

ALTERNATIVE TREES

Domino

(Issue 2, A5, 20 Pages. Available from Rival Records, Bath, Forever People, Bristol or write to Room 6, 28 Wellsway, Bear Flats, Bath, enclosing 30p & SAE)

This one is handwritten, full of skulls, very wierd and very silly. The editors, Messrs 'Teen Skull' and 'Oracle' are heavily into THE CRAMPS, who are the

fundamental inspiration behind the venture. This issue features articles on GEORGE ROMERO (he of all them horror films), THE GUN CLUB and a million and one things you never knew about the private life of JERRY LEE LEWIS (I told you it was wierd) - "Great Balls of Fire" was released on the same day that the Russians launched their second Sputnik, and Lewis shot his bass player in 1976.

THE CRAMPS are there of course, and there's a 'Crampotition' (the winner gets 'a neat luminous skull full of goodies' (luminous brains?)). Cartoons, laughs and lots more skulls. Not a lot of reading for 30p and rather lacking in a proper sense of direction, but very likeable and original.

fiRefleTch

Ho-hum. Well, it looks like a fanzine, with all the proper spelling mistakes (rule no. 1 for all aspiring fanzine editors - always spell 'definitely' 'definatly'. Even Tom Vague does this, so it must be right.). It's tidily, if unimaginatively, laid out, but devotes itself entirely to such names as KISSING THE PINK, THE EURYTHMICS, THOMPSON TWINS, STRAWBERRY SWITCHBLADE and THE ALARM.....which is senseless until you remember the bit about fanzine editors getting on the staff of the NME. I wish them luck:

(Issue 1, A4, 20 Pages. Available from Revolver, Bristol or from 14 Osborne Villas, Kingsdown, Bristol. 30p.



THE UNDERground

SHEEP worrying

(Issue 1, A5, 28 Pages. Available from The Subway Organisation, 4 Rylestone Grove, Bristol BS9 3UT for 'five shillings' (25p you fool) & SAE).

You should know this one as well - used to be UNDERGROUND ROMANCE, two of whose 'staff' were involved in that frightful business with THE MONOCHROME SET and the Radio Bristol interview (which incident has been recorded in at least three of the above zines - Al Reed won't be allowed to live this one down). Full story plus interview with the band, plus COCTEAU TWINS THOMPSON TWINS and Bristol's BLUE AEROPLANES. This mag really is

rather good, and has all the usual stuff with a pleasing mixture of local and national names. It's intelligent and interesting, and far more accessible than most.

From the same stable (and same address and price) comes OPERATOR'S MANUAL, devoted entirely to the labyrinthine world of the independent cassette. Quoth Martin Subway "....Subway's here to help people 'get out and do their own thing', take their future out of the hands of big business and the multinationals, and wave the flag for independence". Well you can't say fairer than that, and if you're at all interested in this sort of thing, get in touch with Mr. Subway.

tape and record reviews and the ever-wonderful TAPE HEADING in which people get together to say really unkind things about demos that have been sent in. Sheep Worrying rarely takes itself seriously and can be very funny. In fact, this magazine is absolutely crucial, simply brilliant. If you can't afford the 30p, starve. As the rock editor of Venue put it (and he should know) "Sheep Worrying is the best thing to happen to the West Country since the opening of the M5, and if you don't buy at least three copies each, you're crazy".

Abh! There's nothing else quite like Sheep Worrying around here - a curious mixture of rock fanzine and political broadsheet devoted to bringing about the revolution and obtaining better facilities for bands in particular and young people in general in the Tory Dominated Deep South. Space is devoted to folk, films, sport and beer, but rock (all local) predominates - there are gig reviews,

(Mr. O'Brien accidentally acquired SHEEP WORRYING magazine in a stock market raid that went horribly wrong some months ago. He is now trying to make a go of it, and is bound to be biased about it. Ed.)

So what . . .

Which brings us to summations. The influence and importance that fanzines have is difficult to measure; on the surface of it, it's hard to take a typewritten and xeroxed offering like most of the above very seriously. Until, that is, you remember that this is the sort of thing that (E.G.) Polish or Czech dissidents indulge in - and look how seriously we take them. To produce a fanzine is quite often the reaction of an individual or individuals who feel alienated by the moral bankruptcy of contemporary society, who wish to take greater control of their own lives and to reach like-minded people. There are literally hundreds about (I've probably missed loads around here - sorry!), and while we should avoid trite and meaningless labels like "alternative culture", it is necessary to realise that the fanzine is endowed with a freedom that most other media simply do not have - freedom from money. It can say exactly what its editor wants it to say, feels it should say; it has a ready-made autonomy and integrity. So support your local fanzine - or start it. Happy reading!

HENRY O'BRIEN