke off with "But what *can* one do?"

the ants attack their next target

They took the boat and the field-glasses, and went close in to examine the place. They made out a number of big ants, whose still postures had a certain effect of watching them, dotted about the edge of the rude embarkation jetty. Gerilleau tried ineffectual pistol shots at these. Holroyd thinks he distinguished curious earthworks running between the nearer houses, that may have been the work of the insect conquerors of those human habitations. The explorers pulled past the jetty, and became aware of a human skeleton wearing a loin cloth, and very bright and clean and shining, lying beyond. They came to a pause regarding this . . .

"I 'ave all dose lives to consider," said Gerilleau suddenly.

Holroyd turned and stared at the captain, relizing slowly that he referred to the unappetizing mixture of races that constituted his crew.

"To send a landing party — it is impossible — impossible. They will be poisoned, they will swell, they will swell up and abuse me and die. It is totally impossible . . . If we land, I must land alone, alone, in thick boots and with my life in my hand. Perhaps I should live. Or again — I might not land. I do not know! I do not know!"

Holroyd thought he did, but he said nothing.

"De whole thing," said Gerilleau suddenly, "'as been got up to make me ridiculous. De whole thing!"

They paddled about and regarded the clean white skelton from various points of view, and then they retruned to the gunboat. Then Gerilleau's indecisions became terrible. Steam was got up, and in the afternoon the monitor went on up the river with an air of going to ask somebody something, and by sunset came back again and anchored. A thunderstorm gathered and broke furiously and then the night became beautifully cool and quiet and everyone slept on deck. Except Gerilleau who tossed about and muttered. In the dawn he awakened Holroyd.

"Lord!" said Holroyd. "what now?"

"I have decided," said the captain.

"What — to land?" said Holroyd, sitting up brightly.

"No!" said the captain, and was for a time very reserved. "I have decided," he repeated, and Holroyd manifested symptoms of impatience.

"Well, — yes," said the captain, "*I shall fire de big gun!*"

And he did! Heaven knows what the ants thought of it, but he did. He fired it twice with great sternness and ceremony. All the crew had wadding in their ears, and there was an effect of going into action about the whole affair, and first they hit and wrecked the old sugar-mill, and then they smashed the abandoned

Continued on next page

STEVE LEMBERG PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS...

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ALL LIVE! MUSIC! MYTH!

Last January, Marvel Comics editor, Stan Lee, and several of his staff "put on" a program at Carnegie Hall. "Put on" is the correct term, if we are to take the words of Dean Latimer seriously. Dean has written a review which anyone who intends to attend any other such program should definitely read.

As a warning, no less

It was nothing less than mystifying.

That was the reaction that was written on each face of the poor schliemiels who paid upwards from \$4.50 at the door to see Stan Lee at Carnegie Hall last month: pure mystification.

Why here?

Why Now?

What did it all mean?

Who's taking in all the money? The *Marvellous Evening With Stan Lee*, as it was billed, revealed nothing. The audience left in stunned silence, after often yawning louder than the fabulously fraught festivities.

It wasn't merely that the evening was boring. Many kids were there — three-quarters of the audience was high-school age, with college punks constituting the rest — and many kids there would have settled for boredom, just on the off-chance of learning something new about Stan Lee or Marvel Comics, which to them must surely be Paris in the '90's, or worse.

nothing new under Stan's Ego

But surely they anticipated something new, or special. An announcement of yet another New Trend in Marvel Comics, perhaps. A resurrection of all those dead old Marvel heroes who have fallen into the abyss in the last few years, maybe.

Or old startlin' Stan might simply come out in his underwear and recite "Shakespeare!" Anything you hear, anything NEW! Anything!

So when all they got was lame sentimental drivel, the same kind of junk you can read every month in Stan's Soapbox, and the Bullpen notes, you can understand why they were mystified. And bored. So bored, that they sent armadas of paper-airplanes winging from the balcony.

Why *Carnegie Hall*, for the luvva Mike? In *Carnegie Hall* one expects a certain degree of *magnificence*, right?

Imagine then our astonishment at seeing the stage decked out like some high school auditorium for *Our Town*. Stage right, an assortment of plywood tiers upon which sat Chico Hamilton and

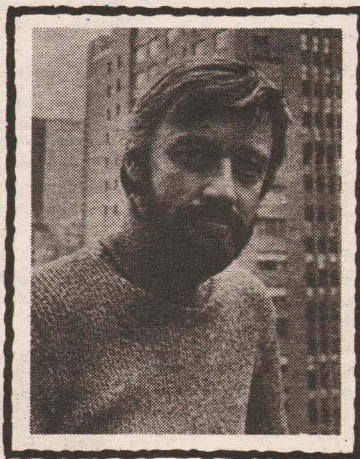
staging, right? Think it's gonna be a heavy night, hot times in Carnegie Hall, don't cha?

Well, it was Pretty Disappointing.

Stan maunders on for a spell, standing in front of the little podium all tall and bearded and wise-looking, and then he introduces some other guy; who is it? Why! — It's Herb Trimpe, who does *The Hulk!!!* And *Trimpe* sits down at a little drawing table with a rear-projection gimmick, and sets into drawing the Green Golem himself. And while Humpin' Herb sketches, some other swain, who was nameless to begin with, reads off the Virtues and Hangups of The Hulk.

It was like nothing we had ever seen before! even in Carnegie Hall! You would think, now, what with comic sales dropping like a stunned falcon for lo these

A MARVEL-LOUS EVENING BY DEAN WITH LATIMER WITH STAN LEE



his rock players, with their instruments; stage centre, a little podium for the speaker; and stage left, a big baffle screen that seemed there simply to fill up empty space. The whole thing bathed in muted light, seeking evidently a "spooky" effect.

Well, at first you could've been deluded into thinking maybe something snazzy was about to occur. Because first of all, Geoffrey Crozier, the Master Illusionist of all Australia, swept out in his Druid robes, to an accompaniment of hard-rock Space Music by the Hamilton combo, and dashed around like a maniac.

the 3rd time's the charm!

By and by, after conjuring up flames out of his wrists and stuff like that, Crozier hauled out a huge wardrobe-type box on stage, and opened the door. Nothing inside, right? *Ha!* We say *Ha!*, because after closing the door, he opened it again, to draw forth a beautiful girl in a harem outfit. Far out!

Once again, he closes it, to open and draw forth yet another cutie.

And then (third time's the charm!) he opens it; to haul out *Stan Lee!* Tough

half-dozen years ago, they'd come up with *something new*, some new riff with which to shill their superheroes.

But no, they're still trying to tell us how "engaging" their various freaks are, because they have "human hangups," which "those DC superheroes" never had: how the Hulk deep down in his Paleolithic psyche *loves all things*, but is forever being brutalized by those about him; how Peter Parker is a sensitive kid, and *much too good* for the foul world in which his *alter-ego*, Spider-Man, toils; how Captain America isn't really a flag-waving fascist, but . . . But I confess I ceased listening by the time they got to Captain America. The whole audience did (some snored).

For one thing, who gives a heck about Marvel Comics any more? Who really does? When they went "relevant" with their "New Trend," they hung themselves on their own aimless alliterations. Since they started to preach they lost whatever elements of fantasy they ever had to commend them to us. Besides, ever notice how Marvel lumps together 8 or 15 "Good Guy" superheroes to beat up one "Bad Guy"? — real American sense of fair-play there! That 8 against ONE stuff! The Merry Marvel Mobsters!

store behind the jetty. And then Gerilleau experienced the inevitable reaction.

"It is no good," he said to Holroyd; "no good at all. No sort of bally good. We must go back — for instructions. Dere will be de devil of a row about dis ammunition — oh! de devil of a row! You don't know, 'Olroyd . . ."

He stood regarding the world in infinite perplexity for a space.

"But what else was there to do?" he cried.

In the afternoon the monitor started down stream again, and in the evening a landing party took the body of the lieutenant and buried it on the bank upon which the new ants have so far not appeared . . .

a grim prophecy . . .

I heard this story in a fragmentary state from Holroyd not three weeks ago.

These new ants have got into his brain, and he has come back to England with the idea, as he says, of "exciting people" about them "before it is too late." He says they threaten British Guiana, which cannot be much over a trifle

of a thousand miles from their present sphere of activity, and that the Colonial Office ought to get to work upon them at once. He declaims with great passion: "These are intelligent ants. Just think what that means!"

There can be no doubt they are a serious pest, and that the Brazilian Government is well advised in offering a prize of five hundred pounds for some effectual method of extirpation. It is certain too that since they first appeared in the hills beyond Badama, about three years ago, they have achieved extraordinary conquests. The whole of the south bank of the Batemo River, for nearly sixty miles, they have in their effectual occupation; they have driven men out completely, occupied plantations and settlements, and boarded and captured at least one ship! It is even said they have in some inexplicable way bridged the very considerable Capuarana arm and pushed many miles towards the Amazon itself!

There can be little doubt that they are far more reasonable and with a far better social organization than any previously-known ant species; instead of being in dispersed socie-

ties they are organized into what is in effect a single nation; but their peculiar and immediate formidableness lies not so much in this as in the intelligent use they make of poison against their large enemies. It would seem this poison of theirs is closely akin to snake poison, and it is highly probable they actually manufacture it, and that the larger individuals among them carry the needle-like crystals of it in their attacks upon men.

Of course it is extremely difficult to get any detailed information about these new competitors for the sovereignty of the globe. No eyewitnesses of their activity, except for such glimpses as Holroyd's, have survived the encounter. The most extraordinary legends of their prowess and capacity grow daily as the steady advance of the invader stimulates men's imaginations through their fears.

These strange little creatures are credited not only with the use of implements and a knowledge of fire and metals and with organized feats as we are to such feats as that of the Saubas of Rio de Janeiro, who in 1941 drove a tunnel under Parahyba where it is as wide as the Thames at London Bridge — but with an

put CONAN in Carnegie Hall, by Crom!

Lives there a man with soul so dead these days that he reads any Marvel Comic other than *Conan*? That's of a ir-"relavent" world they know more about than I do of this *real* one and it's just *Conan* against someone else; no goons from the Marvel-Mafioso Superhero Clearing-House.

Actually, I shouldn't have mentioned *Conan* in a positive context. If the accountants at Marvel ever hear that "bright people" read *Conan*, they'll cleave ol' *Conan* to the breastbone. And probably take *Conan's* budget to re-rent Carnegie Hall.

So it was a drag, and a gyp and a Royal Rip-off, the *Marvellous Evening With Stan Lee*. The only element of it that was anywhere near new was Lee's introduction of Alain Resnais, the famous French culture-groupie, and film-maker and advertising chairman for the Marienbad Wall-paper Company, and who, according to Lee, is making a flick which will incorporate elements of Marvel cartoons.

"It's a wierd, lovely, funny, sad flick," equivocated Stan, "about life and death and love and hate, and — well — *everything!*"

Chances are, this pencil-pusher speculates, old Stan is letting his editor Roy Thomas or perhaps some far lesser talents ghost who knows the *Way-of-the-Con-by-book-licking*, write the script for that one too, and that Smilin Stan doesn't really know a heck of a lot about the film at all. I mean; Stan's latest ish of *Creatures On The Prowl Where Boogeymen Stumble* was "wierd, lovely, funny and sad" — and I can say that, and I didn't even read it! And I'll even bet that *Where Ghosts Romp* or whatever their "horror" comic of reprints from the 1960's is called, was "about life and death and love and hate and well . . . *everything!*"

There was one element of the evening, though — besides Crozier's sporadic appearances, during which he performed such illusions as skewering girls with cutlasses and setting their heads afire — that was pretty nice, and that was the advertised slide show. Joshua Lights, of the old Fillmore East, put it together, and it was *Pretty Swell* kids: micro-second flashes of Marvel heroes and heroines, hitting you so fast and furious they actually seemed, after a while, to be in some kind of sequence. This is an art-form that could bear some more use.

Lord knows there had better be found some new use for comix in the years to come. Leave these loudmouth losers to their own devices and they'll kill the field once and for all, that's clear. If the *Marvellous Evening With Stan Lee* indicated anything, it showed that the reason contemporary "aboveground" comic art is devoid of interest, lies in the deficiencies of its creators. They are a marvelously boring bunch, that's all. ■

organized and detailed method of record and communication analogous to our books.

So far their action has been a steady progressive settlement, involving the flight or slaughter of every human being in the new areas they invade. They are increasing rapidly in numbers, and Holroyd at least is firmly convinced that they will finally dispossess man over the whole of tropical South America.

And why should they stop at tropical South America?

Well, there they are, anyhow. By 1911 or thereabouts, if they go on as they are going, they ought to strike the Capuarana Extension Railway, and force themselves upon the attention of the European capitalist.

By 1920 they will be halfway down the Amazon. I fix 1950 or '60 at the latest for their discovery of Europe.

—Herbert George Wells, 1897

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR: DAN GREENE, who did the captivating pulp-magazine-like illos for this story, is one of comic art and illustration's newest rising young talents. Last issue we goofed and credited the illos to someone else. Sorry Dan!

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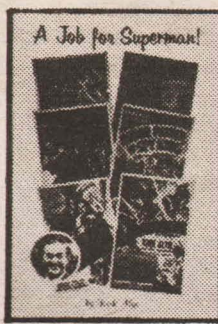
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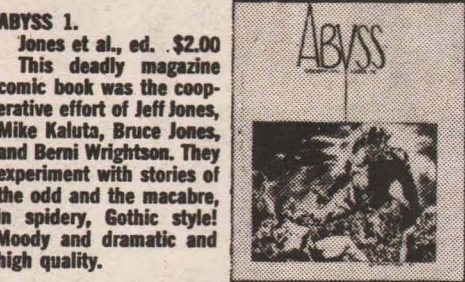


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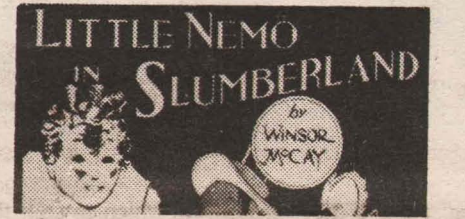


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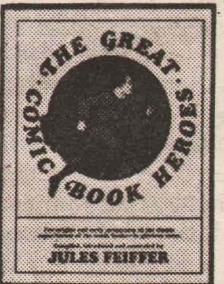
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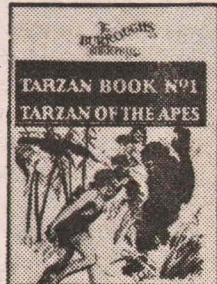
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Continued from page 5

"THEM!"

hope that the gas would carry throughout the ant colony. As we approach the cone, huge antennas were emerging from the rim of the hill. The team grab their machine guns and began firing at the approaching behemoth. Medford screams instructions.

"Aim for the antennas. Aim for the antennas."

First one antenna blown off, and then the other. The creature is dead.

From inside the cone they heard that Hellish whistling. Dr. Medford has a curious expression on his face, a mixture of fear and fascination. Well, this must be a big day for him.

"Gentlemen, We may be witnessing a biblical prophecy come true - "And a terrible famine will encompass the land. . . and the beasts shall inherit the earth." — a religious nut? Peacenik Ban-the-Bomber? No! This is said by a rational government agent.

"Stand back Doc" ordered the man with the bazooka. He fires deadly pellets into the cone. We wait. Inside, all hell breaks loose and the screaming of tortured ants rings through the desert.

It quiets down in there after a while. They should be dead but there's only one way of finding out for sure. Someone must go down into the cone to see. Bob Graham, Ben Peterson and Pat Medford put on their fatigues, and covered their faces with gas masks, then descended into the pit. I follow in similar gear, close (not too close) behind.

It is an incredible sight! Hundreds, possibly thousands of giant monster ants lying dead at our feet! The stench is awful. . . even through the masks! Pat Medford tries to keep herself under rigid self control for fear of fainting. Not an easy job. Even Ben Peterson looks queasy. . .

Suddenly, an entire cave wall was coming down on us and with it, a giant ant, desperately seeking an escape through them. Ben's gun blazed madly away at the animal until it fell with a shriek at our feet. Too close for comfort!

"It must have escaped the gas on the other side of that wall," Pat volunteers this theory.

At last we stand at the foot of the main nest. Pat reaches for her camera and takes pictures of the macabre scene. Spread out before us is a hideous crypt of wall to wall death. Creatures spawned by the atomic age condemned to death by a guilt ridden, terrified mankind.

Continued on next page

It is over, or has Man merely been witness to the beginnings of a shift in the order of things . . . the rule of the insects?

Up on the surface, Dr. Medford studies the photographs taken by the team in the nest.

"Are you certain that these creatures were all you found in the main nest?" he asks gravely concerned.

"Yes, dad," Pat says. "Why, what's wrong?"

"I'm afraid that there's a great deal that's wrong, Pat. The queen is gone, probably with a mate. With the enormous size of her wings she could be half way across the world in a matter of hours. If she mates and is allowed to reproduce, she can bring thousands of her offspring into the world in a single delivery! In that case, the human race is in very real danger of immediate extinction."

Bombs away

Friday - 11:30 AM

The experience and personnel of the nation's largest military communication's centers are now at Dr. Medford's disposal. Military and civilian operators are placed on around the clock standby duty to receive and check out any and all information coming into that office, from anywhere in the world, that might possibly lead to the present whereabouts of Them. We are using Alamagordo AFB as operations center, and...

It has happened! An urgent S.O.S. radioed in from a freighter in the Atlantic tells of a horrible massacre in progress. As near as the operator can figure out, the queen must have flown aboard ship in the early morning hours and hidden in the great hold, left uncovered during the night. There she laid her eggs and flew off again unseen by the crew. Now, the ship's crew is being devoured alive by hungry ants as their boat bobs helpless in the middle of the ocean. . . the radio operator's message was abruptly cut off! General O'Brien orders the dead ship bombed and sunk as quickly as possible. . .

Flash! Another report in to Central of a man, a private pilot, who claims to have seen a "flying saucer" while taking his own plane for a spin. Graham decides it best for all concerned that the man remain under psychiatric care



ILLINOIS GUARDSMEN INSPECT HORRIBLE TROPHIES: QUEEN-ANT'S CHAMBER. The final prize; the dreaded Queen-Ant and her last drones, succumbed to gas-attack.

until the matter of wide spread public panic had been averted. Besides, who would have believed a crazy story about a flying saucer with wings anyway? Bad joke. Kill this item.

Friday, 9 PM:

Things have been quiet for a few hours. Dr. Medford anxious, slept little, wonders when we will find next lead. Surely the calm before the storm. . .

Saturday, 4 AM:

Early the following morning, a strange report reaches us from Chicago. One whole car on a freight train has mysteriously lost its cargo over-night, while parked in the stock yard. The night watchman was being accused of stealing the shipment and selling it on the black market. The guard protests that the entire incident was absolutely insane.

"Who ever heard," he says, "of a black market for SUGAR?" Who indeed! We wait.

Saturday, 4:30 AM:

Graham, Peterson, Pat and Dr. Medford and I are on the next

plane bound for the windy city... Upon our arrival, we instigate a check on any strange reports turned in to local police during the night centering in the area of the stock yard. . . 8:30 AM — It is learned that a woman phoned in a missing persons report on her husband and small son. They had set out on a camping trip twenty four hours ago and hadn't been seen or heard of since. The two of them would often stop off at the stock yards to fly the boy's model airplane.

"He loved that little plane," she cries.

That's just one more case to check into.

Late Saturday afternoon: the drunk ward of the county hospital; see a man who had been picked up the previous evening for drinking and for trespassing on railroad property. He might well have seen something. Find the man something less than sober, and raving. It is nearly impossible to get a straight answer out of him, Whea! We were just on the point of leaving when he blurted out something about "their coming out only at night."

Raced back to his bedside! Asked what it was he was talking about.

"Sure, I'll tell you," he laughs. "I'll tell you if you make me a sergeant of police like him. Make me a sergeant and charge the booze. Make me a sergeant and charge the booze. Make me a sergeant. . . ."

The drunk got lost in his song and forgot about his earlier slip entirely. He had retreated into a coma - like shell, just as the little Vogel girl had. Local police officer was stares out of the window in the ward as though suddenly hypnotised by something he had seen. He turns and faces Bob, Ben, and me.

"How could the ants remain hidden in such a totally open area of the city? It would be an impossible task unless... "There's

only one place that they could hide. Come over to the window and look down there!" These words we knew as we heard them would turn the key.

Out of the window is an immense structure standing next to the stock-yards and directly across the street from the hospital. It towers above the street like an Egyptian obelisk. It spreads its many catacombs out in all directions and underlined all of the city, and its great, yawning entrance is right here. . . here, staring back at them. It is the entrance to the sewers of Chicago. . .

In a moment we were on the street in front of the sewer system. We hoped to find a trace, a clue, anything, just some positive indication that we were at last on the right track and in the final stages of their journey. The officer stooped down near the left supporting column of the structure and retrieved a toy. He handed it to us and looked sad. It was a boy's model airplane. Absence speaks louder than words. . .

WARI

The Governor has declared the city in a state of martial law. The total curfew will be strictly enforced. Meanwhile, the National Guard mobilizes. By nightfall the storm drains are surrounded on all sides by soldiers. On radio command, jeeps now begin rolling in the countless openings, perhaps to meet somewhere in the center. But this was a frighteningly dangerous task. There are 7,000 miles of drains woven under the Chicago. An attack could spring upon the men from almost anywhere and at any time.

The signal to go in was given and the vehicles moved rapidly. Each jeep is equipped with a flood lamp to light the way for foot soldiers scouring the tunnels. I have special priority. I ride in Ben Peterson's jeep.



NATIONAL GUARDSMEN USE FLAME THROWERS TO DESTROY GIANT ANTS! Nervous civilian-soldiers test weaponry continually during sewertrek.

the Monster Fan Fair

One mile in: Ben Peterson stops his jeep and listens.

"What's that? Do you hear it?" Peterson now out of the jeep, and leans up against a drain pipe that emptied out into this tunnel. He hears it again. So do I. We both will never forget that sound. "Give me a flashlight," he says. "I'm going through."

With a helpful assist from the driver, Ben climbs up into the pipe and begins to crawl through. As he reaches the opposite end of the pipe he points the flashlight in the direction we thought we had heard the sound coming from. There is a large opening at the other end. On the far side of the room is a little boy, wedged behind some heavy piping. *An ant is going for him, trying to get at him through the pipes. Ben fires his gun at the beast. . . brought him down!* Quickly, he edges, his way out of the drain, climbs down into the open chamber. The driver covers Ben with a rifle. . . I hold pistol. . . scribble notes with one hand. . .

"Don't be frightened, son, I'm coming to get you." Ben is half-lost behind sewer-pipe maze.

Ben moves toward the boy and helped him out of the corner. Turning around, he faces another giant ant. He barely has time to start firing this time. This was much too close for comfort. Ben and



LAST-MOMENT NEWS FOTO OF HERO SAVING CHILD IN SEWERS. Scant minutes before his death, this final foto of Sgt. Ben Peterson was taken.

the boy ran to the drain pipe and prayed that they would get out in time. Ben lifts the boy up and into the pipe.

"Go ahead, so, just keep crawling through! The men at the other end will take care of you."

Ten minutes later. . . Ben put his rifle down and started to climb into the hole, himself. He didn't see the shaggy, black shape silhouette on the wall behind him. Nor did we. . . It was too late to reach for his rifle so he continued climbing into the drain. The ant reached out its pinchers and grabbed him off of the wall. We saw the shadow of Ben struggling in mid-air against the walls. . . light was being shown thru a crack in a wall but it wasn't any help whoever was behind that wall surely couldn't get to him in time. . . I held the boy. . . The soldier tried to get a well-aimed shot at the ant, but couldn't. . . My old friend was helplessly caught tight in those claws. The ant stabbed him over and over again, and I could sense the deadly poison racing toward his heart. Some soldiers broke through the wall then! *Bob Graham* fired wildly at the monster. But it was too late. The damage had been done. Graham ran over to his fallen new

friend and gently cradled his head in his arms. A jeep rumbled away carrying the boy to safety.

"We came a long way together, Bob," Peterson whispered. "I'm sorry I won't be around for the finish with you."

Ben died there, quietly, on the floor. That awful eerie whistling came again and Graham reeled back to fact it. *Them* grabbed hold of one of the supporting beams that held the roof up and brought the sky crashing down. Graham was stunned for an instant for there was silence. Then came gun shots echoing — the cave-in had separated him from the rest of us. *Them* are coming at him from all sides now! He is now backed into a corner and fighting jealously for his survival. We can't get to him! . . .

Yes we will! The soldiers crash through the wall with their jeeps just as his ammunition runs dry; pistol clicking.

"Aim for their antennae!" Ten minutes later: Gun fire filled the room and the last ants fell with a deafening crash. Just beyond that room was an enormous pit and in that hole in the ground were three survivors of the hellish spawn. The soldiers lifted flame throwers and aimed them into the pit.

"Wait," said Bob Graham urgent-

ly — "Don't fire yet. We must be certain that no more have escaped and that this is the last of Them."

Graham walked slowly toward the edge and studied his enemies. In the center of the two, newly hatched animals was the missing queen ant. So this was indeed the end. The battle was won. We had reached the finish of our journey. . .

"Burn them," Graham orders, and walks away from these earthly sewer catacombs, into the fresh, wholesome air. I follow, still writing every chicken-scratch I can.

On the surface, Dr. Medord is speaking. . . his words sum up what we all feel. . .

"When Man opened the door to the atomic age he released powers that were strange and new to him. We were like Pandora and her box of legend, wondering if we were strong enough to dominate the forces we unleashed. We must bear an awesome responsibility for what we stumbled into. Now the atom age is with us and our fate as a race is irreversible. We may yet find that, like Pandora, the secrets of nature were too terrible to survive. Only time will tell us the answer to that. I pray that we haven't done the wrong thing." ■

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In our next precedent-breaking issue, we break one of our own precedents, and present no special theme . . . just lots of special stuff. It's called our Grab-Bag Issue for that reason.

First, we've got our special in-depth story/fact treatment of THE BRIDE FRANKENSTEIN, complete with info and in-fotos which few people ever saw before or even heard of. In fact, we're even innovating a NEW form of picture captioning with this article... the captions will be actual dialogue from the original script which was spoken as the photos were taken. This way, THE MONSTER TIMES can make the film all that much more immediate. Drop us a card and let us know how that goes over with you.

Joe Kame of Mushroom Monsters is unleashing upon us ANOTHER SERIES - and film survey, at that!-called EDGAR ALLEN POE MEETS ROGER CORMAN! It's to go into detail about ALL the Edgar Allen Poe story-based films . . . and the blood-curdling things which film producer Roger Corman did to Poe's writings when Poe wasn't around to defend himself. Naturally, we have photographic evidence of all this.

And to go nicely with Joe's article, we've got a special cinematic comic strip by leading sf & fantasy paperback painter-illustrator, Jef Jones. Jeff wrote and illustrated this comic about a man who, in more than one way, is crazy over the writings of E.A. Poe.

But then, THE MONSTER TIMES is a newspaper. A newspaper should have news, and so we have a bit of reporter-sleuthing done by Jim Wnoroski (pronounced Wo-nor-ski), who's dug up some interesting facts about the greatest DRACULA film of all time (made in Europe and Starring Chris Lee!) - and why it's not come into this country - read DRACULA GOES TO COURT

We'll also have another spiffy MONSTER TIMES PHOTO-COMIX page, for you who like photo-comix!

And we've got product tests and

book and record reviews. And more. Believe US, if you trust no one else! - this is an issue you don't want to miss . . . and it's certainly worth subscribing to, to make sure you'll get it!

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