

ALGOL 13



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stole

BEATLE-
JUICE :

EDITORIAL

If you really want to know what I'm going to talk about in this editorial, turn to page six.

Actually, that's not true. I thought of taking out the first two pages of my editorial from the last issue, and when people noticed them missing I'd say, "Sorry about that," or words to that affect. I'm not too happy about what happened with the last issue of this fine fanzine which I humbly edit, and it is reflected in this issue. Mainly, I'm first drafting the editorial.

People are asking me, "What's this bit about you being interested in science fiction? I mean, here you are, ~~fat~~ plump old Andy Porter, happily publishing this insane weekly fanzine, member of all sorts of fannish institutions, and even secretary of a worldcon. So what's with this science fiction jass. Fandom, after all, is a way of life."

And, maybe, fandom is a way of life. Look at Buck Coulson; he's writing sf, his wife is writing sf, he publishes this insane monthly fanzine that's been going for about 15 years or so, and his son is running up credits before he gets on the FAPA waitinglist. To Coulson, Fandom Is Just A Goddamn Hobby. But look where it got him: a couple thousand dollars in the bank, a wife, a son, a farmhouse full of books, and action and adventure at the Overhead Door Company.

In my case, pretty much the same thing. Look where fandom got me: secretaryship in the NYCon 3, a fulltime job working with Larry Shaw, a part-time job reading manuscripts for the Magazine Of Fantasy & Science Fiction, a roomful of books, an electric spirit duplicator and mimeograph in the bottom of my closet, buried under the incomplete collection of Playboy (I buy them for the Arthur C. Clarke stories), and a growing collection of sex books (there was this Martian chick, see, with breasts as full as Phobos...). But I digress.

Yes, Meyer, I am interested in science fiction. I read the stuff, still (unlike some fans I could name...), and even like some of it. I still get a lot of what's being published (although I don't spend as much on it as I used to; but that's another story), and I dutifully read it, hoping like hell that I come across a Harlan Ellison collection with stories unintroducted by the author; that I'll discover that the three Laws of Robotics are really a put-on; and so forth.

I like science fiction, I guess. Somehow, Truman Capote doesn't turn me on quite as much as Lester del Rey or Roger Zelazny do. I even prefer Chip Delany to Marcus Van Heller. I like science fiction so much that I recently left the Sam Martin/Quick Frozen Foods Scene (although not completely of my own free will) and

am now working for Lancer Books. Larry T. Shaw, fabulous fan of yesteryear and now just a common fabulous editor, tells me I can call myself Associate Editor and buy Harlan Ellison a drink at the BayCon. This is nice.

This is, in fact, where I've been aiming ever since I got myself out of the rut I'd gotten into after copping out of college and taking a job proofreading and doing great literary things like that.

If the truth must be know, I wanna be a editor when I grow up.

I am quite willing, if I might take a page from Ted White's Getting Ahead In The Real World book, to be forceful and aggressive to get there, I know what I want, for perhaps the first time in many years. About 22, to be precise.

I am also saying this here, because I now feel I can, and should, come out and say what I feel, even if I may make a few enemies in doing so. Alright, I believe in Truth and Justice and the American Way. I am part idealist, perhaps, but I believe in leveling with people, and if I can't level with people in my own damned fanzine, then there's something wrong with the universe somewhere.

I am interested in science fiction. I think this fanzine shows it, and what I am saying shows it, and I want my readers -- my dear readers who never reply to a darned issue of this fanzine but just soak up my sweat and blood and sit there in the dark, saying nothing -- I want my readers to say it, in the form of thirteen page letters of comment, and seven thousand word articles on why Jack Gaughan is a better artist than Robert E. Gilbert, and how Roger Zelazny writes rotten puns which slip past the editorial pencil of Ed Ferman. I want all sorts of things. But I think I've said enough on this topic; believe me, I really do like science fiction, and I read it and review it, and write long boring editorials about it, and I want all my readers to rush right out and write long ~~horrible~~ fascinating articles and letters about it, and send them to me, and make me happy and shut me up. As an added inducement, people who do not respond will be dropped from the mailing list, and I am not accepting any further subscriptions.


~~~~~

I was going to have a long article by Pat Lupoff in this issue, all about the Great Cattle Wars, which really have nothing to do with science fiction until you realize that transferred into Outer Space they become the basis for Galactic Patrol, or some book like that. But I never got the article. So it will be in the next issue, out sometime in July, unless I don't get it in time again. If this should happen, I will send Pat Lupoff a collie puppy, a collie puppy that hates cats and cocker spaniels. And maybe even likes to chew on mustaches...

~~~~~

I am going to talk about something that has been bugging me. I refer to the new Rotation Plan. The Rotation Plan as adopted at the NYCon 3 Business Meeting (yes, there was a Business Meeting; how could we deny George Scithers his Moment of Glory?) calls for a foreign convention to be added to the current three areas of rotation in such a way as to have this affect: Western, Midwest, Foreign, Eastern WorldCon. The new plan starts in 1970, presumably with Heidelberg, Germany, as the first foreign convention. A foreign worldcon will be held every 4th year; if no foreign bidder is interested, the East gets the convention in the year immediately following the Midwest Worldcon.

The chief point I'd like to raise is that there will be a two year hiatus between conventions in the Midwest and the East. One popular suggestion to fill



the two year interval between the two is that a national convention, minus Hugoes and international status, be held in the year when the WorldCon is outside the US. As most countries don't have a national holiday that corresponds with Labor Day, the ConCon (Continental Convention) could be held over the Labor Day weekend. However, this could cause problems: where would the ConCon be held, who would vote for where it would be held, how would it detract from the financial support and attendance of the foreign WorldCon, etc. The suggestion brings up rather large problems which can quickly become even more involved than the suggestion itself.

A second, and equally major point, is that where the Eastern WorldCon will be must be decided by uninterested foreign fans. This is grossly unfair to the bidders for an Eastern WorldCon. Convention site voting is notoriously under-attended; a total of 450 votes were cast at the TriCon, which had 850 attendees; voting at the NYCon 3 totalled up to only 540 votes cast, when almost three times that number of people were in attendance at the convention! The 200 fans who joined but didn't attend the NYCon never voted at all.

A total of only a few dozen votes at the consite selection meeting of an overseas convention could swing the WorldCon to either of several bidders. What interest would European or Asian fans have in the location of the next American WorldCon, when they would have little or no hope of attending? And what of the non-attending members of the convention, who, in the case of a foreign convention, would be Americans, eager to help support a foreign WorldCon as an expression of fannish friendship?

A possible solution to this is having the consite voting done by ballot, with all the members of the convention voting, results to be announced at the awards banquet, for example. Or, consite voting for the Eastern WorldCon could be done two years in advance, at the Midwest WorldCon. This last suggestion is pretty inadequate, because convention committees might not last out the two years before the convention. A major change in fanac or fannish interest is quite possible.

There is a simple solution to the problem of the East Coast having a two year wait each time its' turn comes to host a WorldCon. This solution will solve the problem that bidders will run into, the fantastic cost of wooing the attendees of a foreign worldcon to vote for them. It will also solve the problem caused by simple jealousy that bidders in the West and Midwest won't have these problems confronting them.

The solution? Ingenious, of course: Move the rotation for the foreign World-Con to every fifth year, instead of every fourth.

With this simple method, the problems which will burden the East Coast become problems shared equally by all three sections; all three regions will have to go through the two-year wait for the worldcon, instead of just the East. All three areas will have to share, equally, problems of bidders at a foreign worldcon.

And, simply, it will enable all of fandom to share a problem, instead of permitting smug convention bidders in the West and Midwest to think, "why should I care about what happens -- it's Washington - or Baltimore, or Boston, or New York's - worry." Sharing the burden equally will help fandom solve the problem faster. All of fandom will be concerned, not just those on the East Coast.

I invite letters from readers on this subject. I intend to personally bring this matter to the attention of the BayCon business meeting, and invite discussion before I do so. The deadline for next issue is May 1st, 1968. Send your brickbats or bouquets to me by then, or they'll appear in the "We Also Heard From" department, a sad fate for your purple prose.

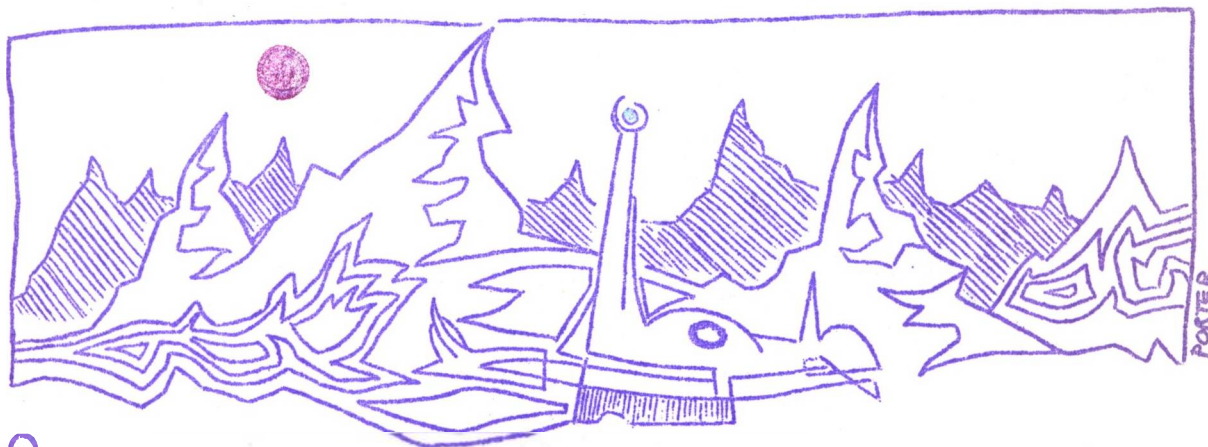


The back cover is an original drawing by Grey Morrow. Copies printed on slick paper are available from me at 35¢ each, or 4 for \$1. They will be mailed first class, unfolded, in flat envelopes to anyone who wants a copy or three.



I'm trying something new in this issue: a unified layout. All columns and articles in the dittogravure section, with one exception, have the same layout. That is, bars above and below the title, with the authors' name below the bars, justified to the right margin.

Instead of several dozen small illustrations scattered throughout the issue, illustrations are generally full page, breaking up concentrated pages of text. I did receive several illos pre-mastered, and they appear in the old format. Hopefully, Richard Flinchbaugh, the artist, will be in the next issue with several full page illustrations. I hope you people out there agree with me that the new format is more attractive and easier to read.



EN GARDE! → A COLUMN

TED WHITE

Let's open this column with two admissions.

First: the title is not of my choosing. I am well aware that it was once the title of a fairly good fanzine, and as far as I am concerned, if Al Ashley wants to call me, "You bastard!" I will be entirely willing to relinquish it.

Second: I regret the untimely publication of the last installment of this column. At the time I wrote it, it was moderately topical. By the time it was published, it was unfortunate and perhaps cruel. In order to avoid another such contretemps, I am reverting to tradition, and this issue I'm returning to some Choice Reprints from material first published in apa L.

In point of fact, all of the following material comes from my column, "Malaisian Flu," in Dave Van Arnam's malAise #43, which appeared in the summer of 1965. In order to set the stage I should mention that I was then engaged to, but had not yet married Robin, and that Ray Cymoczinski, a fringe-fan from Chicago, was sharing my apartment for the summer.

SUMMER IN THE CITY: For several years now, New York City has used the slogan, "New York is a Summer Festival." This year the city has put into operation a phone number for cultural information.

All of this is not idle nonsense. For some years NYC has provided free cultural entertainment for its citizens. There have been the Stadium concerts organized by Minnie Guggenheim, and in Central Park the Outdoor Shakespeare Festival -- for which Ray Cymoczinski is now working.

This year the New York Philharmonic has inaugurated a series of outdoor concerts in the parks of the city of New York. Originally intended and proposed to the mayor only for Central Park, at the mayor's suggestion it will tour the parks of all five boroughs: Sheep Meadow in Manhattan's Central Park, Prospect Park in Brooklyn, Clove Lakes Park on Staten Island, Crocheron Park in Queens, and the Botanical Gardens in the Bronx. A concert-stage-sized shell has been designed which

is fully portable and can be carried from park to park by trailers.

When Robin heard of this, and discovered that the program opening night in Central Park would include Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, she suggested we go. And we did, last night.

It was a warm, pleasant evening. The previous day had been devoted to a constant thundershower of the sort which cloudbursts every half hour and sunshines inbetween, and more had been forecast for this day as well. But while it was hot and humid, the day remained clear, and as night approached it began to grow cooler and less humid. It was, weatherwise, a perfect night.

As soon as we exited the subway at 72nd Street and Central Park West, we discovered that everyone else was also heading across the street and into the park.

"Do you know where Sheep Meadow is?" Robin asked.

"Nope," I said, "but some one ahead of us might. Either that, or we're all heading in the wrong direction."

Soon we were out on an open field. In the distance was the lighted shell, a glowing gold. Trees rimmed the field, and beyond the darkening trees were the buildings of the city, windows lit, their outline dark against the purpling sky. To the east, the buildings across Fifth Avenue were still touched by the residue of sunlight, looking curiously as though lit by floodlights, a huge painted backdrop hung against the sky.

The meadow was already filling with people, many of whom had brought blankets to spread on the ground as we had. We found an open space midway up, and spread our blanket and sat down.

According to the Park Commissioner's estimate, some 70,000 people gathered there that night -- the largest single audience the Philharmonic has ever reached. And truly an impressive figure.

But clearly many of them had never attended a concert before -- there was applause after each movement of the Ninth, for instance -- and I can't help wondering how impressed they could be, unless they were among the fortunately first thousand or so who sat close enough to hear well.

To my amazement, there was little or no amplification, no sign of any PA system. As a result, the music sounded not unlike that from a 78 rpm record, played at low volume. In fact, when the light breeze shifted, the more quiet passages became inaudible. It was definitely disappointing.

There were three pieces on the program. Schuman's Philharmonic Fanfare was the only recent work (indeed, this was its premier performance). The work was brief, as befits a fanfare -- perhaps three minutes; most likely less -- and I had the feeling that under better conditions I would have liked it.

Next came Wagner's Prelude to Act 1, Die Meistersinger von Nurnberg, a venerated war horse which I was totally disinterested in, and regretted not hearing well not at all.

The major work for the evening, of course, was Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 in D Minor, Op. 125, with Final Chorus on Schiller's Ode "To Joy". Robin is interested

in choral music and particularly wanted to hear the final, choral movement. She was a lot less happy about the poor acoustics than I was.

I spent most of my time lying on my back, trying to ignore the squabbling family next to me, wishing I could combine the relaxed comfort of the park with the acoustics of Carnegie Hall, and watching the clouds move over something which was either Venus or a satellite.

Then I was caught by the fact that there was a tremendous delayed echo from the buildings behind and to the right of us -- an echo of several seconds, and good for an entire one-bar phrase. I rather dug it, and got to thinking about how one might record it, for "spacious depth" in a studio. I broke it down into several echoes of varying durations, and then began mocking up in my mind a sprocketed, 35mm tape loop with one recording head and several pickup heads, a variable speed control on the tape, and decreasing volume on the pickups farther from the recording head. I imagine it could be worked out.

Beethoven bores me, although not nearly so much as does Wagner. The musical language of the 19th century is one which I am all but deaf to, and I found nothing but boring repetitious phrases which I already knew by heart, no melodies, no dissonances. It was like the music was all buildup and conclusion, without middle substance. There was a climax every few minutes, any one of which would've sufficed to end the piece. This is a sacreligious attitude, I know, and Robin has told me as much, but I'm stuck with it.

LIFE WITH KERISTA: In recent times the national press, FACT Magazine, and CBS TV among others, have devoted some time or space to an organization called Kerista. Labelled as a "hippie group" now, it actually was launched some four years or more ago, before the present hippie phase, and I first encountered it in 1963.

It all started with a subscription Sandi had to MANNAS. A man in NYC decided to start up a MANNAS Discussion Group, and obtained a list of NYC subscribers, to whom he mailed an invitation.

Sandi and I were the only ones who showed up. And the place where the meeting was held was the "Kerista Institute," on West 75th Street, only a block from Larry Ivie's place. It was a single room apartment, with an open back porch on a lower roof. There was a huge, semi-obscene mural on one wall, and a double bed in one corner, with various smaller day-beds and cots scattered about.

The man who'd invited us was a youngish-looking man named Steve Gennes. The apartment's hosts were John Peltz Presmont and someone else whose name now escapes me, a professional clarinet player I can recall only as Albert. It had been Albert's apartment for some years. More recently he had met Presmont, and Presmont had moved in, preaching the word of Kerista. Soon Gennes was added to the happy bunch. Gennes was the only one of them who held a job; his money went into the common pot which paid the rent, and bought the food.

Presmont was an impressive man. Barrel-shaped, and big without being fat, he had a full, bushy beard and curly hair, liberally salt-and-peppered with grey. He had a commanding presence; one felt his magnetism even unwillingly. He was the Prophet of Kerista.

Indeed, Kerista was His. He had knocked about all over the world for a period of years in various "communities" most of which were simply group marriages of

a strictly temporary kind. Then, one day a year or so back, he had Heard the Voices, and they told him that the next great religion of the world would be Ker-ista. Presmont was (and is, I guess) a likeable crackpot. I imagine his voices spoke to him from pot; he always seemed to have a generous supply of it on hand. He told us of the glories of selflessness, of living truly with and for one's fellow man. Privacy, he said, was a culturally induced phenomenon, and all should give freely one to another.

A few weeks later Steve lost his job. Presmont asked him to find another place to live; he was no longer useful in supporting the "community." Also, one of Presmont's previous wives came back to live with him. Albert was asked to find another place to sleep; the Presmonts wanted their privacy.

For a time Gennes stayed with us. I found him a rigid and immature person, and I was amazed to discover he was older than I: 28. He was constantly talking about what he was going to do, but he never seemed to do any of it. There was an amazing session one night after a Fanoclast meeting when Calvin Dennon and Dave Van Arnam and I talked to Steve and tried to untwist a few of his thoughts. Dave shook his head over Steve and could not believe he was so shallow. But he was.

The "Institute" moved down to East 4th Street, and the next I heard of it was a lurid newspaper account of a pot raid which found a couple screwing in a back room during a party. This was blown up by the NEWS into a beatnik orgy. The VILLAGE VOICE did a much better piece on the group, exposing the fact that they'd not changed since I'd known them: they were still composed mainly of teenagers looking for a way out of rigidly conventional lives, and older men and women who had found a soft touch.

I saw Gennes once after that. He was living with a woman in Coney Island, and planning to go to the near east, where he could find plenty of drugs and small boys.

NEVER A DULL MOMENT IN GAY OLD BROOKLYN: Last time there was a Fanoclast meeting here (nearly two weeks ago), Andy Porter went out for drinks or something around midnight and came back in saying, "Hey, Ted White, there's a dead man lying in the street out there."

"You kidding or something?" I asked in my typical Brooklynese fashion.

"No, Ted," Andy said. "There's cops there and they have the street roped off and everything. It's right around the corner, up on Fourth Avenue."

A few days later I bought a copy of the local weekly paper, the HOME REPORTER & SUNSET NEWS, which is edited and published by Frank Griffin, a casual friend of mine.

One of the page one stories was "Cop and 'Agent' Killed In Bar." And it was all about how this three-time loser, posing as a narcotics agent, shot and killed an off-duty cop who questioned him, and then in turn was shot and killed by another cop as he tried to run away. The bar was Lavelle's, on Fourth Ave, between 48th and 49th Streets. Right around the corner.

But the big headlines were "Arculeo Demands PROBE OF 86th ST VICE DEN (Arculeo On 'House': 'Situation Intolerable')"; "Police Storm The 'House' Amid Bullets, Tear Bombs"; and "Exclusive HRSN Interview: MAGGIE QUINTSY'S OWN STORY".

It seems Miss Quintsy has been running a fine old-fashioned whore house at 125 86th Street, here in sedate old Bay Ridge. And it seems when the cops staged

a raid, a longshoreman on the premises came out shooting. I bet the neighbors haven't had so much fun in years -- at least since the last police raid, three years ago.

The marvelous thing, though, is that boxed next to the interview with the headline, "Calling Card?" is a photo reproduction of Miss Quintsy's business card, with the caption, "ABOVE CARD and similar ones were circulating in Bay Ridge for some time last year."

SH.5-7392

BARS, COCKTAIL LOUNGE

BY APPT. ONLY

MARGARET LANA QUINTSY

Business Broker

Consumator between Buyers and Sellers

PACKAGE STORES - DRUGS

INDIVIDUAL

LUNCHEONETTE - PIZZA

ATTENTION

STORES AND ALL TYPE OF BUSINESS

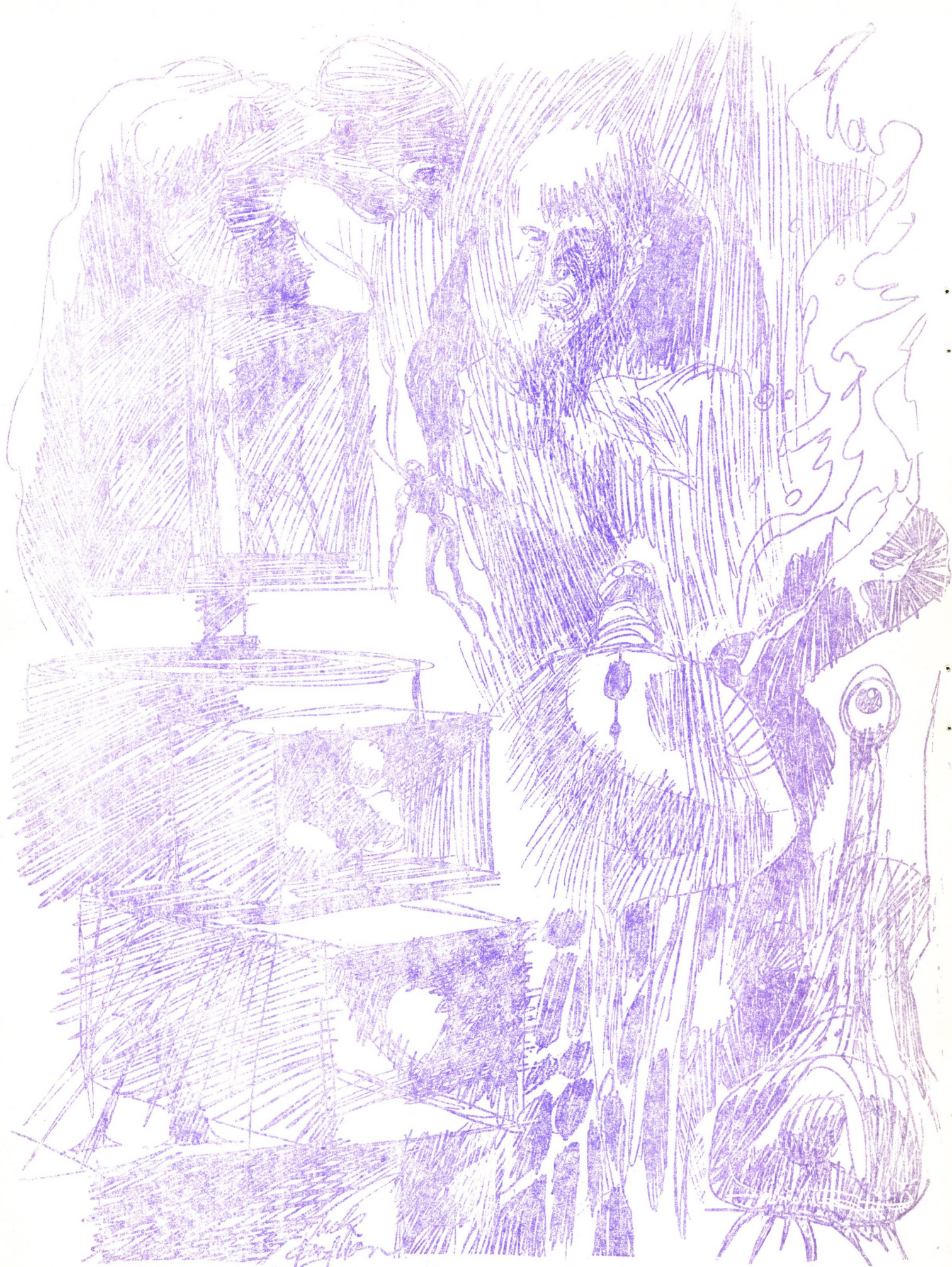
This really threw us; here was this newspaper, campaigning against this horrible 'house', and yet printing the phone number of its madame. Ray decided he'd phone it, and he got Maggie, sure enough. "Who is this," she demanded. Ray hadn't thought it out that far, so he answered, honestly enough, "Ray Cymoczinski." She wouldn't believe it, though, and made him repeat it several times, even spelling it. Finally he hung up in disgust.

So much for Vice In Bay Ridge.

— Ted White

STEVE STILES
FOR TAFF !

SEND
STILES
TO
THE
ISLES...





THE CITY AND



THE STARS



JERRY NIGHT

The sky the night-time city lights
Is fickle; just try to read by
Its blue-grey glow.
Yet it seems too bright as it streams through windows
And glances upon the floor of the warm-lonely house,
that you
Run to the window to see if perhaps
The Moon has cast its waning eye upon the street,
But the sky is blank and strangely light
Like a daylit sky deprived of sun
And the slumbering city wastes its lumens
On a few who wake to see the awesome sight.

But grab a car, plane, train, or bus,
And get out of the city and go a hundred,
Maybe a hundred and fifty miles.
Get where little Ojai's lonely four thousand
Won't mess up your night sky too much.
And the crazy stars are pouring down,
And the Milky Way leaps out of the darkness
and blazes heatlessly, but the night
Seems warm; and the Pleiades, the seven
(No! Count them! eight, nine) sisters are
Great fires pasted to the celestial sphere, and
There's the square Pegasus,
And the Big Dipper, and there's that
Fuzzy patch with Lord knows how many stars,
That Great Nebula, that M31, how far it seems
But so bright and so near that you could just
Snatch it out of the sky.

But you stagger up the trail to the astrograph,
And they're waiting for you up there.
But you can't see your way because it's too dark
on the trail and all you can
See are those damned burning stars.
So you stumble and curse and nearly fall;

But still that mosaic of diamonds--and--nothing
hangs in the sky, and the Milky Way
blazens the sky with light;

But there is not
Enough light to see the trail and you
Ask: Why is the light of the city brighter than the
light of God? but nobody answers and it's
Turning cold, and they're still waiting for you
Up there, so walk on and forget everything.

It never really mattered.

-- Jerry Knight, 1960

SOME ARCHITECTURAL SKETCHES FOR 'THE TOWERS'

SAMUEL R. DELANY

Then they sent me my sales report which said 85,000 copies. And I was very young.

The Jewels Of Antor, that first book, had been created from thirteen nights of nightmares and my determination to have fun with them. But there was this piece of paper saying that 85,000 people were listening. I had no illusion that this was particularly high for a paperback novel. But it was still a sobering figure. I decided that if that many people were listening, I was obliged to say something.

So, strolling the Brooklyn Bridge with my wife, I conceived The Fall Of The Towers trilogy. The idea that came first: I wanted the opening and closing chapters to set each other's images in reverse. Second came the overall story: a country, surviving alone in a radio-active world, has finally reached the psychological, sociological, and economic condition of excess and inefficiency where it must have a war. But there is no one left to have a war with. So they generate an imaginary enemy.

Dealing with all economic and social levels I wanted to web together a group of characters in a complexed, reflective dance. The first volume sets up the situations, economic and social; in the second, the war is fought; in the third, the enemy triumphs.

Toss a mirror into the sun above a crowd, spinning.

Reflected?

-- soldiers, scientists, mathematicians, mind-readers, acrobats, apes, murderers, madmen, farmers, fishermen, kings, common, poets, princes, street urchins, inn-keepers, and thieves. Sic in a saraband of vinettes, I peopled the story.

To facilitate inevitable philosophisings, I divided the country by evolutionary stages, with a race ahead of us, a race behind. For commentary's sake I postulated two extra-galactic forces that had to observe this war to get information on

how to fight their own.

In my main story I wanted to show a man from this chaotic (psychotic?) world learning to deal with freedom. -- That is the only story there is, anyway. And science fiction, in terms of technological freedom (as well as mental and spiritual) is a fine medium in which to delineate this profound education.

I began with Jon's escape from prison. His story ends when he actually gains the freedom he is seeking. In each volume I recounted his escape from a different point of view: first from Jon's; then from the viewpoint of one of the guards who tried to catch him; and finally from the eyes of one of the prisoners left behind. Each retelling was to deepen the significance of the escape. The other stories, revolving around the main one, were to demonstrate contrapuntally characters either succeeding or failing at the same task, thwarted either by inner or outer circumstances, represented by the Random Game that provides the intellectual focus for the work.

That, anyway, was the bright concept on the bridge. I had just turned twenty when the trio was begun. It was finished a bit before my twenty-second birthday. And the near two years of its writing were years in which I learned and learned and learned. Certainly many things I knew by the end of The Towers would have improved the first volumes immensely. The major lesson was: write the book you want to write, and write it as well as you can.

One problem I kept grappling with -- and failing with -- was responsibility for a good many existing flaws in the working out of the whole: how discrete should I make each book? There were several themes and characters that would not reach their climax and revelation until the third volume -- for example, Vol Monik and the building of the City of a Thousand Suns -- that I originally foreshadowed in the first. But if the first volume were read alone, references to them seemed fabulous and unresolved. So I took this foreshadowing out. My major mistake in the second volume was to give the enemy a name, along with some android ambassadors, and a few other bits of ornamentation. Again, I was unsure how the Book would stand up by itself.

Naming the enemy I realise now vitiates the impact of his unreality. I knew this before I finished the third volume, but the second book was already in the jaws of the Great Machine.

The thing that prompts this article is the prospect (knock on wood) of a British edition. A month back, I finished revising and rewriting the Towers for British reprint: mostly a case of pasting the original manuscript back together. As well I could pick over the style (poke-poke, pick-pick, cut-cut-cut) and do the things that a roap through the typewriter will do if you have blue pencils for eyes.

I am passionately concerned with writing. It is the best way to sooth the pain of one's own natural reticence. I would like to make people see and touch and hear as I do; as well, feel what my characters feel. Then, I would order these experiences into significant form.

The best writing lays foundations from which a reader may erect a grander frame of consciousness. Such construction is the greatest of all entertainments. And so would I entertain.

LUPOFF'S BOOK WEEK

DICK LUPOFF

The Index To The Science-Fantasy Publishers by Mark Owings & Jack L. Chalker, an Anthem Series Chapbook, 1966, 76 pp., \$5 paperbound, \$8 hardbound.

Index To The Science Fiction Magazines, 1951-1965 by Erwin S. Strauss, published by the M.I.T. Science Fiction Society, 1966, 207 pp., \$8.50 hardbound.

The Universes Of E. E. Smith by Ron Ellick and Bill Evans, Advent:Publishers, 1966, 272 pp., \$6 hardbound.

One of the by-products of literature in general and special branches of literature such as science fiction in particular, is the work of (note the initial cap) "literature." I.e., criticism, commentary, exegesis, bibliography, concordance, and so on. There has been a "literature" of science fiction and fantasy for many years; perhaps the all-time most significant work of the sort being Bailey's Pilgrims Through Time and Space.

We have before us currently three new entries, each of value.

The Owings-Chalker Index is, to my knowledge, the first attempt to produce a comprehensive guide to the specialty book publishers who have, over the years, produced science-fantasy books exclusively. Owings and Chalker list thirty-six such publishers, and attribute to them some 366 different books. (A two-page supplement, apparently the first of a series to be issued, adds to both totals.)

The publishers listed range from such familiar marques as Arkham, Gnome, and Fantasy Press, to such obscure or forgotten houses as those of Hyman Kaner, the Chamberlain Press, New Era, and Trevor Hall. Also: (a fact new to me) the N3F once published a book (of David H. Keller's).

Owings and Chalker open their listing for each publisher with a brief history of the house: personnel, circumstances and purposes of founding if available, and circumstances of demise (except in the few cases of survivors: the mortality rate is terrifying). They then list each title of that house, in order of issue, giving rather copious bibliographic information, complete contents of collections, jacket

and interior illustrators, and even plot summaries of novels. Admirable material, whether for serious reference or enjoyable browsing.

The index suffers from certain lacunae: there is no listing for Canaveral Press, nor for Edgar Rice Burroughs Inc., nor for House of Greystoke; more surprisingly, in view of Jack Chalker's penchant for Howard Phillips Lovecraft, there is no listing for Ben Abramson, publisher of the only separate book edition of HPL's Supernatural Horror In Literature. Perhaps later supplements will correct these (and other) omissions.

As surprising as the omitted entries are, is at least one inclusion: that of Owings and Chalker's own "The Anthem Series." This series consisted of some six publications (including the present index itself), comprising various critical, memorial, and bibliographic works concerned with Lovecraft, C.A. Smith, and Julius Schwartz (the comic book editor and former sf fan). There is also a 38-page booklet by David H. Keller, described as "Keller's spiritual biography, concerned with a skeptic's experiences in Hades."

Those items of the Anthem Series which I have seen, which include most of the six, have been of fairly uniform format: reasonably competently mimeographed pamphlets, set off by lithographed covers and/or plates. Size has ranged from 30 to 98 pages in the standard 8.5" x 11" format. One might, if one wished, call these "books" ...or, I think with equal validity, one-shot fanzines. With all due respect to the quality of their contents, their inclusion in this index, from a bibliographic point of view, opens the gates to an incredible number of similar mimeographed, offset-printed, or even spirit-duplicated publications coming from other sources. Offhand one recalls:

- Who Killed Science Fiction?
- Why Is A Fan?
- Fancylopedia (I & II)
- The Reader's Guide To Barsoom & Amtor
- A Sense Of FAPA
- The Best Of Fandom (two editions)
- The Complex Burbee
- The NeoFan's Guide (two editions)
- The Con Chairman's Guide
- Science Fiction Yearbook (several editions)
- The Harp Stateside (and all succeeding transatlantic trip reports)

I am sure that a fan bibliographer of any merit could quickly triple the length of my list. I am a little surprised that Owings and Chalker let themselves fall into this particular trap, but I think the reason for their doing so is sufficiently obvious as to require no elaboration.

The index is, of course, grossly overpriced, and I would advise you to borrow, steal, xerox, or otherwise obtain the use of it without paying the outrageous tariff demanded; it is, however, the only game in town, and rather than be without, you might moan and fork over the fiver.

The Erwin Strauss/MIT volume is of course the companion (and admirably matching in size) to Donald Day's Index, 1926-1950. Day announced a second volume himself, years and years ago, but he never produced, and now, I think, there is no need for him to do so. Whether he will react with gratitude or indignation probably

depends upon how much of the work for Volume Two he has already completed.

Basically, the Strauss/MIT book offers the same information for later years that the Day Index gave for earlier years: if you know the name of a story you look it up in the title index and obtain author and name and date of magazine in which it appeared. If you know the author you search in the author index and find the other information.

As a bonus, Strauss/MIT gives us a checklist of the issues covered, cum page count and cover artist, and a running compilation of the tables of contents of all these issues.

The book is photo-offset from computer-produced listings of the information, which gives a legible if somewhat unattractive standard of typography. Something better might have been done in the area of column- and section-headings, but it is not to pick minor flaws in a monumental work. In a different way, this book is every bit as good as the Owings-Chalker volume, and this one is distinctly not overpriced. A magnificent job.

Lin Carter remarked to me the other day that "Most reference books come about because somebody says one day, 'why in hell isn't there a book about blank,' and because there isn't, and there ought to be, that very somebody goes out and writes it." Ron Ellik and Bill Evans' The Universes of E. E. Smith definitely falls into this class, and I would like to add that it falls into the class of the loving tribute of admiring readers to an author obviously held in as high regard as a person as he is a writer.

The book is distinctly not a biography of the late Doc Smith, nor is it even, essentially, a criticism or running commentary on his works. The major features of the book are concordances of his two major series. Ellik's treatment of the Lensman series runs for 177 pages. Evans' concordance of the Skylark books runs for 150. Entries range from several thousand words in length down to such succinctness as the following:

Davey*the Dip Exemplar of pickpockets, used metaphorically (PL 79).

The parenthetical portion refers to First Lensman, the book and the page of Davey's sole appearance in the works of Dr. Smith.

In addition to this sort of painstaking indexing and identification work, the book includes an introduction/appreciation by James H. Schmitz, brief narrative sections by Ellik and Evans, and a Doc Smith bibliography by (West Coast) Al Lewis. The book is generously illustrated by Bjo Trimble; her drawings range widely in quality, from almost embarrassingly bad to quite fetching. My two favorites were those on page 61 and 162. The former catches the mood and feel of a Doc Smith saga; the latter is an interesting interpretation of extra-terrestrial life-forms described by Doc. The front cover drawing, a portrait of Kimball Kinnison with Doc Smith hovering paternally in the background, is unfortunately not up to par.

The book is a positive must for Doc Smith fans.

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Supernatural Horror In Literature by H. P. Lovecraft (with an introduction by August Derleth) published by Ben Abramson, 1945, 111 pp.

You'll probably have a hard time finding the Abramson edition of this book, but it has appeared also in several Arkham Lovecraft omnibuses and is in print currently, I believe, in the collection Dagon.

In this volume Lovecraft traces the theme of supernatural horror from its early beginnings through such practitioners as Hawthorne, Poe, Shiel, Machen and Hodgson. His section on Gothics might make an excellent introduction to the renaissance of that genre over the past few years.

And as he traces the development of themes, Lovecraft weavingly reveals his own philosophy of literature: his fascination with and love for all that is fearsome, loathsome, terrible, all that causes the reader to recoil in horror and disgust at the same time that he is drawn irresistibly on to the next frightful revelation and the next. Like some few others, Lovecraft seems to write better about fiction than to write fiction of his own. Supernatural Horror is as significant a piece of scholarship as it is of philosophy of fiction. What Lovecraft finds attractive, however, I fear I tend to find repellent.

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The Breaking Of The Seals by Francis Ashton, published by Andrew Dakers (London), 1946, 317 pages.

Alas, That Great City by Francis Ashton, published by Andrew Dakers (London), no date (1947?), 395 pages.

If anyone reading this knows anything about Francis Ashton I wish he would write to The Editor and Tell All He Knows, for Ashton is a mystery man in my book, one about whom I would like to learn much more than the very little I know. You can have your mysterious B. Traven: I'll take Francis Ashton for my literary enigma.

As far as I know, Ashton emerged onto the fantasy scene just after the second World War with The Breaking Of The Seals, followed this novel with Alas, That Great City, and then pretty well disappeared. Brad Day's Supplemental Checklist of Fantastic Literature lists a 1952 volume by Francis and Stephen Ashton, Wrong Side Of The Moon; I have not obtained this book and do not know whether its co-author is the same Francis Ashton who wrote the others. Also, the Strauss/MIT Index lists a short story titled "Eternity Orbit" by one Francis L. Ashton in Super Science Stories magazine for January, 1951. Again, I have not got the magazine and do not know if the author is the right man.

Aside from this rather dubious bibliographic data, all I know of Ashton comes from his two novels, but he must be a very remarkable man, or at least he produced two very remarkable books, treating of somewhat similar themes, in fact slightly interlocking in plot, but each readable and complete apart from the other.

The Breaking of The Seals opens with an introductory section set in contemporary England, in which the protagonist, a fairly typical, very British young man, recently disappointed in love, falls under the influence of an exiled Viennese psychologist, Professor Kurdt, whose eccentric ideas of ancestral memory and/or reincarnation tended to anticipate those of Morey Bernstein (the "Bridey Murphy" man). Kurdt guides the protagonist Henry Melville through an arduous period of discipline in preparation for a major excursion into ancient recollection, and ultimately Melville undergoes the great mental change.

This lead-in occupies the reader up to page 94, a long lead-in indeed. Only

then does the major portion of the story begin, as Melville awakens in the identity of Maht, a young man living in an incredibly remote era when the Earth possessed a pre-lunar satellite, Bahste, which circled the planet every four hours. An Egyptian-Babylonian-type culture existed at this time, one of two rival nations being a sun-worshipping theocracy, the other a similarly organized nation of Bahste worshippers.

At the time of Maht's adventure Bahste has reached Roche's Limit, and is being ripped apart by gravitational stress. The result is that the satellite is visibly being transformed from a single object into a comet-like sight, trailing a tail of smaller fragments across the sky, gradually turning into a Saturnian-type ring. The rival oracles below of course read these heavenly doings as a visible war between their respective gods, with the sun first attempting to kill the moon, his rival Bahste by breaking him asunder, then the mortally wounded Bahste achieving a dying vengeance by blotting out the sun. (Of course whether the sun would be blotted out or not depends on whether one views the sky from under the new ring, or off to one side.)

Ashton skillfully counterpoints these astronomical occurrences with the military and political maneuvers of the rival nations and with Maht's romance with a lovely maiden and the classically depraved priest's attempt to take her as a Bride of the God. At the end of Maht's adventures he reawakens as Melville and readjusts nicely to modern life.

Having deprived the earth of its ancient "moon" in The Breaking Of The Seals, Ashton may have felt somewhat guilty, and in Alas, That Great City he replaced it with the good old Luna that we all know and love. Again there is the framing sequence set in modern times, in which the protagonist Jonathan Grant and the heroine Joy Allanson set out from England on a mysterious sailing expedition to the mid-Atlantic. Like Melville, Grant has been recently disappointed in love by the glamorous Elvira (she threw him over for a fellow with a Studebaker).

It takes 102 pages of sailing for Grant to realize that he Really Loves the sweet and sincere Joy rather than the sophisticated Elvira. At this point the tiny sailing ship Altair is caught in a terrible storm, its two inhabitants all but drown, and in that proverbial moment when their lives pass before their eyes, they relive their ancient experiences as Larentzal and Cleoli in ancient Atlantis. The seductress Elvira of course turns up as the deprived Queen of Atlantis, Nethali.

Again, Ashton skillfully interweaves plot and counterplot: A stray planetoid, Brahune, has been approaching earth more and more closely, at intervals of approximately fifty years. With each approach greater natural disasters have resulted; and of course, Brahune is due again, right about Now. Simultaneously the Atlantean civilization has been falling into increasing depravity under the guidance (or misguidance) of Nethali, and a plot is underway to assassinate her and replace the degenerate monarchy with a Reform government. And of course there is a triangular love affair of Larentzal, Cleoli, and Nethali. (A fourth side, the long-absent King Ramenzal, turns up later.)

Ashton achieves considerable color and suspense in the interweaving of the three themes, reaching a climax as Brahune is finally captured by the earth to become our moon, while Atlantis is destroyed in the earthquake and flood that the new satellite produces by its arrival. And of course Larentzal and Cleoli reawaken as Jonathan and Joy, back in modern times.

Francis Ashton was not without flaws as novelist. Most prominently, his habit of writing hundred-page "frames" is neither in accord with contemporary practice nor to the satisfaction of the modern reader who has not the time nor the patience to wade through the equivalent of a short novel, albeit a fairly well done one, as the "price of admission" to the book he really wants to read. Similarly, while his writing is not too bad, stylistically speaking, Ashton has a somewhat verbose manner of expression, which, combined with a leisurely way, at times, of plotting, harks back to Rider Haggard and others of his era, writers who could all but smother an otherwise marvelous story in overpowering globs of verbiage. Ashton is, I say, not really a fatally serious offender along this line, but he is an offender of some proportion.

On balance, though, he appears a man of powerful imagination, considerable talent in the construction and development of a plot, adequate if over-obvious in his characterization. Not a major author of fantasy, but one of interest and worth.

Now: Who can tell me anything about him?

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Palos Of The Dog Star Pack by J. U. Giesy, Avalon, 1965, 192 pp, \$3.25

The Mouthpiece Of Zitu by J. U. Giesy, Avalon, 1965, 192 pp, \$3.25

Jason, Son Of Jason, by J. U. Giesy, Avalon, 1966, 192 pp, \$3.25

This trilogy appeared originally in various of the Munsey pulps (Argosy, All-Story, etc.) between 1918 and 1921. Their theme is that of interplanetary travel by astral rather than mechanical means, an idea exploited at least as early as 1907 (vide Angilin by A. L. Hallen) and very likely earlier. The most famous and successful interplanetary astral traveller was of course Mr. Burroughs' John Carter (1912).

One of the problems of "astral" stories arises from the fact that the astral self or "body" is actually a misty, unsubstantial sort of thing, able to observe and perhaps communicate slightly by psychic "whispers" in the mental ears of individuals suitably sensitive. The astral visitor is pretty well immune to detection, no less harm, but he is also largely powerless to take any sort of physical hand in the activities surrounding him. How to get him into action?

Hallen meets this problem by giving his interplanetary visitor a Venusian (or "Venite") body upon arrival; apparently his own in a prior incarnation, it has been carefully preserved by the priesthood and Angus Douglas simply resumes occupancy upon his return to the morning star. Burroughs responds somewhat puzzlingly; one is almost tempted to say, cops out. John Carter arrives on Barsoom, having left his earthly body in an Arizona cave; yet, on Barsoom, he arrives with a body... apparently his own familiar one, naked but unharmed. Is it a solidified astral body? Or did his earthly physical body somehow miraculously get transported to Mars, where John Carter took it over once again? The author does not explain.

Jason Croft, John Ulrich Giesy's protagonist, faces the problem more rationally than Hallen's or Burroughs' -- he has to -- and the story is the better for it. Arriving on Palos in psychic form, Croft first flits around observing the local scene (a very handy narrative device for Mr. Giesy, that!), then seizes the magnificent corporeal habiliment of a robust young Palosian who happens conveniently to be dying of sheer hopeless stupidity. Having got this far with a rather ingenious

and original plot, Giesy uses the rest of the volume to carry Jason Croft through a reenactment of John Carter's experiences in A Princess Of Mars.

That is, he saves the beautiful princess from an unwanted alliance, overthrows tyranny, and, from a fragmented and feuding collection of Balkanlike statelets welds a powerful and relatively tranquil nation. And of course he becomes engaged to marry the princess.

Where Giesy fails -- where Hallen also failed and where Burroughs by contrast achieved his supreme success -- is in the matter of making his alien world alien in atmosphere. Giesy's and Hallen's alien-worlders are fully human, and calling your horse a xtappnik doesn't do much for creating an otherworldly air. Burroughs making his Martians egg-layers and extending their life-span made them just alien enough to give his books the feel they needed. His semi-humanoid giant green hexapods help too. Hallen provides nothing of the sort, and the best Giesy can offer is a race of blue-skinned slaves, obviously cognate of the American Negro.

All things considered, the result in Palos Of The Dog Star Pack is a thoroughly unsatisfactory performance.

The sequel to Palos is The Mouthpiece Of Zitu, and it is even more unsatisfactory than the previous volume. After returning to Earth to visit his Boswell, Dr. Murray, Croft again journeys to Palos to marry his princess. Because of his many attainments (backed by earthly science some three millenia in advance of that of Palos) and his periodic trances and revivals (taken by the primitive Palosians as deaths and resurrections) Jason Croft is proclaimed the Mouthpiece of Zitu: roughly, Jesus Christ.

As sukh, he is expected to remain celibate. How to marry his princess? At the same time, Jason Croft is faced with a renewal of the political conflict he had thought resolved in volume I. The beautiful but treacherous Princess Kalamita (accent on the second syllable please) has rekindled the ashes of the old dispute and all hell is breaking loose. Kalamita makes a captive of Jason and in about the only exploitation of the astral theme in the Palosian sequence he leaves his body in her encampment to seek help in his disembodied self.

In the third volume, Jason, Son Of Jason, the identical dispute breaks out yet a third time. On this occasion Kalamita captures not Jason Croft but his wife and infant son (and a helpful blue slave girl). Croft brings Dr. Murray into the act (in astral form); by now not only Jason and Murray but also Mrs. Jason and the Mouthpiece's high priest are in on the psychic bit, in addition to which Jason's forces have cannon, airplanes, airships, and napalm bombs. If it sounds like a one-sided battle, it is; that Kalamita's forces come as near to victory as they do is a tribute to their brains and guts. Their defeat is due only to Kalamita's king's cowardly, perhaps even treacherous, surrender.

At the end Kalamita is scarred but still defiant; Giesy may have planned still more Palosian adventures, but unless he was able to break his stereotyped plotting it's as well that there were no more.

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The Phantom Fighter by Seabury Quinn, Arkham House, 1966, 263 pp., \$5.

Solange Stories by F. Tennyson Jesse, MacMillan, 1931, 182 pp.

These are entries in the psychic detective derby, running along with Algernon Blackwood's John Silence ("Physician Extraordinaire"), William Hope Hodgson's Carnacki ("The Ghost-Finder"), Sax Rohmer's Moris Klaw ("The Dream Detective"), and I suppose Mr. Stoker's anti-vampiric Van Helsing. These detectives fall generally into two classes, those who fight ordinary criminals by psychic means (Klaw), and those who fight psychic menaces by any means (Silence, Carnacki, Van Helsing). We have here an example of each variety.

Seabury Quinn's Phantom Fighter, Jules de Grandin, was a phenomenally popular series character in Weird Tales magazine beginning back in 1925. In a new introduction to this first collection of de Grandin's adventures, the author, Mr. Quinn, tells us that there are some 300 de Grandin stories in existence. This book contains ten of them.

Professor de Grandin is an emigre French physician bunking up in a small New Jersey town with a rather obtuse narrator of the tales, Dr. Trowbridge. The Holmes/Watson parallel is nicely handled. In story after story the pair face the classic villains of the supernatural story: werbeings, vampires, unquiet dead, etc., and of course in every case emerge triumphant. The stories are almost unbelievably naive, and yet in an unconsciously campy way they have an innocent charm that quite captivated me.

If you take your fantasy seriously, avoid The Phantom Fighter. But if you are willing and able to suspend the critical faculty, and if you are out for a pleasant evening of chuckles -- and occasional chills -- you may find this book an enjoyable break.

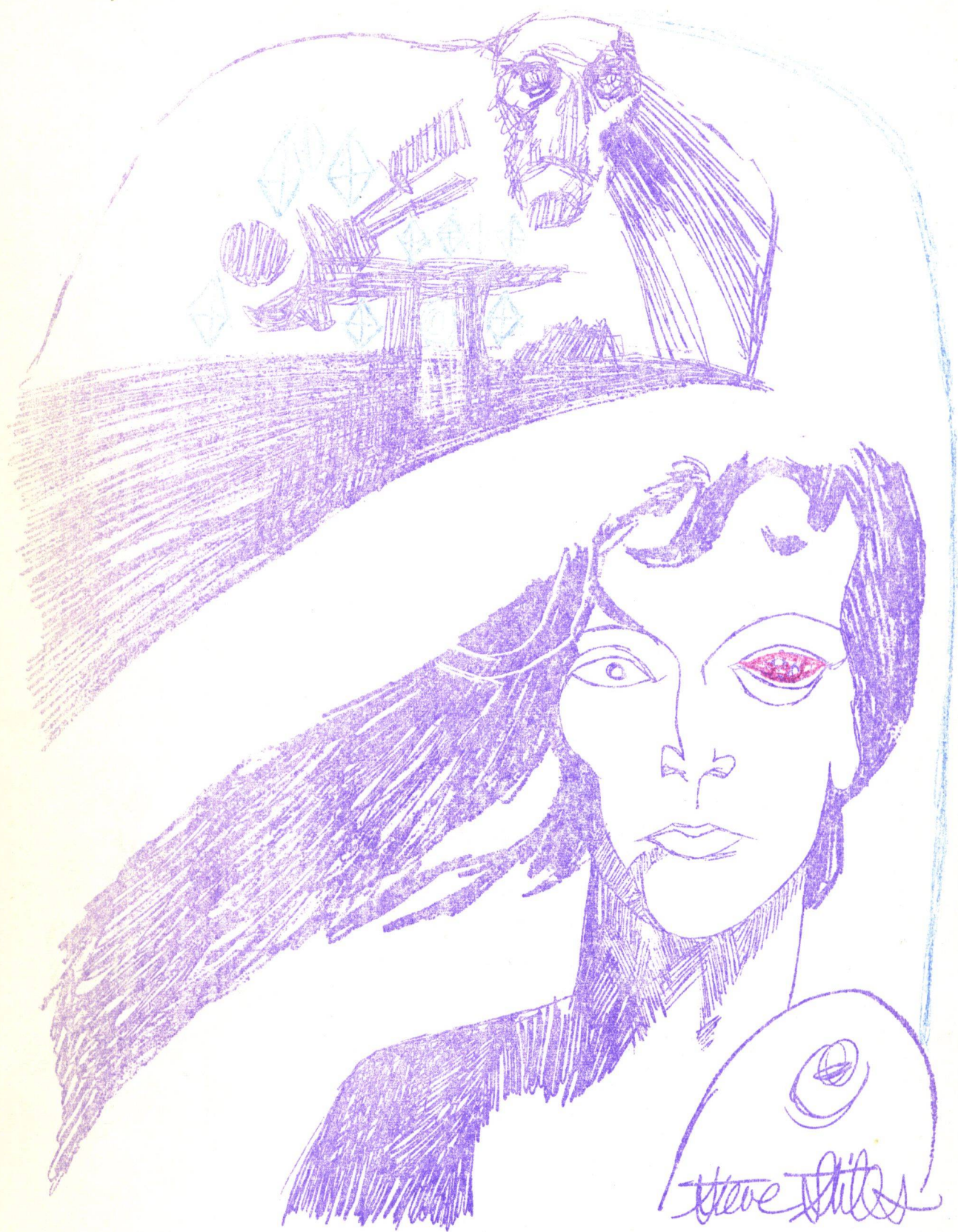
F. Tennyson Jesse's Solange Fontaine is a female psychic detective -- the only one I know of -- and is a "Type I" psyduck: she uses her special gift to combat non-supernatural evildoers. Specifically, Solange has an unusual ability to "smell out" evil -- to detect, literally, the presence of wickedness and sin. In five adventures Solange tracks an assortment of bad guys, mostly murderers, and again, like her varied confreres, manages to come out on top consistently.

Jesse plots with more complexity, and writes with considerably more sophistication, than Quinn, and perhaps therein lies the downfall of Solange and the triumph of de Grandin. Solange is quite good enough to face no danger of becoming camp -- and quite bad enough to have no chance of making it if taken seriously. Result: failure.

-- Dick Lupoff

IN THE NEXT ISSUE --

There will be all sorts of goodies. A long article on the cattle wars which helped change the face of the West, by Pat Lupoff. More of Dick Lupoff's book reviews of old and musty tomes, and maybe some newer ones, too. A strong possibility of fanzine reviews, space permitting. The usual comments and columns from Ted White and Robin Wood. More long, critical articles on the writers and the writing in sf today.



IN THE RUINS SAMUEL R. DELANY



Lightning cracked a whip on the dark, scarring the black with light. Klikit ran for the opening, fell, and landed in dust. Outside, the rain began with heavy drops, faster, fuller. Klikit shook his yellow hair, kneeled back and brushed it from his face. His taut body was still a moment, sensing the breezes and their directions the way -- he fancied -- an animal would.

Blinking, he rubbed dirty hands over his shoulders. A faint light shone around a corner, and in the dimness he could see a broken column and smashed plaster.

The rain behind him became a roar. He stood up, tried to shake off fear, and started forward. Beneath the roar a sudden clap came like breaking stone: he crouched, feeling the tendons at the back of his knees pull. He could feel sand and two tiny pebbles beneath the ball of his left foot. He had lost one sandal hours ago. Now he stepped again and felt the flooring beneath his foot become tile. He reached the broken wall and peered around cautiously for the light.

In a broken setting, a large blue window let in the radiance. The luminous panes were held with strips of lead that limned a screaming crow.

Klikit tensed. Yet over the fear he smiled. So, he had taken refuge in one of the ruined temples of Kirke, the eastern crow god. Well, at least he was going in the right direction. Kirke was the god of Myetra, where he was headed.

A corner of the ceiling had fallen and water filmed the wall, leaving lime streaks at the edge. A puddle spread on the tile in the blue light, building up, spilling a few inches, building up again.

As he looked down at the expanding reflection of the ruined ceiling, he pondered the origin of the blue light, for save the lightning, it was black outside.

Cautiously he walked to the broken wall and looked behind to the source. And sucked in his breath.

Centered on white sand a bronze brazier burned with unflickering light. Heaped at the foot were jewels -- rubies, gold chains, damasked blades set with emeralds,

silver proof, crowns clotted with sapphires and amethysts. Every muscle in Clikit's body began to shake. Each mytocondria in his ferile sole quivered. He would have run out, scooped up handfulls of the gems, and fled into the night again -- then he saw the figure in the far door -- a woman.

Through white veils he could see the ruby points of her breasts, the lift of her hip as she walked out across the sand, leaving delicate footprints.

She saw him. "Who are you, stranger?" She smiled.

He gulped. "Clikit. Who are you?"

"A priestess of Kirke. What do you wish here, Clikit?"

Dusty and stained, Clikit drew himself up to his full five feet one inch. "I was admiring your jewels there."

She laughed. "They are nothing to the real treasure of this Temple. They are only the most worthless part of our hoard."

Clikit blinked, his eyes darting from the fortune before him to the girl. Her hair, though the light from the brazier was steady, danced with inner fires.

"Where are you from and where are you going?" she asked. "And would you like to see the real treasure of the Temple?"

"I am only a poor man who lives with his wits," Clikit said. "I am from Calcivon, but I journey to eastern Myetra. I have heard tales that they have great and powerful magic. I thought I would go see for myself."

"You are very near Myetra," she told him. "You have come a long way and must be tired. Go with me, and I will give you food, rest, and display for you our real treasures."

"Eh...that's kind of you."

"Follow then," said the girl, turning away.

Clikit glanced at her foot prints in the white sand. And fear shivered in him. Alabaster toe and pink heal had peeked at him from under her veils; but the prints were not of a fleshed foot: they were drawn lines -- bone! he realized -- the footprint of a skeleton!

Clikit thought quickly and futilely, stooping over the astounding footprint. At once he swept three huge handfulls of sand into his cloak and gathered the edges together as he stood, twisting it behind him into a club. The woman reached the arch, turned, and motioned him to follow. Trying to hide his shaking, he hurried forward with his hands behind his back.

He wondered what good the club would do if she were a ghost or a witch as he crossed the threshold.

Another bronze brazier lit the hall with blue light. He went on quickly, deciding that at least he must try. But as he reached her, she glanced over her shoulder, without stopping, and said, "the real treasure of this temple is not its jewels. Tell me, Clikit, what would you like more than all the jewels in the world?" They reached a

turn in the passage as she spoke and the light took a red cast. "What would you like more than riches, good food, a castle with slaves?"

Clikit managed to answer jocularly: "There is very little I prefer over good food."

"Are you really all that hungry?"

True. With the coming of his fear, his appetite had gone. "I'm hungry enough to eat a horse," he lied, clutching his sand-filled cloak tighter. She looked away and he was about to swing, when suddenly she moved off through another arch and again glanced back.

Clikit's knees shook. In the yellow light her face looked older and the lines of character in this strange hue were more like lines of age. "The treasure -- the real treasure of this temple is something eternal, deadly and deathless, that many have sought and few found."

"Eh...what is it?"

"It is love," she said, and laughed. Her voice sounded harsh. Again she turned from him, and again he was about to bring the bundle of sand in front of him, but she darted to a flight of steps and whispered, "Follow me down." The tripods on the landings flared green, then red, then white again. The descent -- long, and turning, and long again -- was hypnotic. She moved to an amber lit hall. "This way."

Clikit thought to ask, "What do you mean by love?"

Again she glanced back. Was it the amber light, or did her skin maintain the yellowish hue through which they had passed before? "I mean by love something that few signify by the word. I mean a love that is eternal, total, consummated, unruffled even by death..." The last word was a whisper, followed by a laugh that made him think, absurdly, of feathers.

Clikit thought: now, now, or I shall never find my way out of here. But she turned before him into another corridor and again his resolve fled. He had nearly got it again, when she instructed him to mount, and they climbed a short flight of steps.

Green flooded them again, as, again, she turned to talk. "Would you like to find such treasure; would you like to find love with one perfect and lasting, touched with more than finite beauty?"

The green glow made her look....older, much older. The lips, before pulled back in a smile, now shriveled from the teeth. "Imagine," she said, her voice like leaves on cloth, "love with a woman so wise she can make your mind sink toward perfect fullness, perfect peace, drifting with her down the halls of night, toward the heart of shadows where serenity will cradle you in dark arms, where life is a memory of pain, not even a memory..." She turned from him, her hair over her thin shoulders like straw blown over stone, "...she will lead you down halls of retreat, where there is no hunger, no fatigue, and you will be her sustenance and rest, she will be your beginning and your end, and you will share a union more perfect than the mind or body can endure..."

Clikit had nearly forgotten the burden clutched behind him. It was lighter, his body was lighter; his mind floated inside his head. They were turning again, and turning: "...leading toward perfect love in the center of confusion, in the heart of chaos, with a woman so old and beautiful that she can never know death..."

The word pierced him like a mouse tooth. He pulled his cloak from behind his back, raising it to strike. But at that instant, his guide turned fully to face him. Face...face; no face: bone in blue light, black sockets, a bald bone, veils on the blanched ribs, empty, sharp. Empty?

His own cloak was empty. The sand had all trickled through some hole in the cloth!

Clikit, struggling to the surface of his senses, whirled and fled along the hall. Laughter scittered after him, glancing from the damp stones about his ears. "Come back, wanderer from Calvion; you will never escape, you have come too far...too far into the center..." Turning a corner, Clikit staggered against the rock. The steady light began to flicker. "You will come back to me," the voice returned through the sound of his own fingers clawing over the stone. "You will come back, for all the halls lead down to me." The laughter again whispered in his splintering mind.

An old woman found Clikit huddled against her shack the next morning in the dawning sun. He was wet, shivering, and when she woke him and his grey eyes darted at her from under his snarled, cornsilk hair, she feared she had woken a mad man.

But he began to talk, and told her his story, so she took him inside and gave him a red crock bowl of broth and a towel to dry himself. "The ruins of Kirke's temple are indeed an evil place," agreed the woman as Clikit bent over his bowl again. "Well could some priestess have been confined to wander the catacombs beneath the building by the old magic of the place. But it has been in ruins for over a hundred years. How did you find your way out? How did you escape?"

"The sand," Clikit said. "Turning among those dank halls, I suddenly saw the tiny trail of sand that had dribbled through my cloak, and I fled along that faint white line until I stumbled into the room where I had first seen the jewels."

"Well!" laughed the old woman. She dusted at the hearth with a bunch of switches and the ashes rose on the darkened stones. "It is too bad you didn't have time to stop and pick up some of the 'worthless' treasures of the temple on your way out. But I suppose you were much too happy just to have reached freedom."

Clikit shook his head and grinned. "But I did stop." He pulled his cloak into his lap where it was all knotted together. "I did gather some. See." He struggled with the knots until they came loose and carefully unwrapped the cloak.

"See what?" asked the woman, bending closer.

"In the creased and folded cloth there was much fine, damp sand. But as Clikit grubbed in the twisted material, there was not even a single termaline. "But I --" Clikit began. "---but I stopped long enough to put handfuls of the smaller stones in. Of course I could take nothing large, but there were diamonds, sapphires, and two or three gold locket sets with pearls..."

The old woman nodded her head wisely. "Now, admittedly," she began, trying to restrain her grin, "no one ever goes there on dark nights, especially in a storm, but the boys of this town spend much time chasing each other through the ruined catacombs -- they have for years. I have never heard tell of anything save spider webs and rock snakes to be found there."

"But I tell you---" Clikit repeated. "I know what I took---" He did not go on.

The woman watched him, hunched and bedraggled; she smiled. "Perhaps," she said, "the stones slipped through the same hole by which you lost the sand."

The little man only sat over his gritty cloak and shook his head.

"Will you continue to Myetra?" she asked after a while.

"No," Clikit said. "No. I will go back to Calcivon. I will not go to Myetra. I have come too far already."

-- Samuel R. Delany

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Voices From The Past...

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At the Rorcon last year, the MSFS boys were the only ones who went in for costume at all, but this year there were a dozen or so on hand. We were ahead of competitors in one respect, though--while many of 'em carried rayguns, we were practical and toted water pistols. One of the diverting moments of the con came when Rog Phillips and Erwin Stirmweis conducted a H₂O duel in the Metropole lobby while weirdly-garbed characters scrambled behind mirrored pillars in all directions to get out of the line of fire and the desk clerk explained -- or tried to -- to non-fen. "It's a bunch of supermen," he is reported to have said. "They get together once a year like this from all over the world."

--Art Rapp, SPACE!ARP #30, September 1949

After stumbling over hill and down Normandie Drive, I stumbled on to the Burbee abode, which was peopled by of all things, Burbees. The Burbees do not look old enough to be parents, and in fact three of them aren't.

--Rick Sneary, BURBLINGS, May 1951

Ed Cox doodle here:

A STORY FOR TRUFANS

rich brown

Joe Blatt, I say, was the greatest fan who ever lived. In the pages of Dogma (SAPS), Fuggheaded Remarks (FAPA) and Joe Blatt's Blatts, the wit and verve of the of the man are forever preserved and will live in the hearts of Trufans everywhere.

It is my sad duty to report that the most fannish of fans is no longer with us; he has gone, as rumor had it at the last WorldCon, to purple pastures -- to that Great Oneshot and Blogfest In The Sky.

I need not recount his accomplishments here; they are known to every fan of note, and even some few sercons and confans. The Blatt Ballads are undoubtedly the most moving (and, in their turn, most humorous) fannish verse ever written; "I Had One Grunch, But Ten WorldCons Over There," his monumental 877 page conreport, on the ten worldcons he attended the first ten years he won TAFF in a row (before it became the permanent ((and better known)) BJBTA'F -- Bring Joe Blatt To A Worldcon Fund), is undoubtedly the finest fandom has ever known; "The Fan Of The Rings," the greatest fannish parody; "Carl Brandon Lives In A Birdbath!" the longest and best piece of faaanfiction ever written; "A Cork And A Bandaid," easily the funniest one-shot; Joe Blatt's Blatts the best general fanzine, both for appearance and quality material. Of course, it's also well known that Joe topped the popularity polls in all the apas and held every major office in each of them at one time or another.

But in all of this, Joe was not at his best; it was all just a pale reflection of the Joe Blatt we've all met, and known, and loved.

Joe Blatt In Person can never be captured on paper, even though the greatest writing talent in fandom -- that is, Joe Blatt -- tried his best to do it. I certainly am not presumptuous enough to think that I can do it here.

But my own memories of his fine in-person wit and often devastating commentary are worthy of preservation, even if they fall far short of what he might have done in presenting them himself.

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At my first Worldcon he sat on a mauve green divan; he was twinkly-eyed and drinking whiskey sours like they were pop (no one could out-blogfest old Joe!), and some twenty fans of various hue of trufannish activity were huddled around discussing fandom: it's personalities, trends, swings; it's socio-economic and ethnic patterns; it's goals, means, development, evolution, and various other personal and intriguing insights into its meaning. "Fandom," Joe said, his tongue running over his lips, "Fandom is just a goddamn hobby."

Laugh? I've never seen so many TruFans go into hysterics.

Quick as a flash, he headed toward the Men's Room, saying over his shoulder as

he did, "Excuse me, I have to go to the 4th Chorp Dimension."

The fans had just barely gotten over that when he got back. "It Certainly Is A Wonderful Thing," he commented.

+ + + + +

We used to get into discussions of Philosophy, Joe Blatt and I. At conventions, parties, fan meetings, he would take one side and I the other. Most of the time he was never serious, telling people things he really didn't believe just to Put Them On -- "Follow the goldbrick road," he would say -- but I remember one occasion when he got quite serious, took me aside and told me he'd done a lot of thinking and had reached some pretty serious conclusions. Not sercon-serious, mind you, but fannish serious, because Joe Blatt was always a faaanish fan.

"Fandom," he told me, "is a way of life."

I agreed with him, pretty much, that it must be. I had had the matter under serious consideration for quite some time, I told him, some ten years, -- "That's not too many," he observed, -- and I was quite ready to say that he was right. But ol' Joe! He just smiled and said, "Or maybe not."

Then he drifted away to generate a controversial argument. He took very strong fannish stands, Joe Blatt did, and the questions he asked that night -- "Will the friction-type belt buckle be the thing of the future?", "Who sawed Courtney's boat?" and "Is the Yobber mightier than the Foo?" -- are questions that have been of vital fannish interest ever since.

+ + + + +

Unexpectedly, tragedy.

He was at his height that night -- he dreamed the greatest fannish dream. "We're all science fiction fans," he said. "Why don't we build a tower to the moon -- out of bheer cans!"

You could tell the idea intrigued everyone. Everyone, that is, but a couple of neos who were reading science fiction in the corner. One of them got up to put his book up on the shelf, and Joe Blatt was incapable of resisting the temptation -- quick as a fox, he jumped into the neo's vacated seat, shouting, "Old fanoclast joke!"

Everyone laughed, taking it in the proper spirit -- except the neofan.

Joe tried to be nice to him. I never heard him speak more eloquently than when he said, "The Enchanted Duplicator lies not in the machine, but in the hand of the fan who operates it."

To no avail.

+ + + + +

The rest is history.

"It is to laugh," he told us on his last night. The feud had gone on and on --

all of it one-sided -- and nothing Joe could say or do could stop it. He had even told the neofan that he had a sensitive, fannish face.

It bothered no one -- except Joe Blatt. "I am the captain of a space ship," he would say, or, "The mad dogs have kneed me in the groin."

He pulled out his gun and laid it up against his temple, just below his beanie. "The zap gun," he said, "will never replace the .357 magnum."

There were those, of course, who tried to dissuade him, but he would not be dissuaded.

"It's the fannish thing to do," he said.

And with those for his final words, he pulled the trigger.

-- rich brown





GUNPOWDER I' THE COURT, WILDFIRE AT MIDNIGHT

BANKS MEBANE

She was a spun weather vane, a feathered crucifix hovering in the air, a clothes-line holding one bright garment lashed parallel to the ground. Her shoulder was bare now, and her right breast moved up and down like a moon in the sky, its red nipple appearing momentarily above a fold and vanishing again. The music was as formal as Job's argument with God. Her dance was God's reply.

This is English prose -- an individual, complex prose that moves with stunning speed. It is decorated, even ornate. It comes from "A Rose For Ecclesiastes." Roger Zelazny wrote it, of course.

How does Zelazny achieve his effects? He makes daring use of the figures of speech that add depth and color to writing; the passage quoted above opens with three metaphors like a dazzling kaleidoscope. Consider an image from THIS IMMORTAL:

Day was starting to lever its way into the world.

A simple, startling turn of thought: day is personified and shown prying up the sky. The image is apt, yet it jolts the reader. Take another example from the same novel:

Oh, it was a jolly fire, flapping its bright wing against the night, warming us ...

The equation of fire with a bird's wing may arise from a perceived resemblance, but the effect is mental. The joining of bird and fire also recalls the phoenix, particularly in the context of the story, saturated with mythological references.

This yoking together of very different ideas is like the technique of the so-called "metaphysical" poets of the seventeenth century -- Donne, Herbert, Vaughan, Marvell, and company -- and the baroque dramatists like Chapman, Tourneur, and Webster. Zelazny did his Master's thesis on Tourneur, so he may feel an affinity for the period; at least it has definitely influenced him.

Zelazny's prose owes much of its individual flavor to this use of metaphysical figures (I call them "metaphysical" because that is the standard literary term; they have nothing to do with metaphysics). They are dangerous, though -- they can easily become too daring, too far-fetched. Zelazny edges up to the brink with them quite often but seldom topples over. It is not easy to find a bad example in his work, but I think this one from an early story, "The Misfit," is a partial failure:

The rocket dropped to the rainbow desert like a red-stemmed flower growing backward to seed.

This fails because it is too abstract; such images are sterile when the connection between the yoked ideas is mental only. The mind sees that a landing spaceship might resemble a time-reversed flower, but the emotional linkage between the ideas is not sufficient to carry the simile. In THIS IMMORTAL, a similar figure works:

The crowd rose up from where it had been scattered on the ground, like a speedup film of beanstalks growing.

This succeeds, perhaps because the beans are growing normally, perhaps also because it is helped by an echo of the sowing of the dragon's teeth; whatever the reason, the simile feels right. If the rightness is felt, the figure may be quite abstract; consider this metaphorical description from THIS IMMORTAL:

High overhead, the night was a tarp, stretched tent-wise across the treetops, pricked with faint starmarks, torn with a jagged yellow crescent of a tear.

It requires some mental discipline to see the night sky as a tent with holes in it, but in the context of the story it comes across clearly.

In that last example, the metaphorical comparison was not used only for a momentary image but was expanded into a paragraph. This extension of a figure is another characteristic of the metaphysical poets that turns up in Zelazny's writing. He uses it effectively in the second paragraph (the true opening) of "The Doors Of His Face, The Lamps Of His Mouth":

The Lowlands of Venus lie between the thumb and forefinger of the continent known as Hand. When you break into Cloud Valley it swings its silverblack bowling ball toward you without a warning. You jump then, inside that fire-tailed tempest they ride you down in, but the straps keep you from making a fool of yourself. You generally chuckle afterwards, but you always jump first.

The hand-shaped continent is a natural metaphor that Zelazny uses to bring in the bowling image, which he then extends to cover the action of the paragraph. The whole thing is beautifully tailored to introduce the setting of the story.

Metaphysical images are not the only things Zelazny uses, of course. All the examples given so far have come from his science fiction, for good reason: he uses less figurative language in his fantasies. It might seem difficult to decide where his science fiction ends and his fantasy begins, but he makes the division in his style, either consciously or unconsciously. I think the characters and situations of the fantasies are so exotic and so conceptually plastic in themselves that highly figurative prose would weaken them. Consider Ridd, in "Death And The Executioner":

Rild, who had come out of the north as the winds of spring blew across the land, wearing death upon his arm and the black fire within his eyes -- Rild, of the white brows and pointed ears -- spoke ...

The "death" and the "Black fire" sound figurative, but in the story they are nearer truth than poetry. This is characteristic of Zelazny's fantasy: one of the few similes in "Thelinde's Song" calls a wizard "old as the hills." The cliché jars for a moment, until the reader realizes that it is meant literally -- the wizard really is as old as the hills. Metaphysical double images would be dangerous in such stories, and the figures tend to be simple ones: "purple foliage like feathers" or "blood-red boots". In writing fantasy, Zelazny concentrates on sensuous description, and much of the intellectual complexity that was expressed by figures in the science fiction inheres in the story situations.

Not all, or even most, of the images in his science fiction are metaphysical figures -- that would be too much fireworks. He varies his language to the story at hand. The protagonist of "The Teachers Rode A Wheel Of Fire" is a prehistoric man, and the similes are those that might occur to him:

... a sound, like the singing of the tiny night-things.

and

Little colored stones, like the eggs of birds ...

Often Zelazny uses striking figures that are not metaphysical; consider the description of Conrad's dog in *THIS IMMORTAL*:

Somewhere, he had come upon my trail, and he was coming now, running down the night, leaping like a goat, flowing like a horse or a river, all brindle-colored -- and his eyes were glowing coals and his teeth buzzsaws.

It is complex and rapid, but the similes and metaphors, vivid as they are, do not have that sense of shock that a metaphysical comparison produces. The effect comes from the pace, the multiplicity of thoughts, and the piling on of feelings. This is a different technique from the metaphysical figure, but it is one that was also much favored by the same seventeenth-century writers. Even what would usually be a static description can move under this treatment, as in this example from "He Who Shapes":

Render turned away from the window and approached the great egg that lay beside his desk, smooth and glittering. It threw back a reflection that smashed all equanimity from his nose, turned his eyes to grey saucers, transformed his hair into a light-streaked skyline; his reddish necktie became the wide tongue of a ghoul.

That passage does have a couple of metaphysical metaphors. I am not sure they work -- the ghoul's tongue seems a bit much -- but the overall effect is one of speed achieved by multiplicity. The technique can also be used for action, although it is necessarily action coupled with description. Consider this progress of Conrad and Graber across the ballroom in *THIS IMMORTAL*:

We started across the room, negotiating alleys of people. High overhead, the chandeliers drifted and turned like faceted satellites of ice. The thelinstra was an intelligent Aeolian harp, tossing its shards of song into the air -- pieces of colored glass. The people buzzed and drifted

like certain of George Emmett's insects, and we avoided their swarms by putting one foot in front of another without pause and making noises of our own. We didn't step on anybody who squashed.

This is a beautiful combination of narration with imagery, expressed with real wit -- wit in both the modern sense of humor and in the seventeenth-century sense of ingenuity. I think this is approaching the heart of Zelazny's style, and I want to quote an extended paragraph to show the uses he can make of it; consider this long description from "The Keys To December":

Quick, a world in 300 words or less! Picture this... One land mass, really, containing three black and brackish-looking seas; grey plains and yellow plains and skies the color of dry sand; shallow forests with trees like mushrooms which have been swabbed with iodine; no mountains, just hills brown, yellow, white, lavender; green birds with wings like parachutes, bills like sickles, feathers like oak leaves, an inside-out umbrella behind; six very distant moons, like spots before the eyes in daytime, snowflakes at night, drops of blood at dusk and dawn; grass like mustard in the moister valleys; mists like white fire on windless mornings, albino serpents when the air's astir; radiating chasms, like fractures in frosted windowpanes; hidden caverns like chains of dark bubbles; seventeen known predators, ranging from one to six meters in length, excessively furred and fanged; sudden hailstorms, like hurled hammerheads from a clear sky; an ice-cap like a blue beret at either flattened pole; nervous bipeds a meter and a half in height, short on cerebrum, which wander the shallow forests and prey on the giant caterpillar's larva, as well as the giant caterpillar, the green birds, the blind burrower, and the offal-eating mark-beast; seventeen mighty rivers; clouds like pregnant purple cows, which quickly cross the land to lie-in beyond the visible east; stands of wind-blasted stones like frozen music; perpetual frost in places of shadow; sounds in the morning like the crackling of ice, the trembling of tin, the snapping of steel strands ...

This is a catalogue, and a chain of rich sensations, and perhaps a bit of writer's self-indulgence, but I think it all works. If ever a world was packed into 300-or-less words, there it is. It has everything, from live, sensuous description up to those wit-driven pregnant purple cows. Yet the thing moves, moves rapidly at a pace determined by the tight-packed observations and by a poet's particular care for the sound and rhythm and phrasing of words.

Zelazny's wit shows through in his work in a number of ways but most clearly in his word-play. He is known (perhaps notorious is the word) for his puns. This is another example of his likeness to the metaphysical poets -- they were determined punsters. The pun is like the metaphysical figure in that both bring together dissimilar ideas; the figure does it conceptually while the pun does it verbally, almost by accident. The pun is commonly considered a vehicle for (usually limp) humor, but its literary use can be serious. Here is a beautiful example from "The Doors..., The Lamps...":

If something big decides a baitman looks tastier than what he's carrying, it then irony colors his title as well as the water around it.

The connection irony-iron-haemoglobin-blood might seem to abstract, but I think it works perfectly.

Having given a good example, I'll move immediately to the notorious one

from "Dawn":

Then the fit hit the Shan.

While the Shan of Irabek was a necessary character in the plot, his title was chosen merely to allow that horrendous pun, a decided mistake in the story however delightful it might be otherwise. It stops the action cold while the reader recovers, and it shatters the general tone. Zelazny puts humor in his writing and can generally introduce it into a serious story without a jar, but that one oversteps the bounds of Delian law. It would fit in a comic story; in "Circe Has Her Problems", Circe speaks while in the same position that Cleopatra occupied in the original version of the joke:

I am not prone to argue.

It works -- and that story abounds in word-play, all appropriate to the light tone. Circe states her problems in a passage of hilarious verbal complexity:

I am a sorceress by trade, not a goddess, but I happen to have a lot of Nymph blood in me (which can either be bad or good, if you look at things that way very often -- I don't). Anyhow, I had enjoyed my obvious attributes for a long while, until a cat-souled she-dog from the isle of Lesbos in a fit of perverse jealousy (or jealous perversity -- slice it either way), laid this curse bit on me ...

Zelazny should write humor more often; he handles this sort of fast-talking farce very well.

Sometimes Zelazny will conceal his double meanings as if he meant to keep them to himself. In "He Who Shapes", Render's receptionist is a woman named Bennie Hedges who disapproves of smoking. This light irony is carefully played down. The two elements of her name are never written together: she is always "Bennie" or "Mrs. Hedges". Her dislike of smoking is not explicitly stated but is implied by the speed with which she empties an ashtray when a single ash has been dropped in it.

Such double meanings turn up frequently, and usually quite openly, in the names of Zelazny's characters. In "He Who Shapes" the psychiatrist-hero is Render: "to give over", "to restore"; also "to perform", "to interpret"; also "he who rends." All the meanings are echoed in the story. The heroine's name is equally fitting -- Eileen Shallot: Elaine, the Lady of Shallot; also, Eileen is an Irish name, and in Render's final fantasy she figures as Wagner's Isolde, Mein Irisch Kind.

Literary references in Zelazny's work are far from limited to the names of his characters; in his text he often partially quotes from or alludes to some other piece of writing. Such echoes bring in the wide associations of the work cited and help to enrich his own thought. In this practice he is close to such twentieth-century poets as Pound and Eliot (who, significantly, were fond of and influenced by the metaphysical poets).

The danger here is that a reference may be too consistent if it is unfamiliar to the reader, it confuses him. Consider a line from "A Rose For Ecclesiastes":

I felt like Ulysses in Malebolge --- with a terz rima speech in one hand and an eye out for Dante.

If the reader knows the INFERNO, this sentence will communicate; if he doesn't, his reaction is likely to be "so what?" Yet a quotation can be used with great effect; in "The Doors...", "The Lamps..." Davits quotes to Jean Lumarish from Ezra Pound's Canto II:

Daughter of Lir, eyes of Picasso.

The relevant lines from Pound are:

Seal sports in the spray-whited circles of cliff-wash,
Sleek head, daughter of Lir,
 eyes of Picasso
Under black fur hood, lithe daughter of Ocean ...

The passage brings in a swarm of associations. Lir was a Celtic sea-god whose daughters became swans -- perhaps seals in a version of the legend unknown to me. The eyes of Picasso I take to mean the sad, dark, liquid eyes of the figures from his Blue Period, which might suggest those of a seal. The Canto is saturated with sea images and the female seal-figure is transformed poetically into Eleanor of Aquitaine as seen by the troubadours, into Homer's Helen, and into Tyro, a nymph loved by Poseidon. All the associations slide into Zelazny's sea-drenched story and heighten the relationship of the central characters for a reader who recognizes the allusions. It depends on viewpoint as to whether this is considered a decoration or a defect -- I favor the first view. Good writing should not be pre-digested pap.

However the literary references need not be so insistent. In "This Moment Of The Storm", Godfrey Holmes, after killing a thug, remarks that:

Flights of angels sang him to his rest, perhaps.

The allusion does not stop anyone who doesn't recognize it, yet it does point up the desolation of the end of the story by recalling the corpse-laden castle of Elsinore.

Zelazny, seldom content to do things by halves, sometimes pours on the allusions to the overflow mark. Consider this innkeeper's greeting to the Prince in "Dawn":

Welcome to this well-nightingaled vicinity, and to the perfumed gardens
and marble halls of this humble establishment!

I find no less than three references, conscious or unconscious, in that sentence. The "well-nightingaled vicinity" is decidedly conscious; it quotes A. E. Housman's parody of translations from Greek tragedy, and Housman himself may be alluding to Sophocles' "Oedipus in Colonus" in that phrase. The "perfumed gardens" recall the title of an erotic classic attributed to the Sheikh Nefwazi, and I am also reminded of the old song, "I dreamt That I Dwelt In Marble Halls." I don't think these references add much to the story; they are more in the nature of Zelazny's private jokes.

His jokes are always better when they are shared. Consider his echo of a once-popular song in THIS IMMORTAL:

When the spiderbats return to Capistrano ...

That is great fun -- and seems a suitable signal for winding this up.

I have discussed Roger Zelazny's figurative language, his multiplication of verbal and sensuous ideas, his puns and other word-play, and his literary allusions. I think the way he uses these devices is the main factor in the individuality of his prose on the textual level. In pointing out analogous practices in other writers, I have mentioned poets, particularly the metaphysical poets; this was necessary because Zelazny's approach to words in themselves and as related to other words is that of a poet -- and a baroque poet at that.

Fiction writers who are so concerned with compression of thought and verbal decoration usually turn out clotted, static stories. Zelazny's talent amazes one the more, for beneath these surface ripples the currents and creatures of the deeps still move and hold.

But that is another story.

-- Banks Mebane

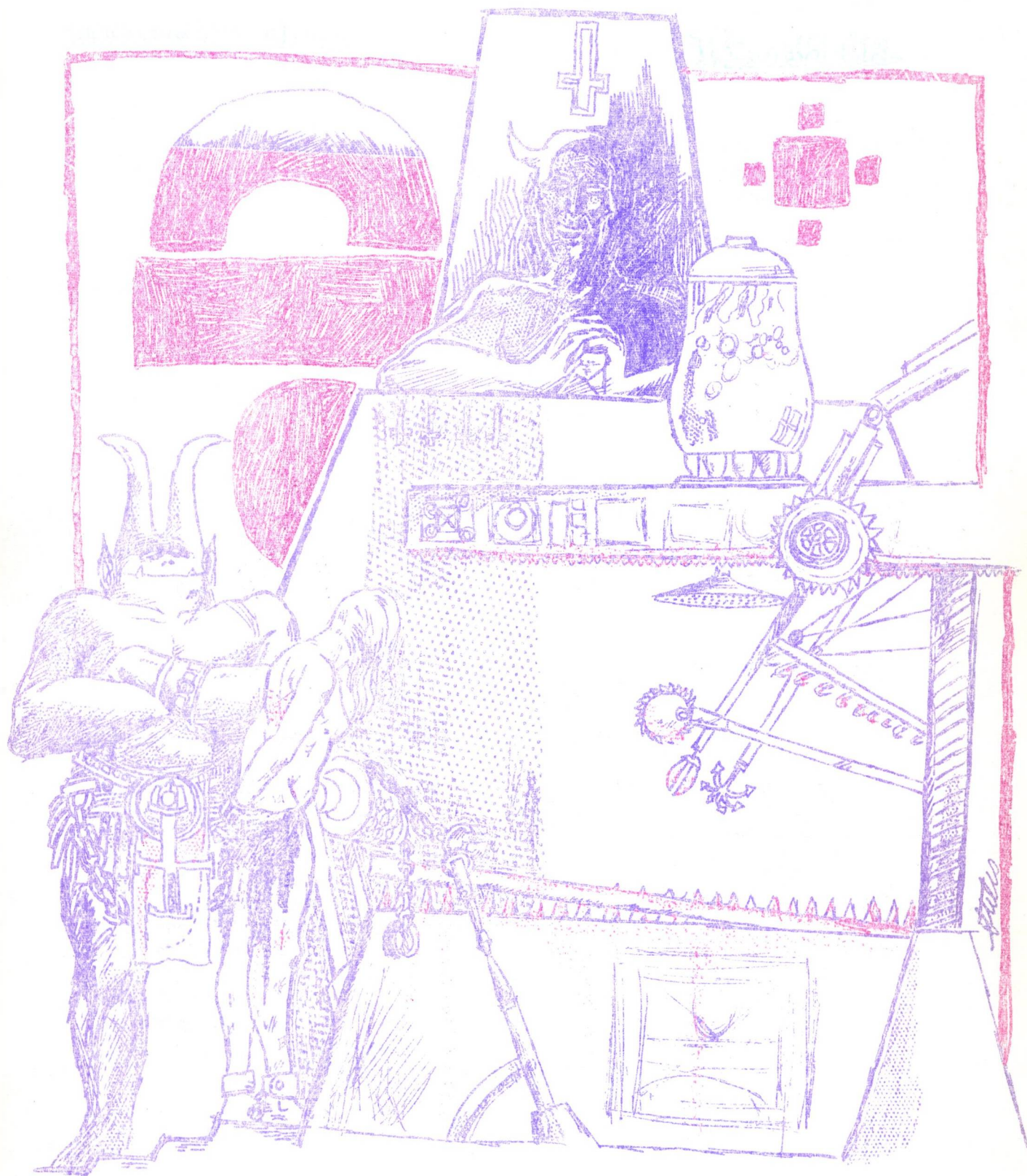
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12 FOR ONE DOLLAR

From: Andrew Porter, SFWeekly
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GRUT ||| ROBIN WOOD

A COLUMN |||

It's midnight, jazz and static on the radio, rain slapping against the window, and the neighbor's cat is sitting in the room, sleeping and breathing asthmatically. The other cat is sitting outside in the rain, but we won't let it in the house. It has leprosy and its nose is rotting off.

Thanksgiving night, Big Turkey day is here--something to do with Pilgrims I've heard. Or Puritans, or somebody. Turks? Withh-burning types, at any rate. But then, there's little reason for being harsh on them for that. Everybody has his personal hangups.

Which reminds me--somewhere buried in our old family records is a diary, and in that diary it mentions that one of my ancestors was hanged for witchcraft. It seems girls in the village felt funny whenever they passed him on the street, so they hanged him. The diary does not specifically say what gave the girls funny feelings, it just mentions that he was hung for witchcraft.

GRUT, the answer to common sense and logic, returns.

+++++

I have this wild picture in my mind, and it has to do with the way they go around banning certain drugs like alcohol (via a Constitutional Amendment, yet), marijuana, peyote, etc. Yes, I knew Prohibition was repealed, but it still did exist at one time. My point is--sometimes they got carried away. I'm all for banning heroin, but when you start picking on Mornin' Glory seeds...

It's 1975 and I'm sitting in my room. The shades are pulled and I've made a careful check of the room, discovered two hidden microphones and a TV camera disguised as a light bulb. Having disposed of these, I wonder. Is it safe? I decide to take a chance. I light the small burner, prepare the powder...and then WHAM!!! the door breaks asunder and I know I'm trapped.

It's the caffeine Squad. They've caught me red-handed, a jar of Instant Mills Brothers in my hand. Oh, the shame of it! I knew it's going to look bad. It's my second offense, an automatic two years in the hoosegow. And the court will show little mercy. I've already had my chance to adjust to society and I've failed. I'm a major criminal, a dope fiend, a Java Head.

They hustle me out of the room and I sigh inwardly with relief. They aren't going to search the room. They won't find the hard stuff--the bottle of aspirin I had hidden in the attic.

+++++

The telephone rang the other day, as telephones will. It was somebody taking a survey for a company, one of those people who you usually curse at and almost destroy the telephone while hanging up. But what the hell, I had nothing better to do at the time so I went along with the gag. I answered umpty-leben silly questions.

Q: What do you usually take for a headache?

A: Aspirin.

Q: What brand?

A: The cheapest I find.

Q: Uh, do you remember the brand name?

A: I dunno.

Q: Well, do any brand names come to mind?

A: Well...um.

Q: Well, let's put it this way: what brand do you consider to be the cheapest?

A: I don't really know. I just go down to the store and get whatever's cheapest. They're all the same.

Q: Wait a minute. (Sound of pencil scratching frantically at paper) Let me get this all down.

And on and on and on it went. And I could hear this person on the other end of the line madly writing down notes every time I gave an answer that didn't fit into tabulated answer a, b, or c. And I can feel a warm glow descend over me, because now I'm a part of the American dream, a member of the Great Society, yes, by God I've finally arrived--I'm a Statistic. Somebody will punch holes in IBM cards and little lights in vast machines will flash, relays will click, little pieces of technical tape inscribed with mysterious symbols will pour out of calculators. And, if someday you should come into the local drug store and see a bottle of aspirin marked: GUARANTEED CHEAPEST ASPIRIN ON THE MARKET, you may rest assured that I had a part in it.

Q: What do you think of aspirin commercials?

A: They're obscene.

Q: You know, to tell the truth, I agree with you.

Wow, I think, there's a human being working for these bastards. It is almost unbelievable. I hang up the phone and look outside. It is a beautiful day. The sun is shining, the fog has rolled back, a warm breeze drifts across the Twin Peaks. It is a nice day in San Francisco, and for a moment my faith in humanity is restored.

I pick up my briefcase, strap it on the back of the motorcycle and go to the college to study and take in a couple of classes. When I come out of the last class of the afternoon I find nothing but a blank space where the bike was. Somebody has stolen it. It is the end of the world.

Yes, it's tragedy time, gang. Because there I was staring at the place where my bike had been but a few hours ago. An almost brand new 305 cc Honda Super Hawk, not the biggest nor the fastest in the world, but it did have a top speed of around 100 mph. And I hadn't even gotten around to trying the century mark yet, had pushed it to 85 so far, it was smooth as silk and no wheel wobble, squatting down on the road like it was glued and if I'd only held on to the throttle a little longer I would have done it, but now it was too late--the beast was gone.

And me with no theft insurance.

The cops came, the cops left. I walked home, snarling and cursing and kicking cripples. I was mad.

Months passed. I began hanging around bike shops, looking at the new ones. Yamahas. The Suzuki X-6, 250 cc with a six speed transmission. And I wondered if I would ever get a new one. If you haven't ever driven a bike, by all means don't ever. For once you do, even if it's a little 50 cc job, you're hooked.

But, perhaps it will turn out okay. The cops have finally called, and right now, somewhere in a San Francisco Police warehouse, all the pieces of my bike sit. It was stripped, but they have all the pieces. And God knows how many people.

And it's wild, the way they caught these guys. They picked up the ringleader for something else. He had a diary on him. It went back two years--names, dates, places, the works. He headed a car and motorcycle theft ring. So they just went through the book and started rounding up people and machines.

I don't know what the moral of this little fable is. Except that learning how to read and write sure got a whole bunch of people into one hell of a lot of trouble.

+ + + + +

In these trying days of absurd logic and mass insanity, people are demanding and searching for an island of sanity, something solid, something to strive for and identify themselves with, a new philosophy, a slogan to rally around.

My humble offer toward this goal today: ---Censorship.

+ + + + +

During Thanksgiving vacation I found myself delving into a mouldering pile of science fiction and I somehow located a couple of issues of STARTLING STORIES. How they ever wormed their way into my pile of magazines I'll never know. I suspect that one of my ASTOUNDING's may have defecated them. Unfortunately, they were pure crap.

But, goddamit, I couldn't help rereading them. Crap they may be, but what do we have to take their place today? What science fiction magazine is there today that specializes in publishing garbage, jammed in here and there between the ads for rupture blets and miracle gadgets that increase gas mileage 200%?

Quality has crept in, and it is transforming science fiction into something unrecognizable. The Mainstream is absorbing it. Now, you can sit back and scream about New Waves, pseudo-sf, people who have never read the stuff but are trying to write it, and bewail the fact that a long quasi-scientific explanation about how the whiz-zam drive works is no longer included in stories, but it won't do a damn bit of good. You're being swallowed up, screaming in protest perhaps, but gobbled up just the same.

But, perhaps the time is ripe for stinal garbage to re-emerge. Right now there are countless pop-art nuts running around scoffing up Marvel comics, blowing their minds on LSD, and making monuments out of tomato cans. And what (just suppose)... what if one of those people ran across something on the newsstands with a faded letterhead that read: FLABBERCASTING TALES? And under the letterhead is this Emsh-chick, her clothes half torn off by this honest-to-god BEM, frothing at the mouth, leaving no doubt to any observer that BEM-sodomy is on its mind?

Huh?

+++++

Besides, that slick paper is tearing my eyes out. What the hell is supposed to be so good about slick paper. Other than it looks expensive as hell? Unless you hold it at just the right angle, the light flashes off of it and all you can see is one big glare. Abolish it, I say. It's a menace.

+++++

Speaking of menaces, the flying saucers are back. A freind of mine recently saw one, and he never touches anything stronger than tequila, so I know it must be true. They have returned.

It was buzzing his swimming pool. It was pretty small, he said, about the size of Mars or Venus. This may be small, as flying saucers go, I really don't know, not being an expert. However, it may explain why so few of them ever land. There are very few sites on this world large enough to serve as a landing patch for an object the size of Mars or Venus.

+++++

Getting back to FLABBERCASTING TALES--I'm serious.

Why not? The time is ripe for an stf mag boasting that it publishes pure garbage, stories that are totally rotten by any literary standards, with good guys for heroes who somehow manage to singlehandedly save the world from the dirty old monsters or from being engulfed by a poisonous comet tail. Is there anybody out there who yearns for the old fun-loving days of Thud and Blunder, where you could read a story and not worry about things such as unity, proper motivation, and psychological insight? Are you sick of reading perfectly plotted science fiction where all the parts fit together like the workings of a fine ~~watch~~ watch? Do you yearn to return to the days when you waited until no one was looking, picked up a stf magazine from the rack, scurried over to the man behind the counter and paid for it while hiding the cover illustration with your hand, afraid that if someone saw it they would start pointing at you and laughing?

Damnright you do. Somebody out there must. Some super-fanatic fan must be reading this right now, surrounded by piles of blank cheap paper and production equipment, just waiting for some sudden inspiration.

Well?

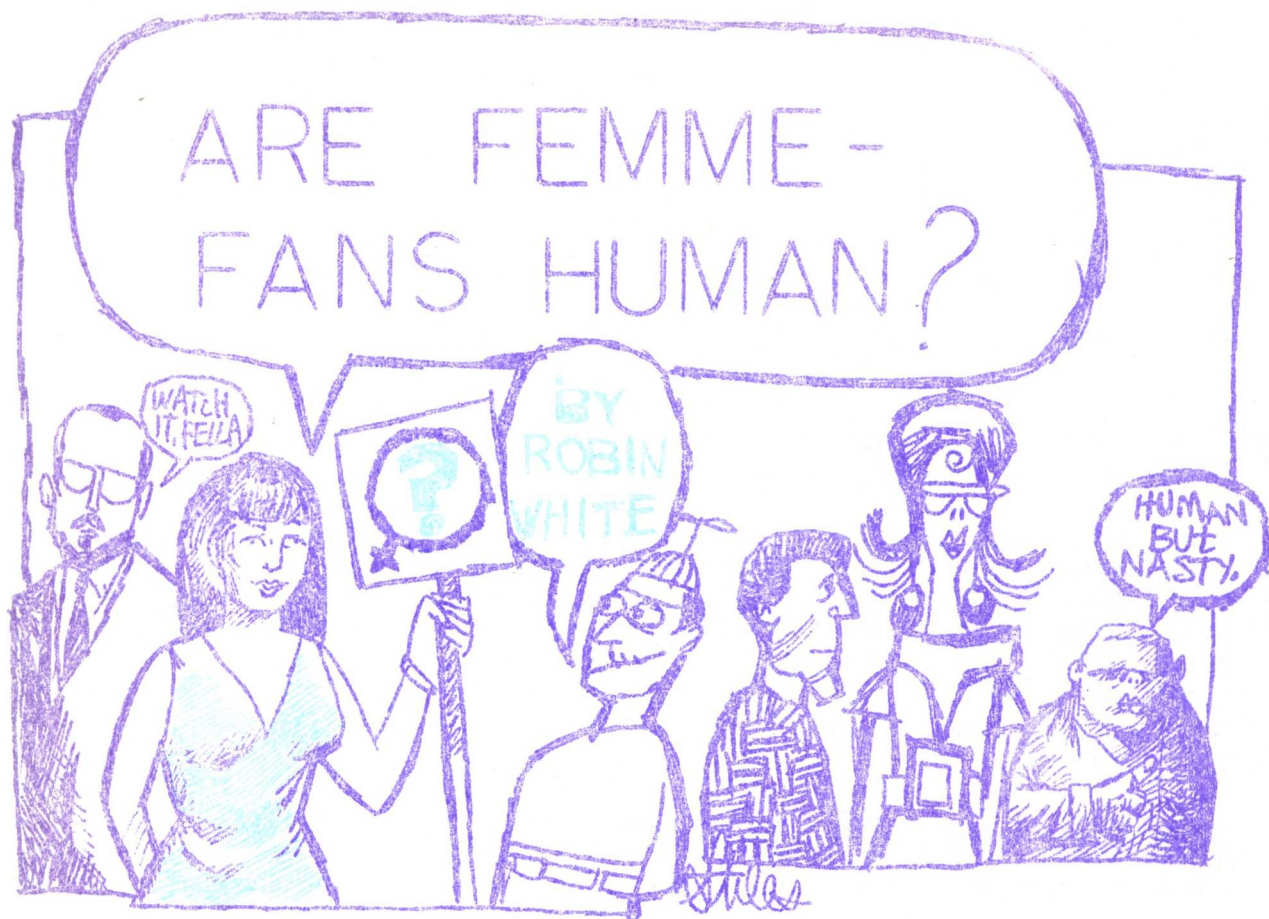
Science-Fiction-As-Such, this may be your last chance.

+++++

My Ghod, GRUT with a message? How did this ever happen? My apologies.

-- Robin Wood, 1966

THANKS GO to Julius Postal for the electrostencils which appear in this issue.



I asked the illustrious Ted White, "Are femme fans human?"

"That's easy," he said. "No. Femmes fans are objects. They are symbols. The object of the game is to see if you can get one. That puts you one up on everyone."

"That's right," said Arnie The K.

"Yeah," said Ted White with his mouth. "I always manage to have one around."

Smug, isn't he? I can say that. As the present Mrs. Ted White, I know he is.

Yet we femme fans or female hangers-on have asked for it. I for one, started out rear-end-backwards in fandom. Instead of saying, "Hi, there, fandom, I'm a human being," I said, "Hi, there, Male Fandom, I'm a girl." Now this may be fine and good to some people but it does have a tendency to misrepresent one to others. Sexy orange dresses aren't everything.

To top the whole mess off, I've been told by some male fantypes I know, including my husband, that I didn't do a very good job of it; that is, making myself known to fandom in general. In my early days I didn't quite realize just how female starved most fandom is. I was very much afraid of that big mass of unknown faces. I didn't circulate very much. I didn't talk much. (Okay, so I still don't talk all that much; I'm shy or something. I was a lot worse than I am now and I'm trying to be a little less afraid and more outgoing now.)

Back to the main point: when I entered fandom I was looking for male companionship just as much as most Male Fans are looking for girlfriends. (That is easy to say, when they are attending conventions and club meetings and not doing productive things like publishing fanzines.) I was between boyfriends (I'm the one-at-a-time type) and I didn't have very much to do on Saturday nights. My parents, Lunarians members, invited me to go along with them to a meeting one evening. I attended reluctantly at first because my parents were always hounding me to go strange places with them. After a while I attended regularly because I enjoyed Frank Dietz' cakes and the ratty quality of some of the meetings. And it was there that I got my first real chance to talk to Ted White.

That, as it happens, is how he discovered that I was more than a girl with a lot of visible cleavage. The two of us had a fun conversation about cats, a subject dear to both our hearts.

There we were: the typical boy meets girl situation. Well, almost, anyway. The difference: Ted had already met me and didn't think much of me as a person. He thought that I was just a little too knowing and brittle for his tastes. As a result of our conversation T.W. got to know me and discovered that I was not just the superficial sex object that he thought I was previously. I turned out to be a real human being.

There it is.

At that point I stopped being a femme fan and became a person. I was a person because I no longer could be classed as an unreal object. I had exhibited some of the qualities that are intrinsic in a person -- interest in others, warmth and intelligence, perhaps.

Ted told me after we had known each other for some time that our conversation that night was the point at which he actually became interested in me as a person.

Are femme fans human? It seems to depend on two things. First, for a femme fan to be human she has to be a person. That means a real, living, feeling, communicating person. Basically, she has to develop the necessary characteristics all by her lonesome self. It's called growing up, gaining maturity -- hell, you should know all about that stuff. Second, well it seems to be a matter of the opinions and attitudes expressed amongst the male fans. In other words, how do they accept her and treat her?

Now I can't say that I am an authority on how male fans treat single femme fans. I only experienced the phenomenon for a short period of time. I have only become aware of it in comparison to the way people in fandom treat me now that I am married to Ted.

When I was single I had a lot of guys chasing me. People were always trying to get me into a corner or into a deserted room at cons. Mostly, they were just making grabs at me. This sort of attention is all very flattering, but it can get tiresome. It also had another effect: I being a girl who had just come out of virtual hibernation, (going with a guy for four years) was scared of all these males making passes at me. I didn't know quite how to handle it all. So I adopted a defense mechanism; I adopted an all-knowing smile and/or smirk. This scared off some of the guys and brought the horde into reasonable proportion. Of course, such an action tended to backfire. I succeeded in scaring off, at least temporarily, some of the older and more worthwhile people. My husband, it turns out, was one of

those. He thought that my taste was poor, since I hung around with what he considered to be "little boys" when there were so many men in the vicinity. What he didn't know was that they were the only people that I knew and that the rest of the bunch scared me so much that I was not about to venture out and make "new friends."

I also found out later that my smirk or sneer put him off. It made me look like I didn't trust anyone and that I perhaps hated people. As I have become more sure of myself amongst fans I have almost completely lost this tendency to sneer and smirk.

In my early days in fandom, I drank quite a bit too much. It was a way to feel a little less scared and to come out of my shell for a bit. I was the life of the party -- under tables, that is -- and I was later very embarrassed about that sort of behavior. It wasn't for quite a while that I was able to hold conversations with anyone. I know I put people off some, but it wasn't all my fault. Very few male fans tried to talk to me at that stage. I feel that I was regarded more as a sexy object than anything else.

Ted was one of the first people who tried to talk to me. This didn't come immediately with him, either. We had seen each other quite a few times before we got to talking at any great length.

After the two of us started going together it seemed that I was accepted into the inner circle. It was as if I had suddenly been born a real human being before their very eyes. They talked to me.

Now I don't feel that my whole character changed in that time period between my entrance into fandom and my acceptance into the circle. I think that the occurrence can be traced back to the fact that I was no longer in the running. I was Ted's girl. I was no longer up for grabs. Once I was no longer a possible potential girlfriend, I was treated more like a common garden variety human-type person. (I guess that they no longer had to put on a show for me.)

This situation has especially improved since Ted and I got married. I have now met some of the Ghos of fandom and been



accepted. Just a short while ago I was an outsider to general fandom. I must say that I prefer my new role.

So for me it was a combination of two things. First, I had to stop being scared and allow myself to behave like a person. Second, others had to be more willing to treat me like a person.

Perhaps since there are so few unattached girls in fandom, the guys get just a little over-anxious about getting "one of their own." In the process of courting her, they have a tendency to forget that she too is a human being and would like to be treated as such.

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RANDOM FACTORS

THE READERS

Robert Coulson, Route 3, Hartford City, Indiana 47348 Lupoff's Book Reviews are fascinating as usual, even though this time I had already either read the books or had no intention of reading them. (I read John Kendrick Bangs' "Houseboat On The Styx" and I think one of his Holmes pastiches and never had the slightest desire to read anything else by him.) Well, the Starret book sounds like one I might like to read; otherwise no. But I am constantly astounded at the variety of old books Dick peruses.

Frankly, I think you picked poor examples for your dissertation on plotting. I have read 3½ books by Ted White (counting his collaboration with Terry Carr). In addition to the collaboration, which doesn't count because I don't know who did what as far as the writing went, they were Android Abenger, Phoenix Prime, and Secret Of The Marauder Satellite. We'll omit this last, since it is (a) a juvenile and (b) the product of a writer with several completed novels to his credit, despite the fact that it is much better than Ted's other books that I have read. So we have two books to stack against the two books that Lee Hoffman has done for Ace and which I have also read.

Either one of Ted's books is far superior to either one of Lee's. Since all the books were written at the same stage of the writer's career, this can either be (a) Ted's method of plotting his books being superior, or (b) Ted being a far better "natural" writer than Lee. I don't think that Ted is a better natural writer.

Andre Norton's books are far better than those of either White or Hoffman, but she's been writing longer and presumably learned something in the process. So, no comparison; by the time Ted and Lee have written that many books, they may both be far better than Norton. Or they may not.

However, to get back to Lee Hoffman, one of her books was supposed to be funny and contained the strained "humor" typical of a second-rate tv comedy, and the other one was serious and read like the novelization of a Saturday afternoon matinee. I don't know how they were plotted, but both were : thoroughly mechanical in effect. Ted may plot mechanically, but he is learning how to make events seem to follow one another logically. Results are what counts, not methods.

-- Buck Coulson

Harry Warner Jr., 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Md., 21740 I found Algol more entertaining and informative than it might have been if this issue had followed the potpourri tradition of most large fanzine issues. For one thing, it increased perceptibly my tentative mental image of Harlan as a sort of latterday Berlioz who hasn't happened to be working in musical fields. From second- and third-hand observations, I've always thought of him as this sort of an extreme romanticist (slightly out of the proper chronological sequence for this condition) and egotist (not at all an uncomplimentary characterization, for this quality is almost essential for anyone who is to rise above the other people with approximately equal talent but less faith in themselves) and at least a minor genius. I hope Harlan gains the lasting celebrity in science fiction that Berlioz achieved in music, and it's already obvious that Harlan is different from Berlioz in personality so as to enjoy life much more of the time while he cuts this astonishing swathe through it.

As usual, Rotsler is so brilliant that everything else seems a trifle dim and dingy, even though the Ted White, Lee Hoffman and Bob Silverberg essays would seem splendid enough if they weren't quite so close to the cartoons.

For all his apparent faults, Harlan has a gift that almost nobody else in this fan-turned-pro status possesses. He's liked, sometimes grudgingly or secretly, but almost always liked, by virtually everyone who really knows him. The ones who write bitterly about Harlan are those whom he encounters only briefly once a year at a worlcon. Tucker has the same knack of winning affection, so does Bloch, maybe two or three others qualify, and what of all the other scores of fans who have become pros and have either patronized or ignored fandom ever since? Fans think as little of them as they think of fandom.

The main bone that I would pick with Harlan's speech...is the reliance on the old assumption that there is something lost when a science fiction writer creates a fine mainstream novel. Some of us are old enough to have experienced the years when we wished desperately that more good science fiction could be written simply in order to make it more popular in the world at large and to increase the total amount of science fiction emerging from the presses. Most of us went thru the state of wanting nothing but science fiction because we were thinking for the first time a lot about how the world might change in the future and what it'll be like when we get to the planets. All but the most recent discoverers of science fiction have found the novelty of science fiction worn away into a patina of old familiarity now. I've reached a condition in which I don't care if a fine new novel is science fiction or mainstream and I'd hate to see any science fiction author restraining himself from creating first-rate mainstream writing, simply because of some old admonition from his superego that he owes a duty to science fiction.

Your article on editing might prove useful to the talented people who don't have much experience in the science fiction prozine milieu and aren't aware of the particlure preferences and dislikes of the magazine's management. Even if you didn't intend it, you scattered a good deal of this information into the article. It might also fascinate the people who like to try to figure out the impulses that cause other people to tick, because it reveals so plainly that a great deal of people still try to sell to the prozines. This surprises me, because the financial rewards for writing for the prozines have not kept pace with the general increase in labor rates over the years and now, with income taxes and all the companion evils lurking for the person who makes some money, it's hardly the sort of work that attracts a person's interest because he needs money. Nor is it the prestige lure that it once was, when the person who wanted to be known as a writer could gain the admiration of his neighbors and relatives most readily in the magazines,

because they were the things most people picked up when they wanted to read something other than the newspaper.

My only complaint about your article is its failure to point out that some of the things that are wrong with stories when they're submitted to F&SF might not disqualify them from being publishable and even superlative stories in other markets. I detest stories about deals with the devil as much as anyone who holds a share of stock in a publishing firm, but I still think that Thomas Mann did a sufficiently great job with that hated theme to justify an exception for Doctor Faustus. Aldous Huxley novels would frequently fit into the third type which you describe as a dialogue that drowns the plot and characters. And even a short story that is well done will frequently defy your first type, "a mere incident, with no beginning, middle or end." All the way from Chekhov to today's New Yorker, an incident can make a great story if the writer himself is fully aware of what happened before and will happen after that incident and colors his telling of the incident through this knowledge clearly enough to convey the background and potentialities of the event to the reader.

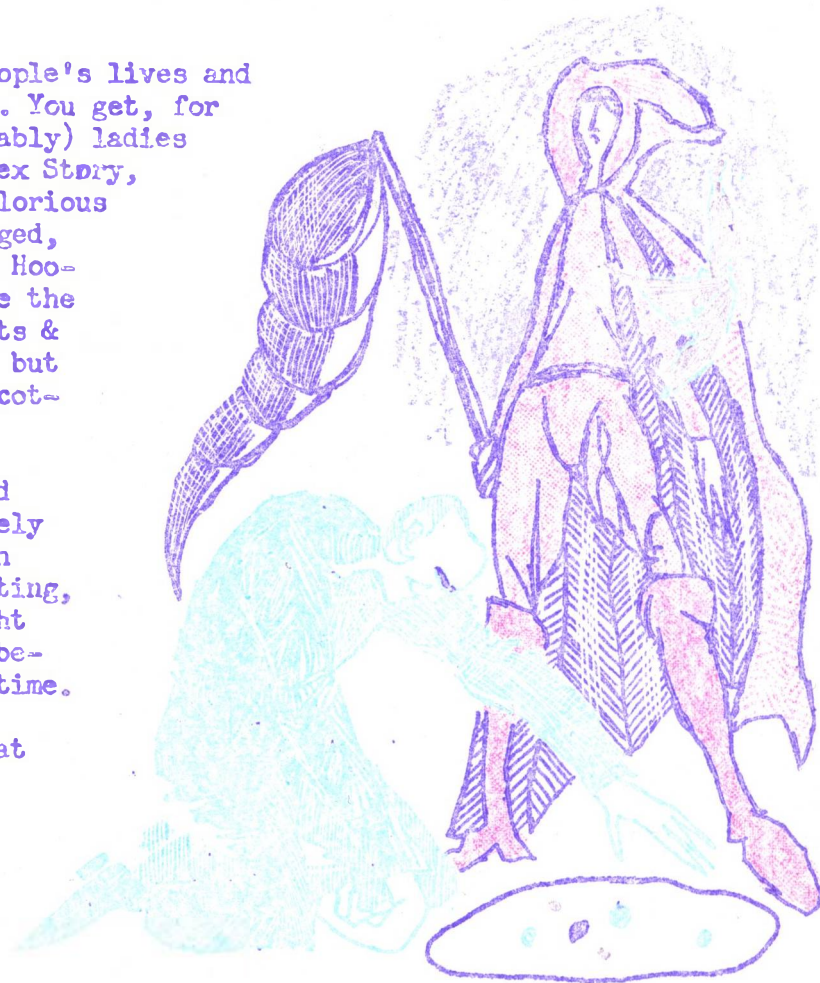
— Harry Warner, Jr.

((Regrettably, the vast majority of people submitting to the F&SF slushpile are complete uninitiates into the world of publishing. Frequent references to "a little extra money" that can be picked up through publishing stories are fairly frequent. So, too, are those who ask that you print their story as payment; they consider money to be secondary to getting into print.

Considerable insight into people's lives and existences is a common thing. You get, for instance, little old (presumably) ladies writing the Great American Sex Story, never realizing that their glorious manuscript must be read, judged, accepted -- or rejected by a Hoo-man Beein; shocking! How dare the editor read my Innermost Thots & Desires! That thought, alas, but rarely passes through their cotton stuffed heads.

Regrettable, too, is the find that 12,000 words of moderately well-written story ends in an Adam/Eve, punchline, downbeating, or similar end. It's downright frustrating, not to mention being a considerable waste of time.

And the amount of stories that are mere incidents, well-written incidents, are decidedly rare. I'm afraid, Harry, that 99.9% of the incident-type of stories that I read are just plain old rotten writing, no matter whose school of writing you pick.))



Joe L. Hensley, 2315 Blockmore, Madison, Indiana 47250 I've known Harlan for a long time. He's been here in Madison several times and I visited him in Chicago when he was with Hamling, and once, by pure chance, we met at Cincinnati, both of us on our way to New York, and we managed with the help of Larry Shaw and others to tear up the town pretty well.

I want to point out quite carefully that there is no element of necessity in our friendship. I'm a small town lawyer and it's an odd year when more than one to ten percent of my income comes from writing, and I strongly suspect that I could give it up and hardly anyone would notice -- except me for a tiny while. I'm at the place where time stolen for writing is time that could be used for cases. I belong to things like Rotary and the Chamber of Commerce. I'm past Exalted Ruler of the Elks and I'm asked to lead community fund drives. I play golf and I wear dark suits and I'm forty-one years old and square. I've been in the legislature and I've been a prosecutor and now I'm county attorney. I make an excellent living as an attorney, but I write. Maybe I've sold forty stories and one novel over the past ten years or so. I guess it's about that. The funny thing about me is that I'm not about to kiss anyone's ying-yang to sell more of them.

So I don't need Harlan. And Harlan, Lord knows, doesn't need me.

A long time back we collaborated on a few stories and we had some fun doing it. I refuse to go into the way we collaborated for it would scare hell out of you all, but the stories sold and one of them got an honorable from Judy.

I like a lot of people. I like Gordie Dickson and he could have my shirt. I like Cogswell and Avram and Randy, Judy, Damon, Kate, A.J., Tucker, Ted, and Terry and the rest, and they could split my pants (except for Judy -- I'm trying to quit). These people are great people and they are, for the most part, secure.

I like Harlan in a special way. He is my friend and I'd drop it all tomorrow if he needed me and there was something I could do for him. I think his talent is worth protecting, worth encouraging and that some day he will be the best of us all (if he isn't already). You see he keeps getting better and better and better and...

Harlan is bright and twiggy, able and nuts. He's maturing and I keep wondering where this will lead to and what the finished product will do. I don't think we've reached the end of the affair.

He lives in a place I've never reached, and I'm not talking about geography. He exists on a plane that I can't explore, hearing the different drum. I don't want his wild world, but his stories make me curious about it.

I get a kick out of some of fandom, some of the fans, for I can remember when Tucker was leading a tongue in cheek deal to remove staples from magazines, and I can remember Ackerman when his collection took up one room, hell, I can remember Degler. People move on, and that which was yesterday is not today. Harlan is maybe the best I've seen. He wasn't yesterday, but he is perhaps today. I keep waiting, with glee, for tomorrow. I think Roger is great and I keep hoping he'll be greater and maybe he will. I'm a Heinlein man and I like Vonnegut's stuff. But Harlan I read again and again and let the chaff blow with the wind. I think that Ted and Terry and Alex Panshin will make it.

But Harlan's something special. There are a few people who can see this poi-

somed world for what it is. Harlan does sometimes, and the times get more and more and better.

As I said before, I keep looking forward, with some degree of glee and some degree of trepidation, towards tomorrow...

-- Joe L. Hensley

Darroll Pardoe, 95 East 12th Street, Columbus, Ohio 43201

It's nice to get a readable spirit duplicated fanzine for a change; it's pretty tedious usually, trying to read both sides of a page at the same time -- or trying not, rather.

You seem strangely misinformed about current events in Britain. It is true, though, that British fan-publishers are at a pretty low ebb at the moment. A genuine revival over there, such as you suggest is happening in the US, would be a good thing. So would a revival of any kind of real fan publishing. Our only home grown apa, OMPA, has been dormant for over a year, and while there is a possibility of its revival, it may well die altogether. The only other organization, PaDS, isn't an apa, really, in the usual sense. There are perhaps 9 or 10 fanzines currently produced through PaDS, and unfortunately they all look and read exactly like each other (with one exception). Outside PaDS there's really only myself, Ethel Lindsay, and Weston, all producing quite different things. So the ordinary common or garden genzine is an almost extinct breed in Britain at the moment. An unfortunate state of affairs, but inevitable with the present peculiar setup in British fandom.

I must comment on Dick Lupoff's book reviews, which cover a very interesting range of subjects, and not only that, but deal with the books mentioned in such an interesting way as to tempt me to go out and look for them myself, which takes some doing, I tell 'ee.

Thle Ellison pieces were interesting, but as I know Harlan Ellison only from what I've read about him, I find it difficult to comment. But a man who can deliver a fine speech like the one you printed extempore, which will stand up to reading afterwards, must be quite remarkable.

Maybe Arnie is right in his letter about the discouragement in genzine publishing. Far too many people just will not respond to a fanzine in any way whatsoever. You'd think folk would make the effort to send a postcard or something, just to show you that they at least received the fmz, even if they don't want to



comment or anything; but they don't even do that. So all too often the publisher asks himself what the point of it all is, and throws in the towel. Although, once a fanzine gets well enough known, I suppose that the opposite occurs and the publisher is overwhelmed by more folk on his mailing list than he can possibly handle adequately. Hasn't happened to me yet, though. --slainte, Darroll

##Sure hasn't happened to me, either. In fact, this issue I'm really bugged that I've received almost no replies, no response whatsoever. Having mailed out and sent off over 200 copies, I have perhaps a dozen letters, 2 articles which I managed to coerce two people into writing, and absolutely no encouragement from fandom in general. I sent out copies with specific boxes checked in the why-you-are-getting-this department; letters of comment wanted, articles, artwork, fiction, what have you. The response, as I've already indicated, has been next to nothing, which certainly doesn't encourage me to produce more issues. I got a 32-word paragraph from Ned Brooks, who I had invited to do an article on Cordwainer Smith. So much for that (a comprehensive article finally did appear, in Australian Science Fiction Review). And, unfortunately, much of the comment that was written was on Stephen Pickering, and I have deleted all of that from the letters that I have printed. The letter-writers in the WAHF department concerned themselves almost exclusively with Pickering or SFWeekly, my other fanzine, and I certainly can't print something that might be completely esoteric and totally uninteresting, as far as my other readers are concerned.

I am concerned with the state of science fiction; rather vitally so. A large percentage of my income comes from the stuff; as assistant editor at Fantasy & Science Fiction, and Associate Editor at Lancer Books, I'm pretty well committed to any and all aspects of the genre. And perhaps next issue, in addition to many letters on the contents, more comments by Arnie Katz on Lin Carter and the N3F, and other wonderful topics, I'll have a whole batch of articles and reviews and the like on science fiction, written by readers of Algol who are really interested in expressing themselves and their opinions and what they think of the subject. And then again, if the current trend continues, and I may use the rather tired but true fanism, Maybe Not.))

Ted White, 339 49th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11220 In truth, this is a fine, solid issue. The Harlan Ellison Section is excellent. The balance of pieces by Rotsler, Leeh, Silverberg and myself turned out well, and provide a solid prologue to Harlan's speech.

Of the remaining material, the stuff about Pickering is unfortunate in light of subsequent developments. I've always enjoyed making sport of people who so obviously and determinedly lend themselves to it, but I can't really enjoy it if indeed I do pity the person in question. That would be like kicking cripples for fun. While Pickering was no more than an obnoxious, over-pompous adolescent, I could enjoy a few jabs in his direction (although it had worn thin by early last fall). But now that he is revealed as a severely disturbed personality, I feel rather remorseful for having picked on him at all.

"Fatman" rivals John Boardman's Tarzan satire in the REALIST of some years past for the best thing I've read by him. I wish John would do more satire and less polemics.

Your "Neither Rain Nor Snow" plows familiar ground, but I must disagree with you about plotting books. There are two basic ways to plot a book. One is to plan the plotline of the book in advance. The other is to let the book plot itself. Very

few people do the latter. In most cases even when a book is "plotting itself" the author has a general idea of how it will end, or of the territory it will cover. And among those who plot out a book in advance, not all write outlines. Lester del Rey, for instance, has told me he mulls over the plot of a book until every single detail is fixed in his mind. Then he will devote himself to writing it in a single sustained burst of energy that may last thirty-six to seventy-two hours.

I collect "author-habits" because I am fascinated by the different ways various writers approach the problem and process of writing a book. I have talked to a variety of writers about their processes.

The two methods of plotting I mentioned above really boil down (in their extremes) to Intuitive plotting and Intellectualized plotting. The former takes place almost exclusively in the author's subconscious, and may present him with occasional surprises. The latter is all worked out in a fashion calculated to create a good and working story in the author's mind, either to remain there or to be jotted down as notes prepreatory to writing the book.

Most authors don't hew entirely to one method or the other. An author as intuitive as Roger Zelazny ("Call Me Conrad"'s ending came as a surprise to him) still sets himself goals and objectives (in "Conrad": a division of the work into sections, each of which would include an action-fight scene). And although you cite me as an example of some one who fully plots his books in advance, and Android Avenger as an example of such a book, the fact is that the first three chapters were written in 1961 without any idea of where the plot would go, and that although I worked out a rough plot for the rest of the book, it did not work, and I abandoned it to write, from chapter four on, a book in which I literally did not know what would happen in any chapter beyond that which I was presently writing. Not until I reached chapter thirteen had I any solid notion of how I'd end the book.

Actually, all my early books (with the exception of INVASION FROM 2500, which was plotted in collaboration with Terry Carr) were constructed in the following manner: First, I wrote an opening chapter or two which set up an intriguing (for me, anyway) cast of characters in an intriguing situation. Then I paused to figure out where the book could go from there. After that, I wrote an outline of the remaining plot and sold the book. Then I wrote the remainder, often making changes in the outlined action as I went along. Android Avenger, Phoenix Prime, The Jewels Of Elsewhen, and Secret Of The Marauder Satellite were all written in this fashion, as was When In Rome, or whatever it will be titled, with Dave Van Arnam. Also Probe Into Yesterday, the as-yet-unsold collaboration with Lee Hoffman. However, as I noted, sometimes I've thrown out the outline and written blind, as with AA. PP was expanded from a projected 45,000 words to 60,000 words, with some surprises for me. Jewels required entirely scrapping several false starts and writing a book roughly parallel to the outline. Marauder Satellite turned into an entirely different book than the one I set out to write (and that was an improvement). I wrote Captain America (out from Bantam sometime soon) without any outline or worked out plot at all. I knew the crime in question, and I knew the villain, and that was all I knew. The rest was plotted "by the book" itself. Etc.

Your objections to the two books of mine you mentioned (AA, PP) that the characters are manipulated into the action is an objection that has nothing to do with the way the books are plotted. That happens to be the kind of story that I am moderately fond of, and that is the kind of story I like to write upon occasion. Jewels is another case, and so is When In Rome. In fact, the latter book is the ultimate

reducto of that kind of book: the protagonist is a catalyst who presense precipitates action, but who controls almost none of it himself. But you are confusing author manipulations with character manipulations. In AA, Bob Tanner (ugh!) is an android under the periodic control of a murderer. I am not manipulating him in order to fit him into a prescribed plot; the murderer is manipulating him in order to carry out his own plan. It is Tanner's task to find the murderer and put a stop to his manipulations. If I manipulated Tanner at all, it was only to have him so shook up by the execution at the book's beginning that he slips and falls, and thusly ends up in the hospital. And I will admit that was a little clumsy on my part. Give me credit for having learned a little since 1961...

To boil it down, the reason you like Lee Hoffman's books better is not because she plots differently (Lee has tried a variety of ways, as have we all), but because (Ifrwely admit) she is by far the better writer of tht two of us. I greatly admire Lee as a writer, and I have been turned on by all but one of her books (Black-Jack Sam, which I still enjoyed moderately). I'd recommend her new science fiction novels (the first is Telepower, half a Belmont double) highly, and I think her westerns are among the best I've read. If I could write as weal as Lee, you'd find no complaint with my means of plotting.

One other note on your article: It is true Norman Kagan submitted manuscripts that were incredible in the number of typos, misspellings and gramatical errors they contained, but this did not put me off greatly when I first encountered "The Fourth Impossible," the first story he submitted to F&SF. He was good enough a writer that with the opening paragraph I was hooked, and I read straight through with enjoyment, and passed it on to Avram, who was then Editor. Avram bought it. When "The Earth Merchants" came in, I scanned the opening pages and then sent it on to Avram with the assumption that since he'd want to see it anyway, I needn't bother wasting time reading it. Sure enough, he bought it. And I copyedited it. Among established pros, Gordon Dickson is nearly as bad. I heard once that Fred Pohl docked his word-rate to make up for the heavy copyediting necessary. I don't think a messy ms. puts an editor off when the story is a good one; it just discourages an editor when the story isn't.

Harry Warner suggests (in the lettercol) that sf should try a POPULAR PHOTOGRAPHY or HIGH FIDELITY-type magazine, supported by advertisers. By which advertisers? ANALOG tried. They went large size entirely so that it could take ads prepared for magazines like SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN. And it didn't get them. There are hundreds of photography-equipment manufacturers and hifi component manufacturers ready and willing to advertise their products copiously. But they have no counterparts in the sf world. The closest would be book publishers. Most book publishers are stingy, and few spend much money in promotion of an sf book. Why, when Doubleday was promoting Harlan Ellison's Dangerous Visions (a book it has accorded more promotion than it has its other sf books) it was still too stingy to set its own type for an \$8.00 ad in the Nycon3 PROGRAM BOOK. Can you see Doubleday and its ilk supporting a POPULAR SCIENCE FICTION magazine with ads?

I must disagree with Coulson about the difference between style and content. When someone writes an article in which his sentences are confusing and make little sense, and his paragraphs have no logical connection, either internally or from one to the next, is this style, or content? If it is style, it is a case of style occluding content. I prefer to think that it's a case of neither being adequate.

— All best, Ted White

((Regrettably, the vast delay between issues of this august journal results in such as my article on editing, written in the summer of 1966, over a year and

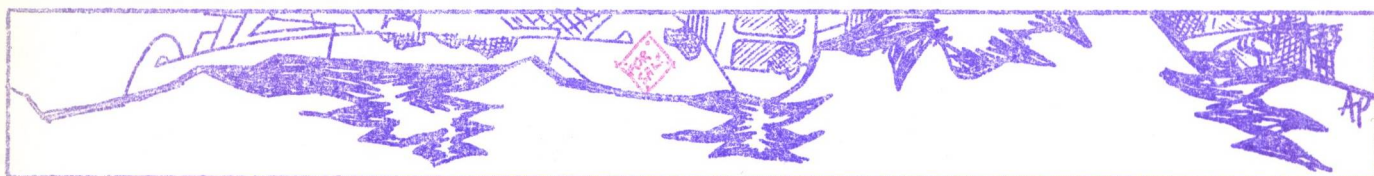
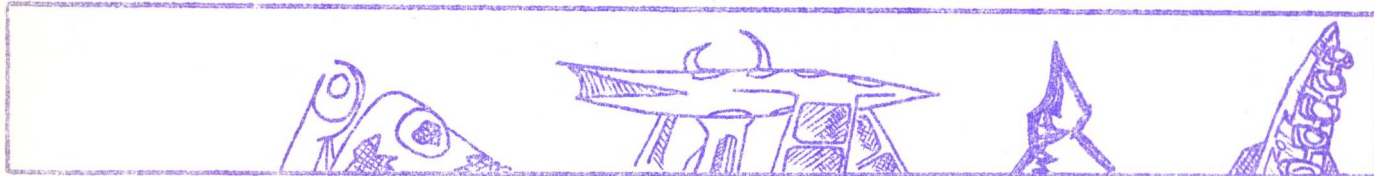
a half ago, valiantly taking the brunt of reactions published at this late date. I have learned quite a bit about the gentle art of editing since I wrote the thing, and in fact could write quite a different and more complex article on it now; I may have to, if response to this issue is anything like response to the Ellish.

I think that you're right; I have been confusing author and character manipulation. On reflection, I can see how this blurring of the two into one has led me down devious alley-ways which really don't exist. A most confusing situation both for myself and those attempting to follow my line of reasoning.

Your informative and enlightening explanation of your and others' means of plotting was informative and enlightening, not to mention plain interesting. I have since read Telepower, and in fact have reviewed it elsewhere (nothing like forcing yourself to do a critical review to make you know exactly why you like -- or don't, as the case may be -- a book!) with the careful thought that it's the best short novel I've read since The Dragon Masters. Lee certainly is proving herself an accomplished writer -- it's a wonder that she wasn't writing years earlier -- and the best woman writer in many years.

While incredibly misspelled, typo-ridden manuscripts are common, very few, alas, are worthy of more than a rejection slip. Sometimes a story -- incredible misspellings, typos, and all -- is really worth reading to the end, in the hope that this is the one, the ms. that will make 5 1/2 hours of terrible prose worth it for the day. And, once or twice amonth, I come across one like that -- a story that I read right through -- and pass it on, with suitable notes for the benefit of Ed Ferman. Such a story, incidentally, is the Chip Delany (a recent review in Analog, plus one in the London Times have misspelled poor Chip's name; he is One with Lester ~~del~~ del Rey and Isaac Azimov, as they say) short in this issue. Fraught with typos, pungent with misspellings, I nevertheless struggled through it and really liked the thing, enough to rally to the task of translating it onto stencil, hopefully with a lot fewer typos than it had originally. We shall see. Or maybe not...}}

WE ALSO HEARD FROM: CW "Ned" Brooks: "there's nothing I feel moved to comment at length on..." Shirley Meech: "Is this all it takes to receive the next Algol?..." Bill Mallardi: "It's STILES FOR TAFF!" Milt Stevens: "Lupoff's Book Week was interesting as usual." Ron Whittington: "...utter inanity..." So much for quoting out-of-context. Remember, vote Stiles For TAFF & St. Louis in '69!



THE PENULTIMATE TRUTH

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- ☐ You're mentioned in this issue; would you care to comment?
- ☐ You're not mentioned in this issue, but you will get the next issue if you send me a letter of comment. ☐ You are Ray Fisher or Steve Stiles.
- ☐ You are known far and wide for your article/fan fiction/column writing; I'd really appreciate any contribution you'd care to send me.
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