ALGOL

THE MAGAZINE ABOUT SCIENCE FICTION

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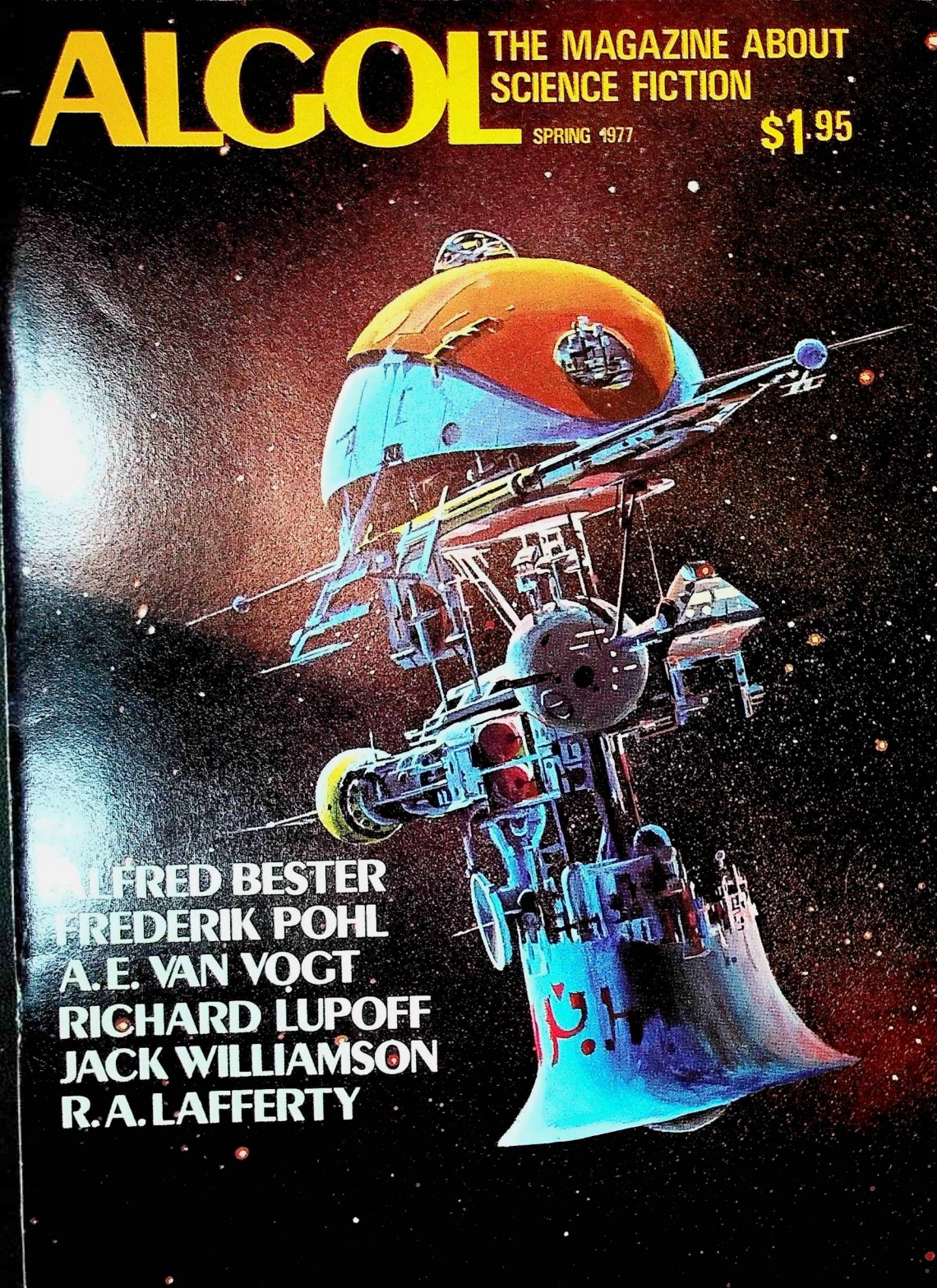

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ALGOL

THE MAGAZINE ABOUT SCIENCE FICTION

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ARTWORK

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BEATLEJUICE BEATLEJUICE

DAMN THE TORPEDOES, FULL SPEED AHEAD: ALGOL is not a fanzine, but rather a magazine. In the past, ALGOL was a fanzine, but like all good things it has emerged into adulthood. Adolescence is past, and the ink-stained mantle of adolescence is cast aside (where it falls on the broad young shoulders of Mike Bracken's *Knights of the Paper Starship*). ALGOL will not be eligible for the Amateur Magazine Hugo nominations or awards; if ALGOL is to be nominated, and perchance to win the Hugo award, it will be in the deep seas of science fiction where the lean sharkships, the mighty but ponderous freighters, the unimaginable dreadnoughts lurk. ALGOL has passed out of the shallows, beyond the shoals and coastal waterways, and is playing at life with the big guys.

ALGOL cordially invites *Science Fiction Review* and *Locus*, both of which make more money than ALGOL does—enough to support their publishers, in fact—to get their feet wet and come out and join ALGOL on the deep seas of SF. If they have the nerve.

GOODBYE SINGAPORE AND THE STRAITS OF GIBRALTER: In keeping with the above paragraph, I have to announce that ALGOL is withdrawing its task forces to the northern reaches of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, with a tenuous thread of convoys extended to Fortress Europe (that has a nice sound to it today, but people of Howard DeVore's generation might have a different view). Since last issue, when I cast loose England to the maddened monsters of inflation, I have relinquished my hold on another bastion of the commonwealth of fan-nations: the sunny climes and wombat forts of Australia.

The cost of foreign postage being what it is, and inflation, devaluation and hard-headed business choices being what they are, it's no longer economical, from a business as well as a fannish sense, to maintain agencies for ALGOL in the far-flung corners of the world. People in Australia will have to send International Money Orders to ALGOL in the US if they want to subscribe. Those few well-off fans still living in the bomb-scarred warrens beneath the Towers of London will have to do likewise to ALGOL or to Waldemar Kumming in Germany. Waldemar, who remains commander-in-charge of Fortress Europe, is buttressed by the engineering skills of a whole round-up of fans in Munich, and the firepower of seventeen divisions of Deutschmarks. Thus Waldemar Kumming remains ALGOL's sole foreign agent.

Canada, for personal and political reasons as detailed in last issue's ALGOL's People, retains its special and privileged status, with its agent remaining one Andrew Porter.

HELP WANTED: As of last October, I again have a full time job. This means that ALGOL again retreats to a position of weekend and evening occupation, for the present at least. For almost two years, as ALGOL's circulation doubled (and the paperwork quadrupled), I tried to make a go of ALGOL as a full-fledged business, but I honestly couldn't have lasted without unemployment insurance to pay the food and rent bills.

Now that I'm working full time again, time rather than money is at a premium. Other than Steve Antell, next door neighbor and good friend (and the indulgence of his non-fan wife Virginia), helping hands for the physical work of stuffing and sealing ALGOLs in envelopes are very rare. If you're interested in helping me at this three-time-a-year chore, meeting the fabulous editor of ALGOL, getting a tour of scenic Brooklyn Heights, and maybe even seeing a few other ALGOL addicts, drop me word at the P.O. Box. I can sure use and will gladly accept any help offered.

LETTERS EQUAL EGOBOO: ALGOL's readers are gently reminded that letters of comment telling me what was right and what was wrong with the issue are always welcome, and in fact eagerly faunched after. Also, published letters of comment get readers and subscribers a *free* copy or one issue extension of their subscriptions, whichever. Finally, the unimaginable joy of egoboo from having your name in print is an experience which has to be experienced to be believed.

RIGHTS FOR ARTISTS AND WRITERS: SF readers tend to take cover artwork for granted. True, they're more conversant with cover artwork and artists than in any other publishing field. They're aware of problems that editors, authors, artists and art directors have on the long road from concept to printed page. They hear leading artists speak at SF conventions, and fanzines and prozines both talk about artwork. Betty Ballantine, writing in *Publishers Weekly*, said "SF fans are ... the publisher's dream readers. Knowledgeable, articulate, informed and self-propelled, they will aggressively seek out books they want, and talk endlessly to one another about their favorite authors and artists. They are the ones who are making 'illustration' the real art form it is returning to today."

Very true, and very observant of one of the great women of science fiction. But there's a darker side to the publishing of SF that many, in fact most SF readers—and that includes

fans—aren't aware of. That's the legal side of the business, the facts of copyrights and contracts and permissions and who-owns-what. I'd originally planned to do a column about the legal side of publishing in *Locus*, but the publisher of this esteemed journal is more understanding—pays better, too—and so these comments will appear here, in this and future issues.

For instance, one common practice of publishers (though it's slowly passing out of use) is that of retaining possession of artwork after it's been used for a book or magazine. The art is kept for use as pretty wall decorations for the executive offices or even stored away and forgotten (as Ace Books used to do), or, frequently, sold to international commercial art agencies or foreign publishers who use it because it's cheaper than commissioning art from local artists. If a publisher has the right connections, they can even make back the cost of buying the artwork in the first place from their foreign sales.

The artist, of course, gets nothing from these foreign sales, and is usually unaware of the foreign use of his artwork.

Another common practice for publishers is to use the same cover artwork when reprinting a book or publishing a new edition. Although the writer earns royalties based on the number of copies sold of each printing, the artist receives nothing for these additional uses of his work.

Recently a gallery opened here in New York devoted to media artwork: that is, art used as book and magazine covers, for interior illustrations, record covers, in advertising, etc. Not the so-called fine art of museums and normal galleries, but rather the art used in everyday life, in magazines and airline commercials, etc. The art is for sale, and prices range from several hundred to several thousand dollars. Obviously, if the publishers keep it, it's impossible for the artist to realize the full monetary potential he's capable of earning from his work. This is, incidentally, a mundane application of what's been happening at conventions for years, where artists display and sell artwork which has appeared on magazine and paperback covers, often for more money than they received from the publisher. And, that in turn is a slow outgrowth of a dying tradition, epitomized by the fact that the 1976 World SF Convention, the first in many years, had no auctions of art or manuscripts, because the publishers, rather than donating art or manuscripts without asking permission of artists or writers, are now returning them to their original owners.

Sometimes publishers will assign copyrights—this magazine has such a provision in the contract it makes with authors—or will place a copyright notice for the cover artwork directly on the contents page, thus putting aside all claims to copyright and/or ownership, for future uses of the artwork. This practice is generally uncommon, in all honesty, and leads into the largest grey area of all in the use of artwork.

Once a book is published, it's featured in advertising, in reviews, in publicity in general. What better way to display, to *sell* a book than to display its cover? And that's where the problem, the confusion, and the controversy arises. A book—the words in the book that all together make it a *book* and not a notepad—is covered by copyright. For purposes of review, it's commonly held that no more than 500 words may be quoted without infringing on the copyright held by author or publisher. Five hundred words out of sixty thousand, for a genre or SF novel, comes to less than 1% of the book.

The cover artwork isn't treated as clearly. Obviously, when you publish a picture of the cover of a book, you're printing the entire work—100% of the art, not just a small percentage of it. And usually when the cover is featured in a review—in, for example and within our genre, *Delap's F&SF Review*—the copyright line that covers the entire

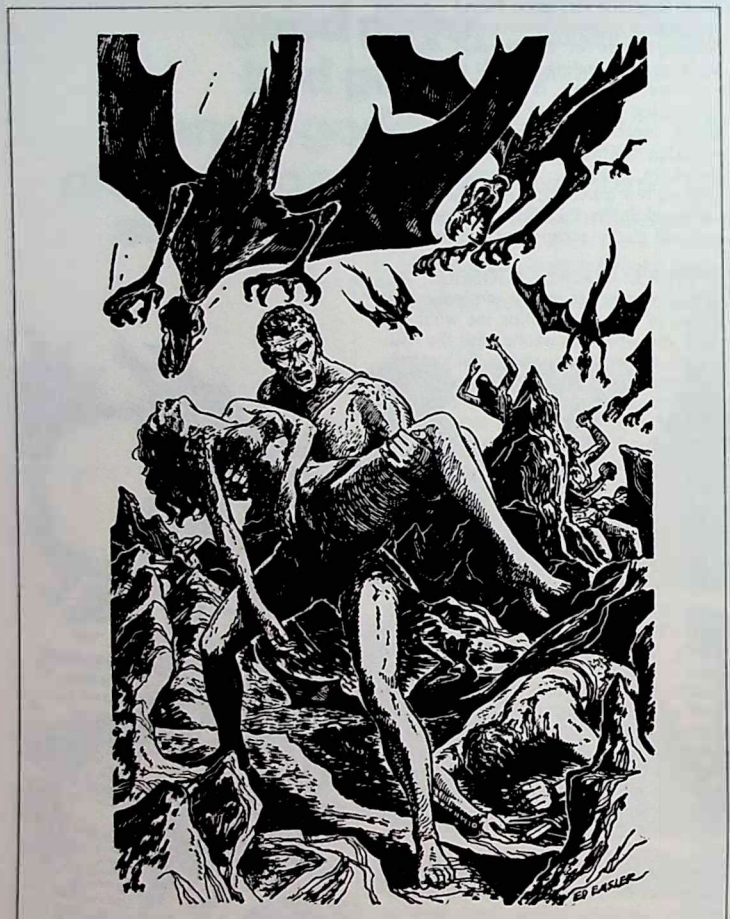

Illustration by Ed Emsh from SCIENCE FICTION ART. Compiled and Introduced by Brian Aldiss. A Bounty Book from Crown Publishers, Inc.

PRESS RELEASE from Crown Publishers. I thought this artwork was copyrighted, but evidently the publisher of this book doesn't care. Printed in Spain and imported into the USA, is it really copyrighted? A good question, which I will talk about next issue.

work is omitted, although the artist may be given credit.

Advertising gets similar treatment. Generally the copyright of a publication that carries an ad that features a book cover is assumed to cover the advertising as well, though some advertisers—just to cover all bases—will put a copyright notice for themselves in a corner of the ad. But of course ads are traded around and appear in various places and are treated as less than sacred by most publishers.

What this boils down to is that the contents of a book are treated as sacrosanct, and the full power of the legal profession is brought to bear on anyone who trespasses on those contents by violating any of the legal conditions set forth in the copyright laws. But when the cover picture is printed *without* a copyright line in a review; when the publisher floods review media with reproductions of his book cover hoping it'll be published *somewhere*—even if there's no credit line; when the publisher decides to reprint a book knowing the artist gets nothing for a new edition; then the legalities are cast aside in the hope of greater exposure, greater publicity, more sales and profits.

You can imagine how artists feel when their works are published without credit, without the protection afforded by a copyright notice; when the reproduction rights are sold without their knowledge and without additional payment to a foreign publisher; when the art is reused by a publisher and the author gets additional royalties, but the artist gets nothing; when the publisher keeps the artwork, although the artist could get double or triple the payment he received for publication rights by selling the artwork to a collector.

Finally, there's a fairly new practice emerging in the field: the wholesale reprinting of artwork in books about SF without the permission of the artists or the original publishers and holders of the copyrights. This is very definitely illegal and a violation of existing and the new copyright laws. More about this next issue.

In future issues, I'm going to talk about the new copyright laws and how they'll affect SF (and all) publishing; protecting the hundreds of new type designs legally; and lots of other things that go into making the legal agreements and foundation for the SF you buy in your local bookstore.

THE ISSUE: Last issue was the first at ALGOL's new printer in Ann Arbor. Because of the larger presses now available to ALGOL, the magazine has gone up to 64 pages plus covers. This issue marks the return to 8 point cover stock from last issue's 6 point, which didn't have the heft and feel that I think ALGOL's cover should have. One of the innovations in the works for future issues is a fold-out poster: I have hopes of having one this issue, but as I type these words I have the feeling that production problems, as well as a suitable subject, make the time too short to do justice to the project.

This issue also marks ALGOL's venture into the world of professional fiction. What I want to publish in ALGOL is the excerpt from a forthcoming novel, rather than the typical SF short story. Publishers, writers and agents willing, that's what ALGOL will do. But not this issue—hopefully starting next issue. I do want to say that ALGOL is *only* buying material by people who've been published before, professionally. I know this is going to bring tears to the eyes of some readers, but that's the way it's going to be. If you haven't published professionally—if you're not a member of the SFWA—then please *don't* send me your manuscripts. ALGOL is paying 3¢ a word for fiction. That's better than *Fantasy & Science Fiction, Amazing, Fantastic, Unearth,* and several other markets in the field. And ALGOL can guarantee the best graphics of any publication in the field for your stories.

This issue features the first "profile" of an author, rather than a straight interview. Think of it as adding background and color to what would otherwise be a simple question-and-answer format. I've got more of these coming up in future issues, including one with Andre Norton.

Elsewhere, resident art person Vincent DiFate, fresh from missed deadlines and missed sleep with the birth of his second son, Victor Joseph, (congratulations to Ro!), gets into the less representational artists, using as visual samples the artwork of Richard Powers. Next issue's cover is by Powers, and ties in with an interview with this major influence on SF art by Vincent. Susan Wood hits closer to home this issue, after having talked about the Australian Worldcon and British fanzines, by giving you some examples of the home-grown variety. Despite the inflation-caused death of "sticky quarters," as discussed by Terry Hughes in a recent issue of *Mota,* I'm sure the proper number of coins will bring one of these last outposts of a completely free press thumping into your mailbox. (Actually, the real reason for the death of sticky quarters isn't the inflationary prices fans charge for fanzines nowadays: it's the invention of Scotch brand transparent tape, which doesn't leave quarters sticky to the touch. Another example of tradition giving way to progress.) Fred Pohl gives us his first column. Fred comes with a long view of publishing, from that of a fan in the '30's to Hugo winning prozine editor to paperback editor. I think it's going to be interesting reading.

And that's the issue. I hope you enjoy reading it as much as I've enjoyed putting it together. I'll see you in the next issue, out in early summer.

—Andrew Porter, Editor/Publisher

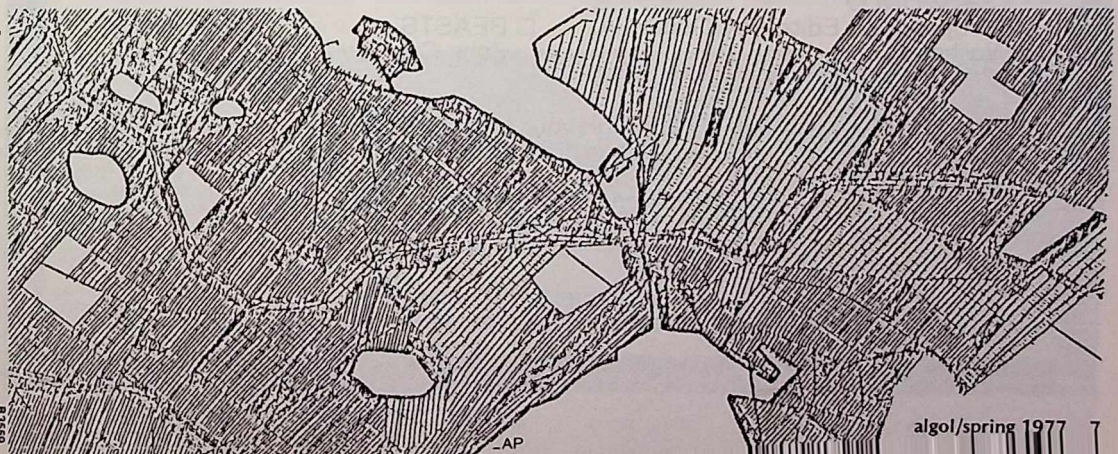

Photo courtesy NASA

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YOUTH AGAINST SPACE

JACK WILLIAMSON

To open on a personal note, Bob Heinlein is an old friend of mine. We met in Los Angeles not long after John Campbell published "Lifeline," his first short story. I was a Saturday-evening guest many times in his Laurel Canyon home at never-formal gatherings of the never-organized Manana Literary Society, where we sipped dry sherry and talked science fiction. Though I have seen him less often since Pearl Harbor broke up that little group, we have kept in touch. I admire him as one of the foremost shapers of modern science fiction, and I suspect that his most enduring work will turn out to be the dozen juvenile novels he wrote for Scribner's after the war.

Juvenile science fiction, as a labelled category, begins with Heinlein—though in fact most of the earlier magazine science fiction had been written for youthful readers and censored of anything likely to give offense. There had been new inventions too, in Tom Swift and the dime novels, but no real futurology. The Heinlein series was a pioneer effort, quickly imitated.

He was feeling his way with the first two books, finding his stride only with *Red Planet*, but that and the following novels represent his craftsmanship at its best. Based on solidly logical extrapolations of future technology and future human history, they are cleanly constructed and deftly written without the digressions and the preaching that often weaken the drama in his later work.

What I most admire about them is Heinlein's dogged faith in us and our destiny. No blind optimist, he is very much aware of evil days to come. His future worlds are often oppressively misruled, pinched by hunger and wasted by war. Yet his heroes are always using science and reason to solve problems, to escape the prison Earth, to seek and build better worlds.

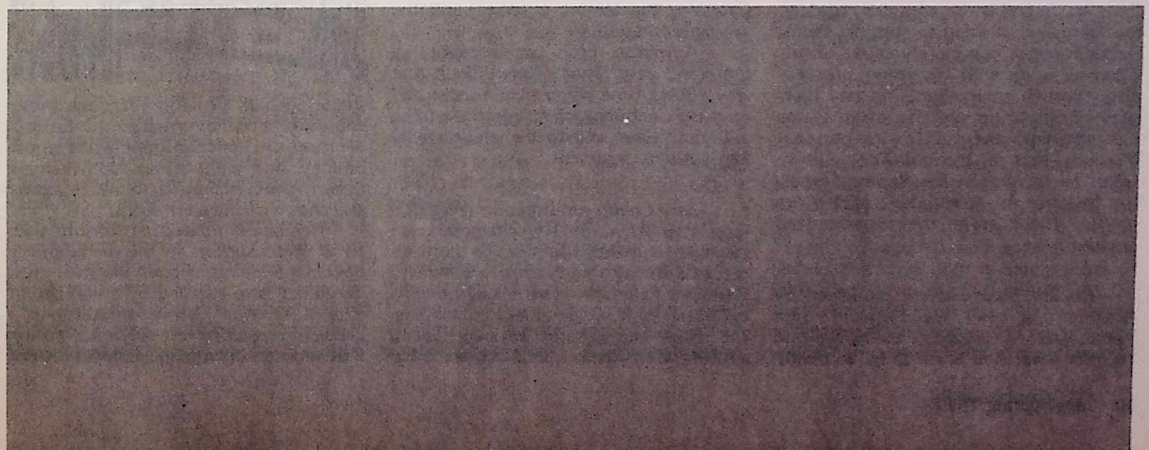
Taken altogether, the dozen books tell a generally consistent story of the future conquest of space. The first, *Rocket Ship Galileo*, begins in a back yard shortly after World War II, with three boys testing a primitive rocket motor. The last, *Have Space Suit—Will Travel*, ends with the triumphant return of its young hero from the Lesser Magellanic Cloud, where he has defended the human race before the judges of the Three Galaxies. Nobody has written a more convincing and inspiring future human epic.

Heinlein never writes down. His main characters are young, the plots move fast, and the style is limpidly clear; but he never insults the reader's intelligence. Rereading the novels for this paper, I found them as absorbing as ever; now and then I was deeply moved.

As exemplars of modern literature, they are of course open to criticism. None of them reflects the labor and the pain and the dedicated genius that James Joyce put into *Portrait of the Artist.* None of them offers the explicit sex now in fashion—Heinlein used to quarrel with Campbell's taboo on sex in *Astounding* and I believe he found his juvenile editors equally irksome. None

Illustrated by C. Ross Chamberlain

This article will appear as a chapter in "Robert A. Heinlein," part of the Writers of the 21st Century series, to be published by Taplinger Publishing Company later this year.



of them looks at the human condition with the dreary pessimism of the "new wave" school.

Another limit needs fuller comment. As Damon Knight and Alexei Panshin have remarked, Heinlein's heroes are pretty much all alike—all competent people. The protagonists of the juvenile novels are born bright, and we see them learning how to do everything. They mature into the all-around experts of his adult fiction and finally mellow into such extraordinary oldsters as Jubal Harshaw and Lazarus Long.

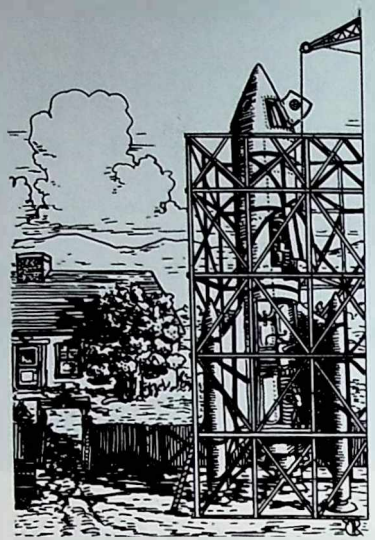
These efficient folk reflect Heinlein himself. Swift wrote *Gulliver's Travels* to satirize man's self-important faith in his own reason. Heinlein clearly belongs to the satirized camp, and his people embody the attitudes of the self-confident reasonable man, the scientist who yearns to know all about the universe and the technologist who toils to control it.

I suspect that this independent individualism can explain Heinlein's often-puzzling bits of irrational mysticism, for example the interludes in heaven in *Stranger in a Strange Land* and the climactic scene in *Starman Jones* when Max has a sense of the dead astrogator standing beside his chair to help him guide the lost ship back through the anomaly. Lacking any rational basis for belief in personal immortality, Heinlein and his heroes must either face the inevitability of death or somehow evade it. The long life of Lazarus Long looks like evasion, and the flashes of mysticism must be wishful escapes from the rational universe that neither the writer nor his people can finally master.

Actually, I think the super-competent characters serve Heinlein well. He is no Tolstoy, recording known life. His major motif has always been future technology, treated with some degree of optimism. The theme itself implies people who invent, build, use, and enjoy machines. Technological man has to be rational and competent.

Yet there's a conflict here that I don't think Heinlein has ever fully resolved. As evolving technologies become more and more complex, so does the teamwork needed to support them. Heinlein seems completely aware of this when he is carrying his young protagonists through their education and their rites of initiation, yet he often seems unhappy with the sacrifice of personal freedom that a technological culture seems to require. In *The Rolling Stones*, for instance, his competent people are in full flight from their mechanized environment.

Rocket Ship Galileo, published by Scribner's in 1947, was Heinlein's first book after he returned to Hollywood from his wartime work as an aeronautical research engineer in the Philadelphia Navy Yard. Earlier, there had been almost no market for science fiction outside the category pulps, but now he had begun widening its popularity with short stories in such high-circulation slicks as *Argosy* and *Saturday Evening Post*.



A sometimes fumbling experiment, the book does no more than suggest the bright appeal of the later titles. The plot is often trite, and the characters are generally thin stereotypes, with none of the colorful human beings and charming aliens soon to follow. Too, the book has dated badly. Anticipating the first flights to the moon, it's a poor prediction. The rocket builders work almost alone, on a tiny budget, with no seeming need for the vast NASA organization. The villains are Nazis, an idea perhaps not so badly worn in 1947 as it seems today. The spacecraft land horizontally, like airplanes, rather than on their tails. The action stops for science lectures not related to the story. Yet the book is still readable, with Heinlein's familiar themes already emerging. The military elite of *Starship Troopers* is implicit in what Cargrave, the atomic scientist, tells the young protagonists:

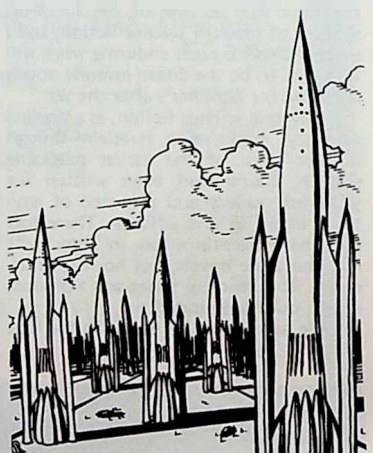
"American boys are brought up loose and easy. That's fine. I like it that way. But a time comes when loose and easy isn't enough, when you have to be willing to obey, and do it wholeheartedly and without argument."

Space Cadet, published in 1948, is a long step forward. The characters are stronger, and they use more of the wise-cracking dialog that gradually became a Heinlein hallmark. The background is carefully built, original and convincing, the story suspenseful enough. Set a century after *Rocket Ship Galileo*, it has few of the discrepancies with history that date the first book. Much of the interest comes from the Space Patrol itself, presented with detail and feeling that must reflect Heinlein's own Annapolis days.

Here he is already perfecting the *bildungsroman* form that shapes the whole series. His heroes are learning, maturing, discovering their social roles. The rite-of-passage pattern shows most clearly when Matt goes home from the Space Academy to find himself alienated from his own past.

He finds the house shrunk, his kid brother amused at his spaceman's walk, his mother terrified by his familiarity with orbital bombs, his father smugly certain that the Patrol would never bomb the North American Union, his girl interested in another man. In a moment of self-discovery, he changes his mind about resigning from the Patrol. "It was an accumulation of things—all of them adding up to just one idea, that little Mattie didn't live there any more."

The space aliens are already becoming a vital feature of the series. In the first novel, there is only the incidental discovery that the Moon had once been inhabited. In this one, we hear of the Martians, their ways of thinking different from our own. We see evidence that the asteroids are fragments of a lost planet,



shattered half a billion years ago by an explosion set off by intelligent creatures. We meet the Venerian amphibians whose biology and culture are convincingly drawn, though they lack the character and charm of the later aliens.

Heinlein's intellectual kinship with H. G. Wells appears in the theme of the novel: the idea that common men must be guided and guarded by a competent elite. Like Wells, he is something of a classicist; rejecting the romantic notion that society corrupts, he assumes instead

that we need social training to save us. I suppose this feeling was fostered by his own military training. Though stated with most force in *Starship Troopers*, it appears in such early stories as "The Roads Must Roll," and it becomes a basic premise for the *bildungsroman* pattern of the juveniles—a premise often in conflict with Heinlein's own deep sense of romantic individualism.

The code of the Patrol is the essence of the book, most moving in the tradition of letting the living answer for the dead at muster roll. The plot is built upon the process by which Matt is chosen, trained, and tested. The contrasting weakling is Burke, who scoffs at the code, resigns to join the selfish enterprises of his wealthy father, and gets himself and the Patrol into trouble through dishonorable behavior. *Space Cadet* inspired a successful TV series in the 1950s, and even now, in the anti-military aftermath of Viet Nam, it still reads well.

With *Red Planet*, published in 1940, Heinlein found his true direction for the series. The Martian setting is logically constructed and rich in convincing detail—done well enough to make us forget the failure of the Mariners and Vikings to find Percival Lowell's canals and the beings that built them. The characters are engaging and the action develops naturally. Here for the first time, Heinlein is making the most of his aliens.

Willis, the young Martian nymph, is completely real and completely delightful. The whole tone of the book is set by the constrasts between the selfish human bureaucrats who exploit the settlers and the courteous and benign Martians who save them.

The aliens and robots of science fiction are commonly interesting only as symbols of human traits and feelings, and Heinlein makes his extraterrestrials an important part of the symbolic structure. Sometimes they are antagonists; those in *Starman Jones* and *Time for the Stars* can stand for the hostility of untamed nature. But more commonly they are neutral or friendly, and they often serve as teachers for the maturing heroes.

The essential action of the *bildungsroman* is the process of conflict and growth that replaces native animal traits with social behavior. In *Red Planet*, the Company and its minions stand for the primitive self, the Martians for society. Like society itself, they are old but timeless, wise, bound by custom and tradition. Some of them are ghosts, transcending individual death as society does.

The Martians in this story have a special interest, because they are the educators of Michael Valentine Smith in another rite-of-passage novel, *Stranger in a Strange Land. Red Planet* is set a little later and we get to know the Martians better, but they display the same appalling powers that Smith brings back to Earth.

The Company, here, is pure greed. The colonists have been migrating from hemisphere to hemisphere to escape the savage Martian winters, but now the absentee officials plan to stop the migrations, enabling them to double the human population and make year-round use of the facilities. The harsh schoolmaster and other profit-minded Company men are plotting to sell Willis to the London zoo.

The settlers themselves are rugged frontier types, who wear guns as badges of social maturity. They are at the mercy of the Company, however, until Jim and his pal, with a spectacular assist from the Martians, are able to warn and rescue them. Since the action takes place in only a few days, Jim has little time for significant growth, but the action does test his maturing courage, tolerance, and altruism.

Farmer in the Sky, published in 1950, is a hymn to the pioneer. The sky frontier is on Ganymede, Jupiter's largest moon, but the plot parallels the familiar history of the colonization of America—the torch ship that carries the settlers from Earth is named the *Mayflower*.

As a novel of education, the book shows the creation of the rugged individualist. Heinlein uses point of view of unify action that covers half a billion miles of space and a good deal of time, letting Bill Lermer tell his own story in a relaxed conversational style. Bill is a Scout—the novel was serialized in *Boy's Life*—and Scout training helps to build his competent self-reliance. The contrasting characters are the incompetent misfits who expect society to solve their problems.

The story has a harsh realism for a juvenile. The immigrants leave the overpopulated Earth to escape hunger and the threat of war. They struggle to survive on a world never meant for men. More than half are killed by a destructive quake. They meet no friendly aliens, though, near the end, Bill and his friend discover a cache of machines left long ago by a mysterious space visitor. Not very important in the story, this incident does give the reader a welcome break from the grimly hostile setting.

The characters are live people. Bill's mother is dead; he finds his father's new wife hard to accept but becomes deeply attached to his new stepsister, a frail girl whose body can't adapt to the cruel new world.

Much of the interest comes from Heinlein's careful technological extrapolations. The novel household gadgets of his future century are unobtrusively presented. The torch ship is expertly engineered, and the problems of terraforming Ganymede are dramatized in fascinating detail. The idea of terraforming—of transforming an alien world to fit our terran needs—goes back at least to the air plants on Burroughs' Barsoom, but nobody in science fiction has explored the process more thoroughly than Heinlein does here. Ganymede, so far from the sun, must have a heat trap to warm it; ice enough to make a world-wide layer twenty feet deep must be processed for oxygen; rock must be ground to dust and seeded with terran bacteria for soil.

Between Planets, published in 1951, moves the series still farther from its juvenile origins toward grownup concerns. Though we meet the space-born hero while he is still a schoolboy in New Mexico, at the end of the novel he is a combat-tested fighting man with marriage in view. The magazine version of the story appeared in the general adventure magazine *Bluebook* instead of in *Boy's Life*, and the plot grows from the struggle for individual freedom that has become one of Heinlein's major themes.

His political philosophy, expressed here and in much of his later work, resembles that outlined eighty years ago by Brooks Adams in *The Law of Civilization and Decay*. In Adams' own words, "As the pressure of economic competition intensifies with social consolidation, the family regularly disintegrates, the children rejecting the parental authority at a steadily decreasing age; until, finally, the population fuses into a compact mass, in which all individuals are equal before the law, and all are forced to compete with each other for the means of subsistence." Adams admires the barbarians, whom he sees as family men, respecting women and children and the arts of war. He finds no good in the "economic man," who lost his primitive virtues and loves only money. On Heinlein's overcrowded and urbanized Earth, the family has given way to the central authority of the oppressive Federation, which rules and exploits all the planets.

Don Harvey unwittingly becomes a courier for a secret group of freedom plotters; unwillingly, he is involved in a revolt of the human colonists on Venus that seems loosely patterned after the American Revolution. Though some of the action is pretty traditional space opera, the characters are ably drawn and Heinlein closes the novel with a vigorous statement of his unhappiness with "the historical imperative of the last two centuries, the withering away of individual freedom under larger and [ever] more pervasive organizations, both governmental and quasi-governmental."

The Venerian "dragons"—Heinlein seems to scorn the euphemistic term Venusian—are among his most appealing and most convincing space aliens, serving as powerful symbols for his freedom theme. "Sir Isaac Newton" is an enormous long-tailed saurian whose ancestors evolved in the seas of Venus; he has learned to supplement his whistled native "true speech" with an elaborately formal sort of English spoken through a voder and with a Cockney accent. He is a brilliant physicist, a courteous host, a staunch defender of individual liberty, and a loyal friend to Don Harvey, whose mother's family came from Venus. The extended family is the Venerian social unit, and Sir Isaac stands for all the city-threatened values that Heinlein and Brooks Adams admire.

Though the theme is strong, it is never allowed to overwhelm the story, as sometimes happens in Heinlein's later work. No matter how much he dislikes the urbanization and the centralized social discipline that seem to be essential for the flowering of technology, he still loves the technological gadgetry itself. The whole background is well imagined, the story told with zest. It hardly matters that Venus is now no longer the humid jungle planet we all used to picture before the space probes began reporting temperatures too high for organic life.

The Rolling Stones, published in 1952, displays an enviable craftsmanship. The narrative is episodic and nearly plotless, a fact that Heinlein emphasizes with the contrast between the lives of his protagonists and the events of the melodramatic adventure serial they are writing about the Galactic Overlord. Discarding most of the standard devices for suspense, he is still able to compel the reader's interest in his lively people and their almost aimless wanderings from Luna City to Mars and the Asteroids and on toward Saturn. . . and "the ends of the Universe."

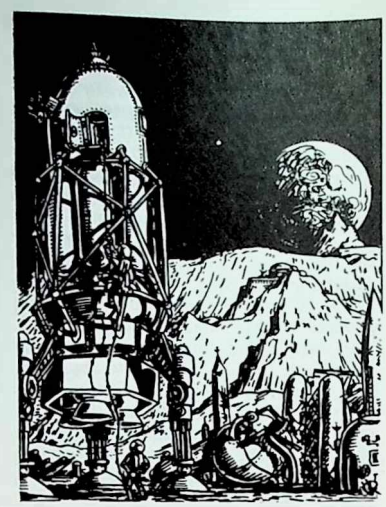
They are the Stone family, ranging in age from the apparently immortal Grandmother Hazel, through the teen-aged "unheavenly twins," Castor and Pollux, down to Lowell, the infant genius who can already beat his grandmother at chess. Each one is a variation on the brilliantly competent man. Heinlein reveals them indirectly, through action and dialog. There is no description of Meade, the older sister, but when we learn that her doctor-sculptress mother is modelling her head we know she is attractive.

The story is a dream of personal freedom. The Stones leave Luna City in a second-hand spaceship, with no motives except an impatience with social restraints and an itch to see the universe. With the father in command, as captain of the ship, the family becomes once more the fully adequate social unit.

Here, I believe, Heinlein is dramatizing a personal concern that is also a dilemma of our technological world. Advancing technology not only asks competent people to master special skills, but it also asks for smooth cooperation. The increasingly complex division of labor requires a social discipline strong enough to prevent sabotage and acts of terrorism, to restrain the power grabs of narrow selfish interests, to unite workers and managers, to fuse the elite and the mass. The protection of the world-machines requires a painful sacrifice of personal freedom which I think Heinlein is reluctant to accept.

But *The Rolling Stones*, unlike such later works as *Farnham's Freehold*, carries its thematic burden tightly. It is a delightful romp through space, brightened with such items as the Martian flat cats, which multiply like the guinea pigs in Ellis Parker Butler's famous funny story until the money-minded twins find a market for them in the asteroid-mining colony.

Much of the effect comes as natural from the sense of an accurately extrapolated future background, with all the new technologies given an air of commonplace reality. The used spaceship, for example, is bought from "Dealer Dan, the Spaceship Man," who is drawn after today's used-car salesman. Though the meteor miners use radar and rocket scooters, they live like Forty-Niners.



The pattern of social initiation is not quite so clear here as in the other novels, since the whole family is in flight from organized society. The self-centered twins change only slightly, but they do gain some sense of obligation to a wider humanity. The whole family takes risks to bring the mother's medical skills to sick spacemen.

Starman Jones, published in 1953, is a classic example of the *bildungsroman* pattern and perhaps my own favorite of the series. Max Jones is a poor hill farm boy faced with the hard problem of finding the place he wants in a closed society. With Heinlein's reasonably consistent future history moving on, the old torch ship *Einstein* has become the starship *Asgard*, now equipped with Horst-Conrad impellers that can drive her at the speed of light and beyond, to jump her across the light-years through the congruences of a folded universe. Max wants to be a starman, but his way is barred by a rigid guild system that has no room for him.

Good science fiction mixes the known and the new—in more formal terms, it recognizes that we can perceive and respond only to those items that can somehow attach to the mental structures we already possess. Heinlein gives us exciting novelties enough in Max's universe, but not without his usual deft preparation; we see Max slopping the hogs and feeding the chickens before he runs away from an intolerable "step-stepmother" and her insufferable new husband to look for his way to the stars.

For all his social handicaps, he has several things going for him. A genius for math, an eidetic memory, a friend named Sam. He has listened to the tales of an uncle who belonged to the Astrogator's Guild and memorized the tech manuals and space charts the uncle left him. Sam is an older man, a figure who neatly complements Max in the role-finding pattern of the novel. Once an Imperial Marine, he has lost his social place because he lacks Max's moral strength. Now a colorful conniver, whose entertaining speech tag is his habit of mixing familiar proverbs, he gives his life at the end of the book in full atonement for his social faults.

The background is worked out with love and skill; though some of the minor characters are stereotypes, they are expertly drawn; Max's young love affair is convincing and appealing. Even on rereading, I find his social triumphs and defeats really moving.

Though the space aliens play only minor roles, they seem to echo the theme. When the lost ship lands on a new planet, its highly organized alien ecology is as hostile to all men as the closed human social system has seemed to Max.

Aboard the *Asgard* with forged papers provided by Sam, he is always in a precarious position, his social status always in jeopardy, yet he learns to make the most of social opportunity. At the end, when all the other qualified astrogators are dead and the tech manuals and tables are missing, it is Max alone who can take command and pilot the ship through the new congruity, back to galactic civilization.

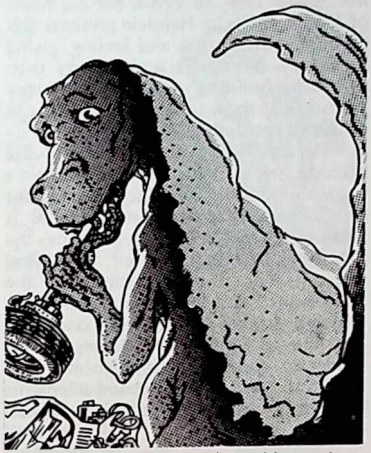
With its bold symbolism, the book makes a universal appeal. We are all born lonely individualists; we must all make the same struggle, often hard and painful, for a foothold in society. Though there is unlikely coincidence and occasional melodrama in Max's story, such faults don't matter. The novel is a fine juvenile, but also something more. It reflects hopes and fears we all have known.

Star Beast, published in 1954, is vastly different from *Starman Jones* but equally outstanding. Though part of the Scribner's juvenile series, it ran in the *Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*, the most literate of the category magazines. The actual protagonists are not young John Thomas Stuart and his girl, but rather Mr. Kiku, who is the competently mature Permanent Under Secretary for Spatial Affairs, and Lummox, the star beast herself.

The beast is Heinlein's most charming space alien, a truck-sized, eight-legged, steel-eating monster, brought back to Earth while still only pup-sized by an earlier John Thomas, great-grandfather of the young hero. Lummox is appalling in appearance but entirely amiable, and four John Thomas generations have kept her as a pet.

The book is a wildly delightful comedy grown from Heinlein's continual concern with the able individual in conflict with incompetent pretenders. Most of the fun comes from our anarchistic joy in the successful defiance of rigid social norms and the stupid people who attempt to enforce them. The victims of this satiric exposure range from the Westville city officials to the bumbling politician who is Mr. Kiku's nominal superior.

The comic actions begin when Lummox pushes out of her pen to taste



some tempting rosebushes. Alarmed by the attacks of frightened neighbors, she causes innocent harm. The Chief and his minions try to destroy her, but find her happily indestructable. Mr. Kiku is involved when Lummox's people come across 900 light-years of space to take her home, threatening to vaporize the Earth unless she is surrendered to them. When she is found, she refuses to leave without John Thomas. The whole mad situation enables Heinlein to satirize the faults and follies of every level of human society from the family to the Terran Federation.

John Thomas's mother is among the frustrated plotters against Lummox, and his girl has divorced her own intolerant parents. Mr. Kiku manipulates his political superiors with a superb finesse, allowing Heinlein to lay bare the absurdities of bureaucracy and diplomacy. Lummox is a fine symbol of the romantic individualist self-impelled, at odds with a corrupt society but undamaged by it. John Thomas and Betty Sorenson enjoy a sort of social immunity borrowed from her, and Mr. Kiku stands tall on his own black feet.

These devastating shots at society and its leaders imply the same reservations about popular rule that H. G. Wells often expressed. Near the end of the book, Mr. Kiku says that the government "is not now a real democracy and it can't be." Majority rule might be good, "But it's rarely that easy. We find ourselves oftener the pilots of a ship in a life-and-death emergency. Is it the pilot's duty to hold powwows with the passengers? Or is it his job to use his skill and experience to bring them safely home?"

But the book is no sermon. Though this familiar theme is stated with force enough, it isn't allowed to spoil the fun, which ends only with the satisfying discovery that the actual pet is not Lummox, but John Thomas himself.

Tunnel in the Sky, published in 1955, lacks the mad fascination of *Star Beast*, though it is built on a wonderful story idea. Life has now become lean on the crowded future Earth, but the star gates are opening on new planets all across the galaxy. Since some of these are dangerous, the schools teach survival. Rod Walker is a high school senior who is dropped with his classmates on an unfriendly new world for a survival test. When a nova explosion disables their gate, the young people are left on their own.

Though the situation is much like that in Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, the development is vastly different. In Golding's book, we watch civilization dissolve into savagery; Heinlein's heroes, before they are rescued, have begun to plant a vigorous new civilization. Golding is a classicist, I think, distrusting the human animal; Heinlein, though half a classicist in making the social adaptation of the naive individual as the subject of the whole series, is still I think somehow a romanticist at heart, rejoicing in competent individualism and conceding no more than he must to society.

Another novel of education, *Tunnel in the Sky* begins with both Rod and his teacher uncertain that he is ready for the survival test. On his upward way to leadership in the accidental colony, he must learn to cope with human rivals as well as with an unkind environment. Yet, though the book sometimes seems to have been planned as a parable of man and society, the theme is blurred. The ending strikes me as arbitrary; with the star gate reopened, the young people simply abandon their social experiment.

The problem, I suspect, is another unresolved conflict between Heinlein's romantic individualism and his awareness of the social discipline required by a technological culture. The best writing is in the first half of the book, in which Rod's competence for survival is being developed in conflicts with savage nature and savage-seeming human beings. The latter chapters, in which he is establishing social relationships within the new culture, seem oddly flat and hollow. He avoids sex relationships in a hardly

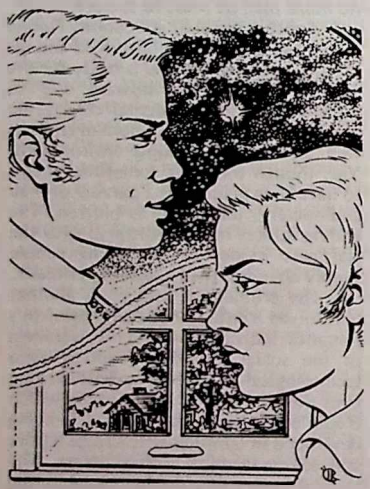
normal way—though his behavior here may have been only Heinlein's concession to his juvenile editors.

In any case, the book simply fails to live up to its initial premises. We are told in the opening that man, "the two-legged brute," is the most dangerous animal in the universe, "which goes double for the female of the species." The first half of the book supports that assumption, but then the human menace fades, leaving only the wilderness planet with its less-than-human threats.

Yet the book is far from bad. The setting, as always, is solidly done. We feel the pinch of want on the over-populated Earth and we understand the history and the working of the planetary gates that have made migration an alternative to war. Some of the minor characters are memorable, especially Rod's older sister, who is an expert killer, a captain in the Amazons. Most of the story is suspenseful enough, and the weak ending may be only a sign that Heinlein is growing tired of juveniles.

In *Time for the Stars*, published in 1956, Heinlein drops back in history to an age when the torch ships are first venturing beyond our solar system to find room for teeming humanity on new planets. Traveling at less than light-speed, the explorer ships take many years for each crossing between stars, and few of them return.

The plot builds from the idea that telepathy, existing most often between twins, can cross interstellar distances with no time lag. Often in science fiction psionics becomes a wild card allowed to wreck all story logic, but here Heinlein limits and explores it in a completely believable way.



Tom and Pat Bartlett are twins—ignorant of their telepathic gift until tested for service as interstellar communicators. Pat unconsciously fakes an injury that lets him stay safe at home to marry the girl they both love and get rich with their joint earnings, while Tom undertakes the dangerous voyage that may last a hundred years. Tom stays young, moving at relativistic velocities, while Pat grows old; at the end of the story, his mental link at home is no longer Pat but Pat's great-granddaughter.

The story has action enough, including a final struggle with space aliens as mysterious and implacable as the physical universe itself, but the main conflict is Tom's internal battle against the psychological complexes that have allowed Pat to dominate him. He must learn to see the unconscious hate beneath his dutiful love, to break the old habit of always giving in. Heinlein presents this conflict with insight and feeling, giving the story more character drama than usual and building suspense all the way to the final showdown between the old twin and the young.

All the hidden implications of the premise are worked out with Heinlein's usual thoughtful skill. Since such instant mind contact across vast distances is forbidden by Einstein's equations, the equations have to be revised. The logical outcome of these revisions is the "irrelevant" starship, the *Serendipity*, which overtakes the old *Lewis and Clark* in time to jump Tom home for the climactic confrontation with his aged twin and for a twenty-second telepathic courtship with his beautiful great-grandniece.

Beginning on the people-ridden Earth, where parents are taxed for too many children—Tom and Pat were unplanned—the whole story is bleak in tone, with none of the mad comedy of *Star Beast*. Yet it's another fine *bildungsroman*, given a very original twist. Tom grows up to kill the enemy within and becomes his own man. If he gets bossed again, it won't be by Pat.

Citizen of the Galaxy, published in 1957, is a sort of epilogue to the whole Scribner's series. The other books, taken together, tell an epic story of the expansion of mankind across the planets of our own sun and the stars beyond. All that is now past history. The plot action begins off th Earth, in the tyrannic Empire of the Nine Worlds, and carries us on a grand tour of galactic cultures already long-established.

The theme springs once more from Heinlein's concern with individual freedom. We meet the hero as a frightened, whip-scarred child sold at a slave auction. The crippled beggar who buys him is a secret agent of the Exotic Corps, a space police outfit fighting slavery. When the beggar is killed, Thorby escapes to carry information from him to other agents among the space gypsies who call themselves Free Traders, then to the

Guard Cruiser *Hydra*, and finally back to legendary Terra, where he is at last identified as the Rubek of Rubek, heir to his own fabulous industrial empire. After a legal battle, he recovers his legacy from the corrupt men in his own company who have been building ships for the slavers and who murdered his parents to avoid detection.

As the story of a young man's education and self-discovery, this clearly fits the classic juvenile pattern, yet the book is adult enough so that John Campbell bought serial rights for *Astounding Science Fiction*. The opening is gripping; the old beggar and the slave boy compel our sympathy; the several settings are detailed with Heinlein's usual captivating skill; the whole novel still reads well.

Yet, for all its ambitious scope, it has major faults. The jumps from one setting to another break it almost into a series of novelettes, each involving Thorby with a new cluster of characters. Toward the end, the suspense collapses—Thorby is only a spector at the climactic legal battle, which is won by a Jubal Harshaw sort of lawyer. Too, I miss the new technologies that add so much genuine wonder to the other books. With the conquest of space already complete, however, I see no real need for new inventions here, and I suppose Heinlein's interests were already shifting from the physical to the social sciences, from gadgets to cultures—the culture of the Free Traders is certainly an anthropologist's delight. In the next novel, anyhow, he comes back to physical science, with one last completely fascinating gadget.

Have Space Suit—Will Travel, published in 1958, brings the series to a highly satisfying climax. The novel opens on a near-future, very familiar Earth. The hero is Kip, another bright and

likeable boy, who tells the story in his own breezy style. He wants to go to the Moon, and things begin when he tries for a free trip offered in an advertising giveaway and wins a badly used space suit.

Again we have the rite-of-passage pattern, but done with unusual love and verve. Kip's world is convincingly familiar: he reads *National Geographic* and attends Centerville High and works after school as a soda jerk. His story moves fast. Though he packs it with simplified scientific fact and with philosophic ideas picked up from his individualistic father, he never stops to preach.

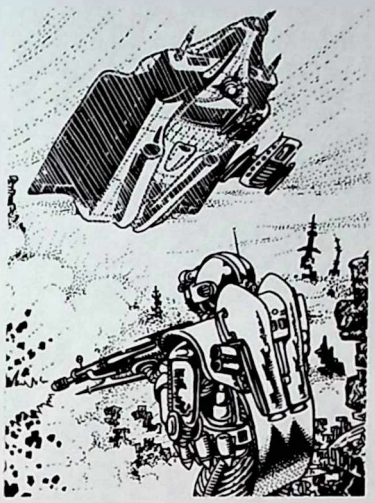
The space suit is the essential gadget. It's worthless junk when Kip receives it from the satirized sellers of soap, but he rebuilds it in time to become involved, along with an eleven-year-old girl genius, in a melodramatic space adventure. The girl, Peewee Reisfeld, has been caught by a gang of evil worm-faced aliens who have also captured the Mother Thing, a furry and appealing creature who is a sort of galactic cop. There is a good deal of routine space opera in the plot action that carries us by stages to the Moon, to Pluto, to the Mother Thing's home on Vega V, out to the capital of the Three Galaxies in the Lesser Magellanic Cloud, and finally back again to Earth. With Heinlein's zest and his fine detail, however, the stereotypes are well disguised. Peewee and the Mother Thing are likeable people, and the story still holds me.

At the crisis, Kip and Peewee find themselves the spokesmen for the human race before a high court that has already exterminated the worm-faced villains and now charges humanity with being too savage and too intelligent, therefore too dangerous to be left alive. The trial becomes a test of Heinlein's symbolic competent character, perhaps of his own philosophy. Threatened with the extinction of mankind, Kip is defiant. When the judges ask if he has more to say:

"I looked around the hall. *—the cloud-capped towers. . . the great globe itself—* 'Just this!' I said savagely. 'It's not a defense, you don't *want* a defense. All right, take away our star—you will if you can and I guess you can. Go ahead! We'll *make* a star! Then, someday, we'll come back and hunt you down—*all of you!*' "

The happy outcome, after an appeal from the compassionate Mother Thing, is that humanity is placed on probation and Kip and Peewee are returned to Earth. Kip is a soda jerk once more, but now with the nerve to toss a chocolate malt into the face of a boy who has bullied him—an incident that Heinlein kept in the book over editorial objection. The series couldn't have had a finer conclusion.

Starship Troopers is a thirteenth juvenile, also written for Scribner's. Following the same story-of-education pattern, it traces the making of a starship soldier. In contrast to *Have Space Suit—Will Travel*, however, it is a dark, disturbing novel, set in a time of vicious

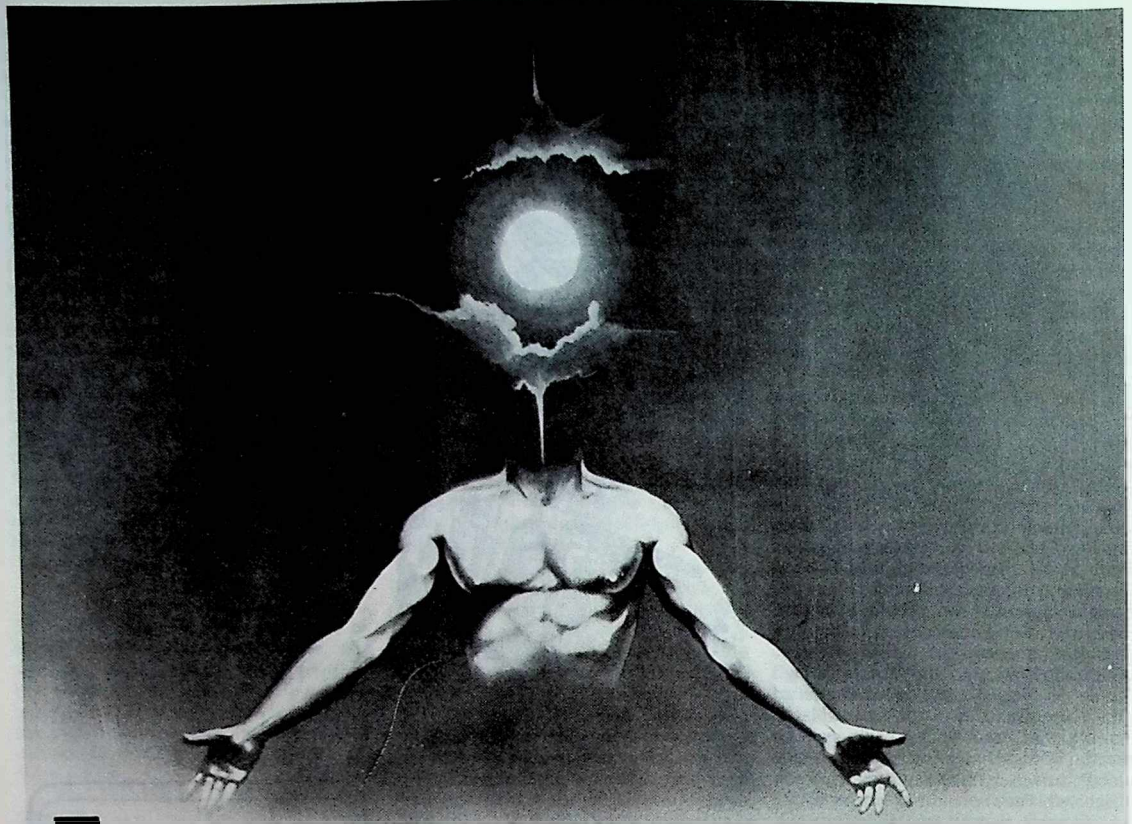


space war and devoted to glorification of the fighting man. Though many of its ideas and attitudes had appeared in earlier books of the series, this one was too strong for the editors at Scribner's. They rejected it.

Published by Putnam in 1959, after serialization in *Fantasy and Science Fiction*, it won a Hugo and it still has hearty admirers. Impressed myself by the anthropology of Raymond Dart and Robert Ardrey, I suspect that Heinlein's unpopular emphasis on human savagery is closer to the truth than the cheerier views of his juvenile editors. However that may be, *Starship Troopers* was a turning point in his career, and it began his alienation from a whole school of science fiction criticism. The inspiring theme of space-conquest that unifies the dozen Scribner's titles seems complete without it.

Considering the Scribner's books as a group, we can claim for them a major role in the evolution of modern science fiction. Certainly they gave many thousand young readers, and thousands not so young, a delightful introduction to the genre. Built on sound futurology, they still make a fine primer for the new reader. The best of them are splendid models of literary craftsmanship, with more discipline and finish than most of Heinlein's other work. Revealing significant conflicts and shifts of thought, they are relevant to any survey of his whole career.

If their generally optimistic vision of space conquest is not so popular now as it once was, one reason is that we have almost abandoned our real space programs, giving up our grand designs to probe too often into festering "inner space." Our loss of faith in our future and our science and ourselves will surely become a global tragedy if it is not recovered. These books have a spirit too great to be forgotten. They need to be read again. ●



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ALGOL PROFILE

AE van Vogt

PROFILED BY H.L. DRAKE

"I became a writer because I killed a snake," A. E. van Vogt told me as we sat in the living room of his Hollywood hills home. And then he went on to give an explanation which points out the sensitivity inherent in the personality whic has become world famous as a science fantasy author. (When he speaks, van Vogt uses the term science fiction to include science fantasy.)

"This occurred when I was seventeen-and-a-half years old and I was guilty and regretful of it. It was a small snake and it was no different from other small snakes I had killed, but for some reason or another I pursued this one to destroy it. Up until this time I had done horseback riding, and I had gone out shooting a lot with a gun, and so on. All of that went because at about this same time my vision began to go. I became nearsighted. I killed that snake and when I did that I did an inward turning thing which included an interest in writing. Even in school I wasn't interested in writing, my interests were more active ones, out-of-doors kinds. But all this faded completely after I killed that poor little snake."

Van Vogt's first short-short story was sent to *Liberty*. He doesn't remember anything about that story except that it was returned "with an ordinary rejection slip." The first story van Vogt sold was titled, "I Lived in the Streets." It sold in 1931 to the confessions magazine, *True Story*. The story was from the point of view of a prostitute, and the editors retitled it, "No One to Blame But Herself." On a part-time basis van Vogt launched himself into writing for the confessions magazines, a type of writing which relied more on formula and stamina on the part of the author than on literary inspiration. He worked full-time and often lost sleep, writing late every night in order to supplement his income. In 1935 van Vogt was still writing for *True Story* and that year won first prize of $1000 in their writer's contest.

"I still don't object to a thousand or two-thousand-dollar check!" he told me and grinned.

I've read what some authors have written about that unique genre in commercial magazines known as the "confessions," and I asked van Vogt to give me his reactions to such writing. What was the formula, as he saw it?

"For *True Story*, or any confessions-type magazine in those days you wrote an emotional story. I learned to write emotion from a teacher, John Gallishaw. Every sentence I wrote in those stories had to have emotion in it. For example, you don't just write: "She lived at 123 Ford Street." You write, "The tears came into her eyes as she thought of her little room at 123 Ford Street." *Every* sentence has to have this emotion in it!"

In July, 1939 van Vogt's first published SF story, "Black Destroyer," appeared in *Astounding*. The first line in the story is: "On and on Coeurl prowled!" And on and on van Vogt continued in SF after that. Even the first SF story he wrote, "Vault of the Beast," was eventually published. Van Vogt has been consistently successful in the SF market. It can be said that he learned the craft of writing in the confessions, but his forte was to be in science fiction-science fantasy. His move to the new genre couldn't take place until he had reached a point of diminishing intellectual returns though:

"By 1939 I'd had it with emotion writing. One day, when I was busy with another confession-type story—I remember it was about half-finished—I thought to myself, 'My God! Not again!' In retrospect, I know that as a craftsman it shouldn't have been a problem for me to continue. Here in Hollywood, you know, people write absolute madness for money! They don't do what I did back in 1939 and stop in the middle of a story and ask themselves, 'What am I doing?' They damn well know what they're doing!"

But self questioning and taking stock of his professional writing career in the late '30's subsequently gave the world an SF writer *par excellence*. Could van Vogt have begun immediately writing SF? Perhaps even he cannot answer that question unqualifiedly. We do know that the experiences he gained during his maturation as a writer couldn't do anything but help. Even the radio plays he sold to the Canadian Broadcasting System during the depression for fifteen to twenty-five dollars each helped to develop the future SF author. For a while after quitting the confessions he was a trade paper journalist. Once he began to write, he was prolific no matter what the genre.

Van Vogt has worked hard at being a writer, even when he was away from the typewriter.

"Aside from needing the money, another thing that gave me impetus in those early writing days in Canada was

being a member of the Canadian Authors Association in Toronto. I attended meetings once a month. Being a systematizer, I had to think of a way to make myself known to those two-hundred people at the Association. So, I thought, there must be some way to become known. I began to set up chairs for people and introduced myself in that way. At the end of the year I was elected secretary. I was one of the few people that just about everybody knew! Also, I made a point of speaking to six different people everytime I was at the meetings. Unfortunately, I kept running into husbands and wives of authors! I'd look over and see some distinguished looking guy smoking a pipe and think, 'That must be a writer.' I'd discover that it was the husband of a poetess and that she was the member! I wasted, in a manner of speaking, twenty-four minutes getting acquainted with him and then I finally asked him what he did! And so, that was part of my early life as a writer in Canada."

When van Vogt left the Canadian Department of National Defense in 1943 he turned to writing full-time, taking time out once to work seriously for the Dianetics movement with his friend L. Ron Hubbard. Van Vogt admits that his free-lancing probably has something to do with his personality.

"Science fantasy writing has had a peculiar effect on me, shall we say an ego-boosting effect, because it has placed my name in prominence. It started with Campbell's analytical lab in *Astounding*, whereby the stories that were published were rated. My first story got first-place and that was the first time I got any real credit for writing and I liked it. When you write confession stories you usually don't use your real name. With radio plays they give your name in such a fashion that you don't hear it yourself when you listen. Television is the same way. I had one of my fantasy stories on Rod Serling's "Night Gallery." I called the story, "The Witch," and they changed it to, "When Aunt Ada Came To Stay." I had a hard time seeing my own name on the screen! But you see, what you get from a thing like that is money. This is what keeps all of these people here in Hollywood. They don't care about their name. They're not as well known as I am, but they're richer!"

On the heels of quitting the Canadian Department of National Defense and deciding to become a full-time free-lance author, the van Vogts decided to move to the United States. It was either Hollywood or New York. At the same time they made their decision it was cold and that, van Vogt told me, was why he and his wife opted for Hollywood. With that move, life became better for van Vogt, the writer.

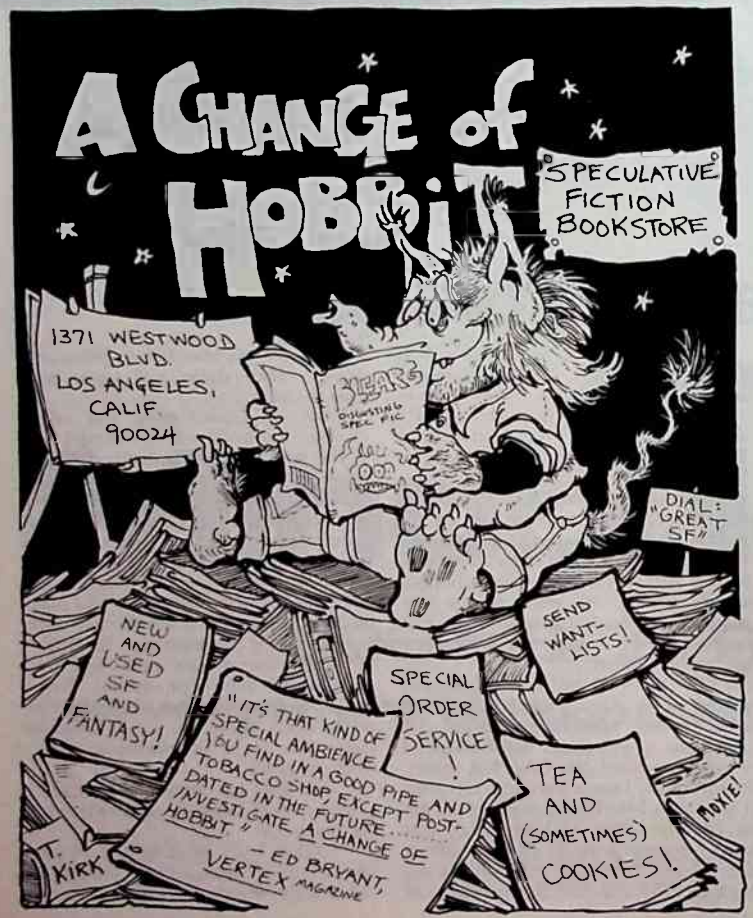
Van Vogt was printed in what he thinks may have been the first hardcover anthology of science fiction authors, *Adventures in Time and Space*, published by Henry Holt and Company. His first novel, *The World of Null-A*, was the first SF novel to be published by a major hardcover publisher in the United States, Simon and Schuster. That was in 1948. "Science fiction was still growing up as a legitimate literary genre at this time."

Van Vogt matured as a writer right along with SF. His maturation was reflected in *The Mind Cage*. "By the time I started writing that story, I had looked over my life a little bit. I was into dianetics by that time. I thought, well, gee, I was very fond of my sister. So, in *The Mind Cage* I had my main character apparently married to his sister. I did all of these things consciously then, whereas I may have put a part of myself into my earlier stories unconsciously. I had a barrier to break through on that story. Also, *The Mind Cage* was my first attempt to treat violence, more specifically, the angry man."

After *The Mind Cage* was published van Vogt began an in-depth study of certain male types whom he labeled, "the violent male." He gave talks on the subject. He interviewed. "Essentially, all I did was define what I saw all of these men do," he told me. "They have an idea that they are entitled to feel right. I decided to use a General Semantics procedure—I consciously thought that there was no hurry to come to any conclusion about this."

At the same time, van Vogt was writing a novel about twenty-three men in a prison in Red China. He found himself changing emphasis and subsequently came up with a story which he titled, *The Violent Man*. The hardcover didn't sell well. "I think that perhaps the concepts in this story were too much for the reading audience to accept, at least at that time." Paperback sales of the book were a little better. "The paperback universe is another world!" van Vogt happily exclaimed. "I don't know who buys those things, but somebody does!"

Moving into the subject of paper-



backs brought me to a question about *Future Glitter*. In another part of the country I had heard that van Vogt had written this story to portray something relative to the Nixon-Agnew administration.

"No, I was launched into the writing of that novel long before any of the Nixon, Agnew and Watergate stuff started. As a matter of fact, the novel was published in October of 1973 and novels usually take about a year from the time of acceptance until they're published. Well, people have said to me that they think in *Future Glitter* they see a definite message about politics in our society. I wish I had had that in mind, but it just isn't so. I can see that if a dictator were out in the open like the one in *Future Glitter*, the people would automatically know more about what he was up to and he might modify a lot of his actions. I can see where some of my readers might draw some sort of an analogy between the Nixon tapes—which sort of helped to expose the whole mess—and the all-pervasive system which I wrote about in the novel. But if a dictator were put out in the open he would *definitely* modify a lot of his actions! That's very simplistically put. Or, the audience perhaps, would grow more sophisticated about the requirements of the world."

I asked the inevitable question: what is next in store for van Vogt's readers?

"Fred Pohl wants me to write another General Semantics novel. And one of these days, I'm going to write my Dianetics novel. I've never put Dianetics into SF. I have not consciously been aware of that thought while writing. In a piece of mine called, *The Universe Maker*, I put in a variant thought on one of Hubbard's scientology whole track ideas. To me, the scientology whole track thing was the biggest science fiction story that I ever saw! But there were a couple of thoughts in there which caused me to think to myself, 'Gee, that's fascinating!' "

And then van Vogt expressed his interest in another possibility which may be pursued in one of his stories some day. It's a "you can't go home again" theme with a twist—"or you may die." According to van Vogt, there have been many examples of people visiting their old homes after many years and not living very long afterwards. In 1973, van Vogt decided to test this, so he and his wife decided to return to Canada and visit friends, relatives and their old home places.

The van Vogts went to Vancouver and Winnipeg. He attempted to avoid his home town in the early part of the trip. "If anything was going to happen, I didn't want it to happen on the way!" Besides, he wanted to visit the World Science Fiction Convention which was being held in Toronto. Van Vogt held off tempting fate until the return trip to the United States.

The first major stop to test the phenomenon of you can't go home again if you want to live, was Morton, Manitoba where van Vogt had lived from the age of ten to seventeen. He hadn't been there in forty years. The old house, a castle-type structure built by a Scottish physician, was still standing. "To stir up whatever was going to stir up, I took pictures of the old place. That's what I needed for my experiment, something like that to help make things happen."

From Morton, the van Vogts drove on to Swift Current, Saskatchewan and then thirty miles south to Neville where van Vogt had lived the first ten years of his life. The house which he had lived in as a boy was still standing. "It looked better through my man's eyes than it had when I lived there as a boy." Again, for experimental purposes he took pictures of his old home and spent some time in Neville. "Don't forget, you're supposed to die after doing these things!"

Immediately upon his return to Hollywood van Vogt attempted to deal with the memories stirred up by his trip. "I couldn't do it. I still can't. It's too powerful." Even a dream technique which he had developed for himself over the years couldn't help this time. "I've touched it. I deal with it every once in a while, but I cannot resolve it. There is power there, in those memories. So, I'm handling it very carefully. There's an awful lot of junk there, a lot of *emotion!*" Perhaps, van Vogt told me, the killing factor after returning home is struggling with the memories of experiences past.

"I lived through what many others have not," van Vogt told me and smiled. "I have returned hom again for a visit. I have not died. At least I don't think I have. But I can't die now. I have too many things left to do!"

"And what willyou be remembered for?" I asked. "Which story? Which book?" I was surprised at his answer.

"I think I'm going to promote my language learning system. I have a good thought there. I thought it out and suddenly I know how to learn languages. Right now I understand about fifteen."

CARL SAGAN

I would like to first say some words about the results of the Viking mission for the question of the origin of life on Mars and its earlier history. Then I would like to say something about the Viking imaging results as they bear on biology. Third, I would like to describe briefly a set of interpretations of the Viking microbiology and organic chemistry results, which are consistent with the hypothesis that it is biology which is responsible for at least some of those results. And, finally, say a few words about the connection between studies of Mars on the Earth and the question of future Martian exploration as a means of exploiting the remarkable successful Viking results.

On the question of the origins of life on primitive Mars, Viking has had a wide range of findings which are extremely relevant, and I think all of which improve significantly the likelihood of the origin life earlier in the history of the planet. That doesn't mean that it guarantees that that event occurred. For one thing, Viking made the first detection of molecular nitrogen at a level of 2 to 3 percent in the Martian atmosphere. Nitrogen is a prerequisite for the sorts of organic chemistry that living systems on the Earth utilize. Proteins, for example, and nucleic acids are both intimately dependent upon the nitrogen that they contain.

Secondly, the Viking confirmed the previous results of Mariner 9 and greatly expanded them in finding an intricate network of sinuous vendritic channels with collapsed banks and teardrop-shaped islands in their centers and something like a delta at the end of them, and I think there is now very little doubt that these channels were produced by running water at some early moment in the history of the planet.

The largest of these channels are crudely dated by the method of cratering statistics: the more craters, the older the object is. And something like a billion years ago, it seems rather likely that there were channels substantially older than that, and at least possible that there was running water more recently than that, but, roughly speaking, something like a billion years ago there was abundant liquid water in the surface of the planet.

Now, you cannot have liquid water on Mars today, because the atmospheric pressure is not high enough, and an open pan of liquid water would immediately evaporate and boil away. And, therefore, to believe in the existence of running water earlier in the history of the planet, a higher pressure atmosphere then than now is required. In several different ways Viking has provided compelling evidence for the existence of such a dense primitive atmosphere, and without going into the nature of the arguments, let me just say that there is one argument dependent on the differential escape from the planet of nitrogen, the isotopes nitrogen 14 and nitrogen 15.

There is an independent argument based on the relative abundances of the isotopes argon 36 to argon 38 to argon 40, the first two of which are primordial, and the last is the result of the radioactive decay of potassium 40. And there is evidence consistent with these two findings from the detection of krypton and xenon in the atmosphere.

Each of these methods do give slightly different estimates for the maximum pressure of the early atmosphere, because they are based on different assumptions, but they all suggest that the early atmosphere had a pressure tens to hundreds of times greater than the present Martian atmosphere, and that is more than enough to make those rivers flow. So we have good evidence of abundant liquid water early in the history of the planet, and in most views of the origin of life, liquid water—you don't need great oceans, but you do need abundant quantities of liquid water.

Another interesting point has to do with the finding by the inorganic chemistry team, the people who worked on the x-ray fluorescence spectrometer experiments led by Dr. Creasley Toul-

THE MARS DISCOVERIES

min of the U.S. Geological Survey, that the likely most-abundant mineral on the Martian surface where Viking has landed is an iron-rich clay of a sort called montmorillonite.

The reason that this is of curious relevance to the question of the origin of life is that in experiments performed in the laboratory of Professor Katchalski in Israel it has been found that montmorillonite is a superb catalyst for the combining of amino acids into long-chain molecules like proteins. And it turns out it's also catalyst for a number of other synthetic reactions in prebiological organic chemistry cells.

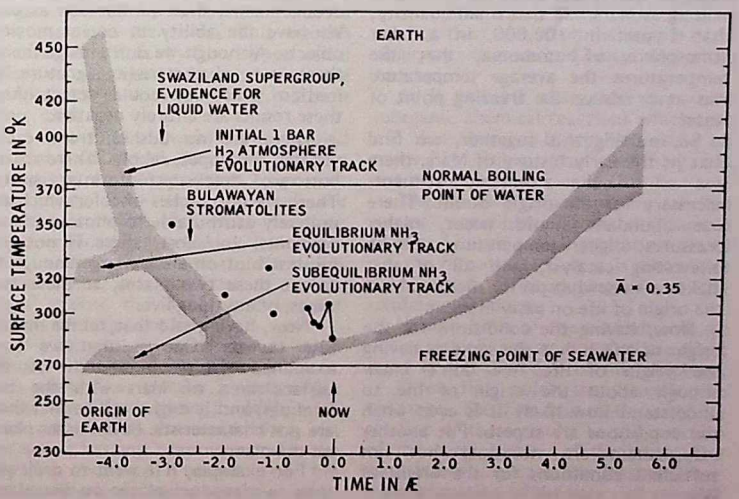
If organic molecules were ever produced in high-yield in early Martian history, the presence of montmorillonite would suggest that they got together to make bigger molecules or even greater elements of the origin of life.

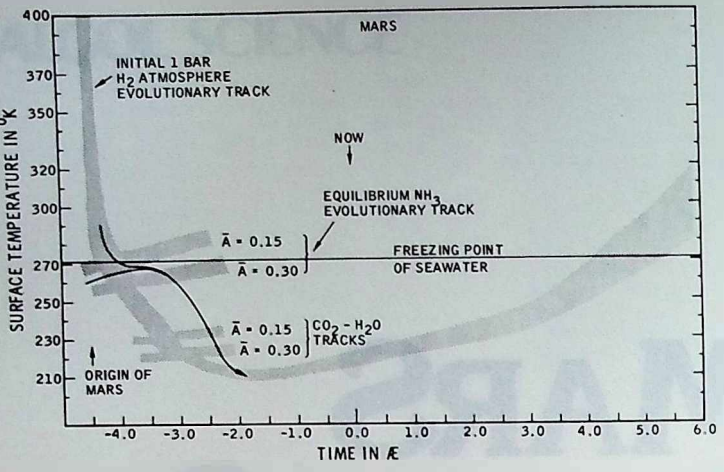
And the final point having to do with early Martian history has to do with temperature. Mars is today in a kind of deep ice-age environment where the average global surface temperature is 210 degrees Kelvin, which is 63 degrees below zero centigrade. The existence of the channels suggests that temperatures were warmer, and I would like to just spend a moment showing by a different argument that that is a likely result, and I will do this briefly.

This article published courtesy NASA.

These are diagrams of the temperature of a planet versus time, and the first one has to do with the Earth. Here is time in billions of years. 4½ billion years ago was the time of the origin of the Earth and the origin of Mars, and there is also time into the future, but that does not bear on our problem.

What is shown here is a set of calculations of the temperature history of the Earth, bearing in mind two different questions: 1, that the Sun is getting brighter with time—this is reasonably reliably known from stellar evolution; and, 2, that the Earth's early atmosphere probably had other gases in it besides the ones today, in particular a small amount, about 1 part in 100,000, of ammonia, which is an excellent greenhouse gas, and absorbs radiation given off by the surface of the Earth and increases the temperature of the





Earth, so that equilibrium amount of ammonia gives a temperature track something like that.

The hydrogen gradually escapes from the Earth, the ammonia goes away, the temperature goes down, gradually reaching the present temperature.

Now, plotted on this same graph are a set of points recently measured by Knauth and Epstein at California Institute of Technology using an oxygen-deuterium method. You can see that they more or less followed equilibrium track and are somewhat higher than it.

That suggests this kind of calculation might have some degree of validity that might be applicable to Mars.

If we look at the next chart we will see the same kind of calculation for a small amount of ammonia in the Martian atmosphere. Again, the surface temperature in time here is the freezing point of water, and what we see is that as long as Mars had that small quantity, that 1 part in 100,000, in a 1-bar atmosphere of ammonia, that the temperatures—the average temperature was at or above the freezing point of water.

So, putting this together, we find that in the early history of Mars, there was all of the atomic constituents necessary for the origin of life. There was abundant liquid water, higher pressures, higher temperature, and an interesting catalyst; and all of that makes a somewhat pretty picture about the origin of life on early Mars.

Now, having the conditions for the origin of life is not the same as having the origin of life. We don't know enough about the origin of life to understand how likely it is even when the conditions are superb. Put another way, these are necessary but not sufficient conditions for the origin of life.

What is more, it is possible that life could have arisen in the early history of Mars and subsequently become extinct because of, for example, climatic fluctuations. So, while I think that the Viking evidence makes the origin of life in early Martian history much more likely than it was before Viking, that doesn't mean that it has to be extremely probable.

Among the possibilities that we can think of are life never arising on Mars, life arising but becoming extinct, so there is nothing but fossils that we could find, and life surviving and adapting to the changed Martian environment, and there for us to find today.

Now, the question of the imaging experiment. If there were large forms of life, forms big enough to see on Mars, the two cameras on each of the two landers had a fair chance of seeing them, at least in the times and places of the landing sites. We have photographed details smaller than a millimeter across. We have the ability to detect moving objects. Although we don't image them, there is a characteristic signature of motion which we could detect. And these results are entirely negative.

There are no bushes, trees, cacti, giraffes, antelopes, rabbits. There are no burrows, tracks, footprints, spoor. There are no patches of color which are uniquely attributable to photosynthetic pigments. In short, there is not the faintest hint on a scale large enough to see at these two places, at these two times, of anything live.

Now, having said that, let me make a few caveats. One is that we have examined one ten-millionth of the surface area of Mars with the two landings, and it might well be that these are not characteristic of the other places on the planet.

For example, if I were to drop you into two random places on the planet Earth, those would very likely be oceans, and you would not see any large forms of life in short periods of time, and you would simply disappear from view. In addition, there are many places on the land area of Earth, like the great Peruvian desert, where as far as the eye can see there is nothing alive whatever; and, yet, in the oceans and the Peruvian desert, those places are loaded with microorganisms.

So the absence of large organisms, while certainly relevant to the question of life on the planet, by no means can be considered to exclude the presence of smaller organisms—microbes, or in the arena or the microbiology experiments.

The two places which were chosen for the Viking landing are two of the dullest places on the planet we could find. We chose them purposely for their dullness, because dullness and safety go hand in hand, and, certainly, the primary objective of the mission was to get it down safely, and do science. We should not, therefore, conclude that there aren't much more exciting places for biology, geology and everything else on the planet.

Finally, on imaging, let me note that for the great fraction of the history of our planet you could have landed on any place on the surface of the Earth and seen a terrain probably not much different from the typical views of Mars taken from the Viking landers. Nothing large to see, and yet a wide variety of microorganisms in the soil, because organisms large enough to see have arisen in the Earth only during the last billion years, and life has been on the planet something like 4 billion years.

Okay, let me now come to the question of biological interpretations of the Viking microbiology experiments. There are two kinds of questions which must be addressed. One is: If there are microbes, why are there no organic molecules? And the second is: Are there biological and nonbiological explanations? Which of those two is better, crisper, has greater economy of effort in explaining the results?

I think it is clear that whichever of those two it is, it will require either a fairly exotic biology or a fairly exotic chemistry when we try to get at the details.

I think you have also all realized that there is a great array of data, very rich. There are clues up to the eyebrows, and the question is to make explanations which will explain all of the relevant data. Let me stress that no one has yet done that.

Perhaps the first point I should say is that the gas-exchange experiment has performed an extremely important service. Its negative results—that is, no clear signs of things due to biology

when it is perfectly capable of detecting microorganisms on the Earth, shows that the sterilization protocols for Viking were successful, that no terrestrial microbes inadvertently hitched a ride to Mars to mess up the experiment. It is an important conclusion, because otherwise that could have been a third hypothesis in the hopper.

The question of sensitivity. The two microbiology experiments which use radioactivity, the pyrolytic release and the labeled release experiments, have a much greater sensitivity than experiments which use gas chromatograph or mass spectrometer for their detection systems. So that it is perfectly possible to have microbes which explain at a suitable level the results of the microbiology experiments and still for the organic matter in those microbes to be indetectable to the gas chromatograph-mass spectrometer experiment.

On the other hand, using the example of Antarctic soils, in terrestrial cases you have so much more organic matter outside than inside that it bugs that if that were the proper model experiments should have seen organic molecules, and they did not.

So, in any biological model there has to be a lower ratio of organic matter outside than inside organisms than applies to the Earth.

Likewise, the pyrolytic release and labeled release experiments have a much greater sensitivity than the gas exchange experiment, and therefore the negative results for biology in the gas exchange experiment are not inconsistent with the positive results, if so interpreted from the pyrolytic release and labeled release experiments.

Let me stress that according to the criteria established before the mission, and those criteria of course are open to change, but according to those experiments the pyrolytic release and labeled release experiments have given positive results for microbiology.

Now, the criteria certainly have to be examined because Viking has obtained, I think, quite strong evidence for the existence of powerful oxidation products in the Martian surface in the upper layer of the soil. In fact, the amount of oxidants is something like 1,000 times the amount of reduced organic matter, and Dr. Horowitz' experiment suggests to me that much more organic matter is produced than can be seen in Dr. Horowitz' experiment, because they get oxidized away before his experiment is completed.

Now I would like to present to you in a very rough manner a couple of models which seem to me to be consistent with the data. One category of model is an oasis model, in which life is not thriving all over Mars, but only in a few preferred localities. In fact, this model was proposed long before Viking by Joshua Lederberg and myself in 1962.

One way of thinking of such a model is that the early benign conditions have vanished except in a few places. The chaotic terrain on Mars is one example of what such a better place might be. Great channels flow out of it. There are places where it is much more likely to have contemporary liquid water than an average place on the planet. There are also places extremely difficult to land on, but possible to rove to.

Now, in the first experiment of the pyrolytic release experiment, in Chryse, the first landing place, there was this very large second peak of 96 counts per minute, which is rather similar to what one finds in some places in Antarctica, according to Dr. Horowitz' controlled experiments on Earth.

Now, that immediately suggests a consistency within an oasis model, namely, that there are a few source locales for Martian organisms and that they are distributed by wind, which is an extremely efficient method of distributing spores and other dispersals on the planet from some source region like chaotic terrain to some quite distant region where the abundance of both microbes and organic matter is much less than the source.

The microbes have the opportunity to show some signs of metabolic activity, but they are not, generally speaking, in an environment in which they can do their stuff.

Another model which has been suggested, I myself have—I'm not fond of it, but let me mention it—is a kind of cannibal model, in which Martian microbes are extremely efficient at eating the dead bodies of their fellows. You must imagine them very efficiently scavenging, so that there is very little organic matter to be found outside of the organisms themselves. This requires a level of effort by the hypothetical Martian organisms. It seems to me unlikely to be something that has been described.

A final kind of model is the so-called hard-shelled model, in which Martian organisms are encapsulated to protect themselves from the rigors of the environment. The idea which has been suggested long before Viking, is that in a high voltage environment, ultraviolet environment, it is important to protect itself against the direct and indirect effects of ultraviolet light.

If your biology is dependent upon liquid water, as all biology on earth is, you might like to have a shell which keeps the liquid water in. Well, with such a hard shell, you would then, not because it has any adaptive value in the Martian, but just because of the consequence of having such a shell, resist high temperatures which are rarely found on Mars, but which are found in the Viking biology sterilization mode.

In the heat sterilization of the pyrolytic release experiment, where these samples were heated to 180 degrees centigrade for about 3 hours, a result of something like 15 counts per minute was required in the first landing site, and subsequent studies show that much lower counts are found. And in any biological model that means that whatever is happening has been able to survive, at least partially, those high temperatures.

I suggest that that result is consistent with the hard-shell model. But this then points to a curious contradiction—it is wrong, but a curious disparity in the pyrolytic release experiment, we find that heat sterilization does not sterilize. In the labeled release experiment, we find that cold sterilization does work.

To put it another way, in reduction of CO_2 to organic matter, that process, whatever it is, partially survives 180 degrees. In the oxidation of organic matter to CO_2, that process turns off at 50 degrees centigrade. And that surely does not sound as if it is the same or similar process. It sounds very much like there are at least two different processes occurring.

And I would simply point out that if there is microbiology on Mars, there is surely inorganic chemistry as well. And there are possibilities that for example, the oxidation is inorganic chemistry and the reduction is biology and other mixed hypotheses.

Two results which seem to point slightly in the direction of biology, according to the opinion of Dr. Levin, the designer of the labelled release experiment, are the following: First of all, the existence of cold sterilization experiments done at 20 degrees centigrade work fine. They leave positive results; then you breed the sample to 50 degrees centigrade and everything grinds to a halt.

It is possible that there are some inorganic chemical reactions which turn off that sharply. It smells a little bit more like biology than chemistry, but not by a large factor.

The positive results of the labelled release experiment from the sample obtained under a rock shed some doubt on the hypothesis that it is ultraviolet light which is producing all of the oxidation products.

I think both of these arguments are not extremely strong, but they are slight leans in the direction of microbiology.

A few final points that I would like to make. The first has to do with the relation of these results to the question of the early history of the earth. The least interesting case, the least interesting explanation of the very rich array of

Viking data, is that there is in the Martian soil a kind of chemistry which to some extent duplicates processes of microbial oxidation and to some extent duplicates processes of reduction like photosynthesis except it clearly is shown in the pyrolytic release experiment that they occur in the dark as well.

Now, if Mars is lifeless, but there are chemical reactions going on, which in some sense are familiar from terrestrial biological samples, that suggests that we have a chance of improving our understanding about the origin of life on this planet. Because if the key events are the ultraviolet radiation of the soil in which there is bound water producing a set of reactions, for example, the production of peroxides, which oxidize matter, that same sequence of events should have occurred in the early history of the earth. There was no oxygen, there was no ozone, there was a destructive surface, there was a lot of water in the soil, and therefore, before such chemical reactions are incorporated in the early history of life, you must imagine a little metabolic cycles for oxidation and reduction going on all by themselves in the soil.

And when the origin of life occurs in the earth, presumably in the oceans, these reactions might then be incorporated into the biology and greatly help to understand the elaboration of such reaction change in terrestrial metabolism.

I would also like to point out that there is a striking prevalence in terrestrial biology across the boards from the simplest organisms to ourselves of enzyme systems, whose function it is to deal with ultraviolet light and the product of ultraviolet light, to undo the damage caused by ultraviolet light.

And the chief of these systems, called catalase and peroxidases, it is at least possible that these systems date from a time when the earth was rather like contemporary Mars, when there was a huge amount of ultraviolet damage that could be done. No Viking experiment has been done at Mars' ambient temperatures. It's a little bit like sending a spacecraft from Mars to the earth to look for life here, but only examining the organisms at temperatures of 200 Fahrenheit. You will not find an awful lot of microorganisms that like that environment, because it is not typical of our planet.

Well, in the same way, all of the Viking microbiology experiments have been done in the temperature range of between 10 and something like 25 degrees centigrade, which is the very highest temperatures ever obtained on contemporary Mars. One would dearly like to do such experiments at lower temperatures, maybe even as low as the average Martian temperature to 10 Kelvin.

Until such experiments are done, it is impossible to exclude the most reasonable sort of Martian life, the kind that likes the ambient temperatures and is destroyed by the high temperatures. There is some hope that in the extended mission of Viking, we might be able to do some microbiology at some lower temperatures than have been done so far.

The Viking mission, it seems to me, has been a spectacular success, quite independent of how this intriguing and enigmatic debate on biology versus chemistry works out. The results that have been obtained, I think, have revolutionized our knowledge about the planet. At the same time, we clearly see all sorts of ways, some very simple, in which experiments could be done, which would clarify the enigmatic issues, and for example, the sequencing of which media are introduced to Martian soil samples, the control of all the variables, one at a time, and so on.

My personal opinion, and this is not necessarily the view of NASA, although I dearly hope it is, the obvious follow on to Viking, the obvious device method of taking advantage of this extraordinary success is an unmanned roving vehicle with some improved biological experiments, more reagents, more test scales, more onboard logic. A drill to get down to depths where there has been no ultraviolet light for a very long time. Possibly with a microscope, although that might be difficult, but the key point is to be able to rove.

Then you could land in the safe places, and wander to the exciting places, which are more likely to have biology or organic chemistry, the places which we note to have a much more exciting geology than these two, while they are exciting, relatively dull places that we landed in.

And so let me conclude by showing you an artist's conception of what such a roving mission might look like.

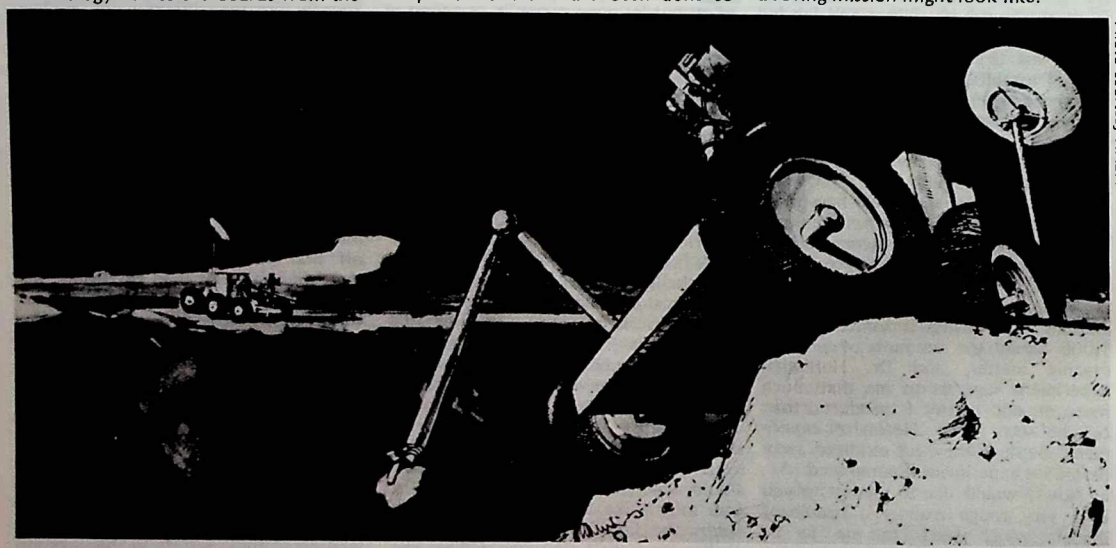
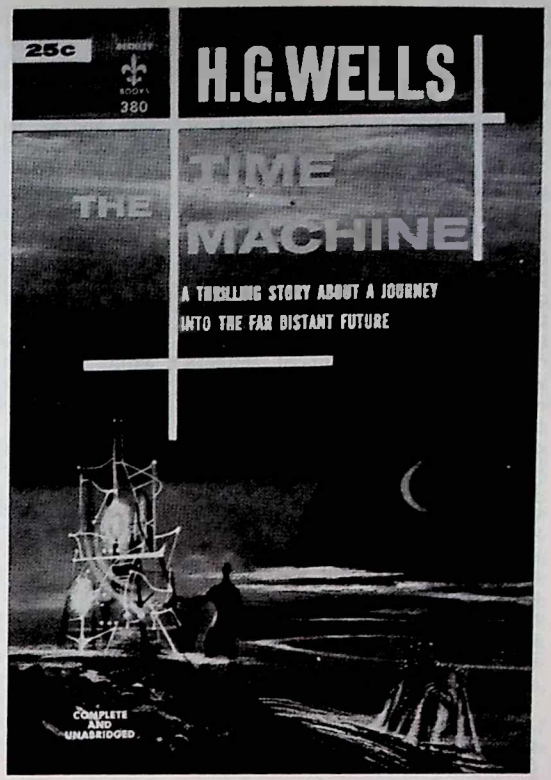
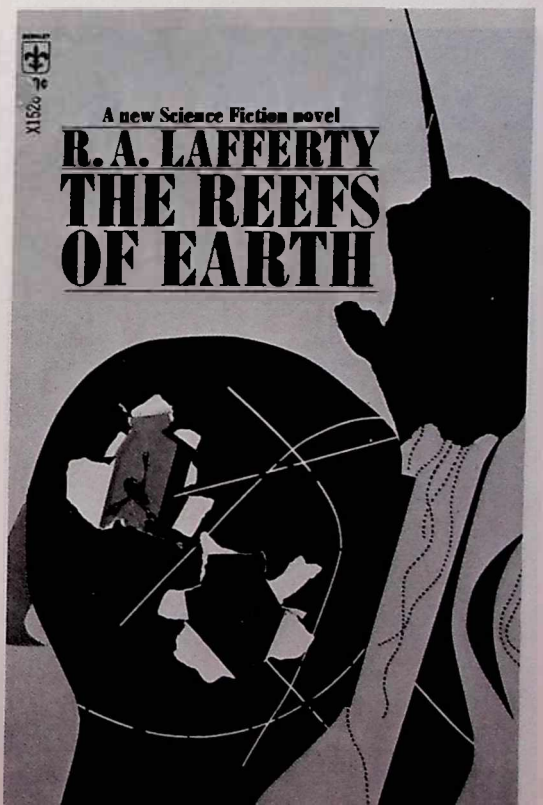


Photo courtesy NASA

Such a rover could wander hundreds to thousands of kilometers in a nominal lifetime. It could wander to its own horizon every day. Anything you see today, you could examine closeup tomorrow. You could have the capability of roaming over the polar ice, and running down one of those stream beds—of fully exploiting the marvelous heterogeneity of Mars.●

sketches
Vincent Di Fate





Before beginning this installment of "Sketches," I would like to make two brief remarks. First, my thanks to all of you who criticized, praised or otherwise commented on the first two columns, and most especially to William Hamblen whose reminder that "there is no atmosphere in space" fortifies the need for me to be more explicit. In the visual (and emotional) sense, there is indeed atmosphere in space, if we think of atmosphere as being the pervading mood or spirit which distinguishes one place from another. If you have seen such movies as *Destination Moon* or *2001: A Space Odyssey*, or even the smallest sampling of the thousands of feet of film brought back by our astronauts during this fruitful decade and a half of space exploration, you would certainly agree that space is a most atmospheric place after all. Mr. Hamblen's valuable comment sharpens my awareness of how the meanings of words are tailored to the artist's vocabulary and reminds me of my responsibility to write in a manner intelligible to *all* my readers.

Second, my thanks to Dr. Al Ackerman who wishes to keep me honest about what is fact and what is opinion. For those of you who were unable to see why I concluded that Frank R. Paul's work is "great SF illustration," in light of my criticism of his technical competence, let me state that illustration need not *necessarily* be "physically" appealing to be effective. Illustration is good when it successfully fulfills the particular functions for which it is commissioned. An illustration, specifically, is a drawing or painting created to meet the pre-fixed requirements of the publisher. In the case of cover art, it should be

The mannequin, a common image in surrealist art because of its lack of identity, and its sometimes sinister and/or phallic allusion, is here handled by artist Richard Powers in two very different ways. At the top, the mannequin is given some of the silhouette characteristics of a man, and is obviously intended to represent the Time Traveller. Consistently, the artist has provided us with a wide range of values and a richness of implied detail which creates the illusion that what we are looking at is rather well defined. In fact, that is not so, and while the illustrative elements are defined in terms of shapes, the major part of what this illustration *is* or *isn't* exists in the mind of the viewer. Below, in a far more graphic example, the mannequin has no identity whatever. Is it man, machine, or monster, or something in between?

eye-catching (as Paul's work most certainly is) and it should have some relevance to the contents of the book, or at least identify it by category (SF as opposed to a gothic or western). If a cover painting does more than that, as Paul's covers do, all to the better. "Art," on the other hand, is usually generated wholly by the artist who is untainted by the need to appeal to the buying habits of the mass market. To grossly oversimplify a very complex issue, conceivably, if a cover is sufficiently terrible enough to attract attention at a book rack, it can effectively sell books—and the selling of books, rather than the pursuit of aesthetic values, is the whole point. Does this mean that Frank R. Paul's work is totally devoid of artistic merit? Of course not. But the principal appeal of it is to the mind rather than to the eye. The current theory in the market place is that if a book can be noticed, by whatever means, it will sell (remember when metallic foils and die-cuts were anomalies? Nor should we forget the recent example of *Salem's Lot*, when an intrepid publisher considered the question, 'can we sell a book with an invisible cover?').

And now, on to greener pastures.

Today, some four and a half centuries after his death, Hieronymus Bosch is most widely known as the forerunner of surrealist painting, but in his own time he was beloved by both the powerful and the poor alike, for very different reasons. Bosch's sweeping landscapes, both terrestrial and otherwise, and his meticulous renditions of fantastic, demonic creatures had a profound effect on his contemporaries. His paintings, dealing almost exclusively with religious themes, often depicted the fearful consequences of the sinful life, and the fear of hellfire was one means by which the Church (and consequently its wealthier patrons) manifested its power. While Bosch questioned total obedience to the authority of the Church, and often depicted the shortcomings of the clergy in his works, he was too much a believer to strenuously oppose it—and the Church, in that time, held all the marbles, so to speak. The common man, faced with the political and economic changes of the day, saw the erosion of the medieval worldview as the ultimate domination of Satan over the affairs of man. Bosch's hellish vision of demonic intervention is an awesome chronicle of fear and anxiety, with which the common folk found a strong affinity. The greatest similarity Bosch's work bears to modern surrealism, apart from the grotesqueness of its subject matter and the dreamlike quality of its execution, is that both were born of the realization that our institutions were failing us in the face of change and the light of new knowledge.

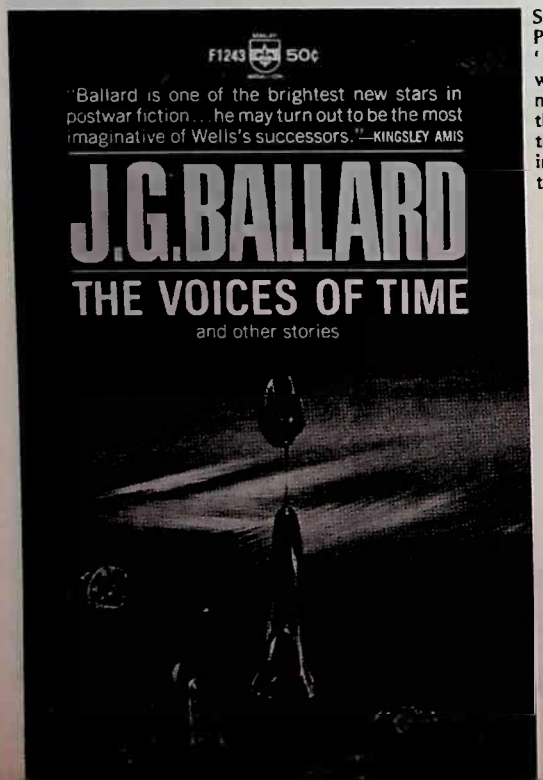
When we think of the Renaissance, we think of drastic change; in fact, that change took fully three centuries to happen. If we then begin with the Industrial Revolution and take Alvin Toffler at his word that we are on the threshold of God-knows-what kind of New Age, we might, perhaps, speculate that history is again repeating itself. I've never been much of a prophet, so I won't go that far (it occurs to me that, for as long as there has been a civilization, there has been a fear of its falling apart), but there was a sufficient amount of change occurring on various levels of human society during the last half of the 19th century and the early decades of this one to get some people to thinking.

The development of the camera, for one thing, had a profound effect on the visual arts, and painting became less of a literal quest for realism. Looking for new territories to explore, art suddenly began to move in many directions at once. It was inevitable that some artists would turn their attention to self-exploration and self-expression beyond the conventional modes. This subjective, and sometimes introspective, turn was further encouraged by the development of a new type of therapy designed to deal with mental illness, called *psychoanalysis*. According to its precepts, once stripped of the controls and inhibitions of the conscious mind, by means of free association, dream analysis, etc., the unconscious can be made to reveal repressed instinctual forces which affect our normal behavior. Suddenly, the *total* identity of man was not the knowable, tangible thing it was once thought to be.

Having little bearing on the arts, but nonetheless of special interest to us, were the almost simultaneous changes which were affecting the physical sciences. By the turn of the century, Newtonian physics was beginning to crumble. By the late teens, the quantum theory and relativity had all but vanquished Newton's clean, predictable, mechanically functioning universe. In 1927 Heisenberg formulated his famous Principle of Uncertainty, and scientific man began to question, perhaps for all time, his understanding of reality.

Did all this mean that everything was coming unglued? I think not. As new tools were being developed, new information began flooding in far more rapidly than the mind of man could assimilate it. But the belief that chaos was the true order of things, had only been a quaint notion up until that point.

The most crucial event of the early 20th century, however, was the outbreak of World War I in 1914. Never before in history had man demonstrated



So much like Tanguy, Powers paints a ''dreamscape'' without intelligible meaning, but with all the implications of time, space and the internal horizons of the mind.

such an all engulfing capacity for self-destruction. The war and a general mood of frustration about the direction art was taking were major factors in the formulation of dadaism in about 1916. Dadaism is an anti-art. To be more specific, it is an anti-civilization, anti-institutional, anti-intellectual, anti-rational anti-art. To the dadaists the war had proven the pretensions of civilization to be false. Their method of demonstrating their disdain for rational thought was to sabotage and discredit every established notion and institution of mankind. To some, the chaos and destruction of the war seemed so overwhelming, that the injection of that chaos into the cultural scheme of things seemed of vital importance.

Born of the same pessimistic views, but further embracing the revelations of Freud's psychoanalysis as a truer image of man and of reality, the first surrealist manifesto was written by André Breton in 1924. Whereas dadaism sought to defy rational understanding by reverting to child-like art (among other modes), surrealism most often utilizes the seeming incoherence of the dream to the same end. On some levels, surrealism marked a return to illustrative painting, justified by this defiance of understanding. Even in the less representational works, such as the shape paintings of Matta, Miro and Tanguy, there is a sense of likeness to natural forms lurking just beyond the threshold of recognition. As with dadaism, surrealism strives energetically to be iconoclastic, perverse and shocking, while at the same time still maintaining an awareness of the age old questions of identity and reality.

The basic considerations of science and art are the same. But whereas one is bound to objective analysis the other is free to do otherwise.

It has been suggested by some observers that there is a great division of ideas existing in the literature of science fiction. Certainly, there was a time when science was the unmitigated hero of the genre. No matter what problems arose from the tinkerings of man, man was so much the master of his destiny that he could rise to the challenge, and in the end, his new "toy" would come to provide for his betterment. New Wave supplies us with an alternative viewpoint about our technology and compells us to consider other aspects of the problem. They say that New Wave is dead, but its death is only as an independent commercial entity. As long as there are men such as Philip K. Dick, Samuel R. Delany, Harlan Ellison, and Michael Moorcock profoundly committed to making us see the wonders of our scientific age through different eyes, science fiction will continue to provide us with a valid forum. Who has the right to control the direction of man's genetic future? What will happen when the first clone (or alien or machine capable of creative thought) kills or is killed? And, again, what is the true identity of man? What is human? What is reality? Is there any sense or order to this vast, black universe, and can we maintain our rationality knowing that there is not?

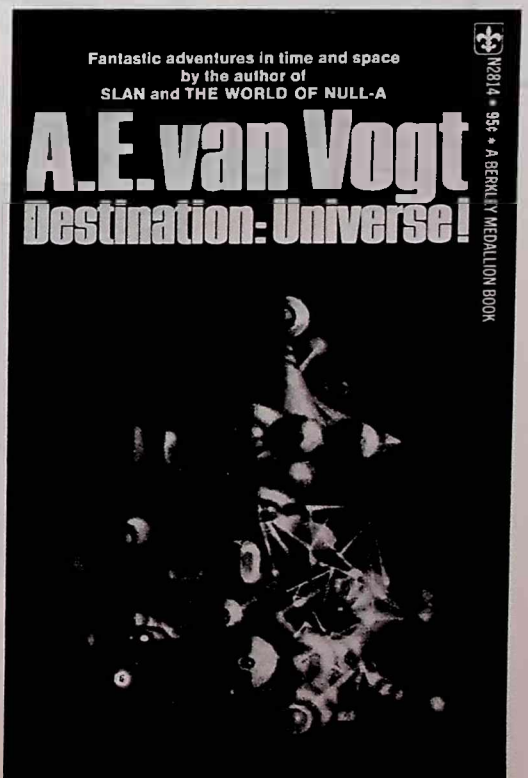
On the face of it, the surrealist viewpoint being an *anti-ism*, is diametrically opposed to the purposes and principles of science. It is therefore rather startling that, early in the 1950's, at the suggestion of publisher Ian Ballantine, a young American surrealist named Richard Powers began applying the precepts of surrealism to solving the problems of science fiction illustration. Powers was not the first to attempt such a thing, Hannes Bok and others endeavored to do so some years earlier in the magazines, but Powers was certainly the most persistent. Some three decades after beginning his professional career, Powers is still remarkably active in the science fiction market.

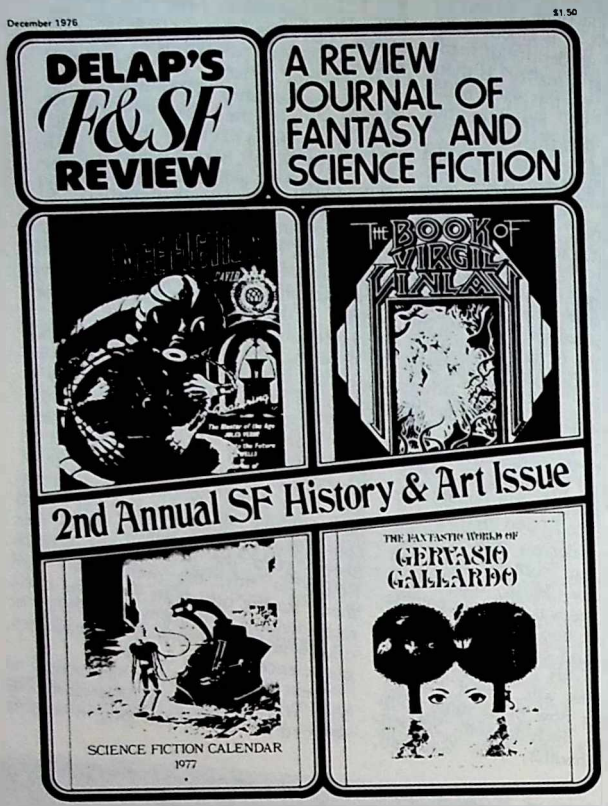
While Powers derives much of his creative momentum from the European surrealists Tanguy, Miro, Matta, Dali and di Chirico, he was quite an enigma in the paperback book field of twenty-five years ago, and consequently influenced dozens of his fellow illustrators. The SF notables who reveal Powers' influence, either now or at some point in their careers, include John Schoenherr, Ed Emshwiller, Jack Gaughan, George Ziel, Paul Lehr, Eddie Jones, and Vincent Di Fate (who?), to name a few. His popularity with his fellow artists can best be accounted for because of his "painterliness" and for his constant efforts to experiment, despite the demands of the market. His popularity with the book-buying public (and although he has never won a Hugo, his ability to sell books with his art is very much in evidence) can best be attributed, to my way of thinking, to its appeal on the subliminal level. Perhaps, like Bosch, he taps a mutual anxiety we share about the future, or perhaps his work touches us in a way too deeply buried in the common memory of man to be recalled.

Powers, like Frank R. Paul, marks only the beginning of the "New Wave" school of SF art. Many would follow in his footsteps, and still others would draw from different influences a vision that could still best be described as surrealistic. The greatest importance of the "New Wave" school is in the irony of applying surrealism to SF, and consequently, to science. Whether people read the literature of science fiction or not, the pictures are still there, staring out at us from the book racks; helping us to form, consciously or otherwise, our notions of our machines, our science, and our future.

Next time, more of the artists of New Wave SF, and an interview with Richard Powers far too long in coming.

A city adrift on the currents of space? A crowd scene? Machine? Bathroom plunger from Xeno? How nice to participate in the quest for understanding!





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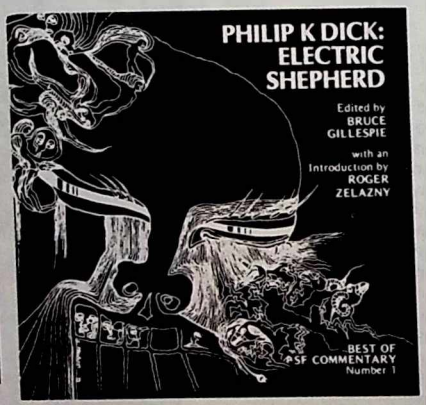

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POHLEMIC:

THE BADNESS OF BIG

When I first began writing science fiction, which was well over two weeks ago, things were different. Science fiction was a cottage industry. No one expected to get rich from it, and no one paid attention to it except those who loved it. I would write my stories and take them up to John Campbell at *Astounding,* or T. O'Conor Sloane at *Amazing,* or Charlie Hornig at *Wonder,* and they would (almost always) reject them, but once in a while something would get in print. A little later, when I was first a pro editor, Isaac Asimov and Ray Cummings and Cyril Kornbluth would bring their stories up to me, and it was pretty much the same. I would buy them when I liked them, and send them back when I didn't, and it was a reasonably human contact between human beings. The writers wrote. The editors published. The readers read. Sometimes the players changed teams, a reader began to write or a writer got an editorial job, but the functions stayed the same, and there was hardly an unnecessary link in the production chain. And we all loved it. We had to love it; there wasn't enough money involved to do it for anything but love.

That simple and idyllic life style began to change even while I was all fresh and new in it, because agents began to appear. Julie Schwartz was the first to specialize in science fiction. (Maybe I was the second myself.) But other agents, what we reverently called "mainstream" agents, did handle a little science fiction now and them, and before I was through with my first four years of editing *Astonishing* and *Super Science* it became relatively uncommon to have on-the-spot personal contact with the writers. By 1960, when I first took over *Galaxy* and *If,* I was buying almost half of what filled the book from agents; John Campbell was buying about the same, and many of the other editors were buying even higher proportions. Some editors bought every last word from an agent, usually Scott Meredith, who would from time to time make a deal with a publisher to supply him the whole contents of his magazines. Then the Science Fiction Writers of America appeared, and suddenly there were three parties to consider in dealing with a writer: the writer, his agent and SFWA.

At the same time, of course, the larger world outside became aware of our little SF Eden, and began to encroach on it, and so we had major publishing houses like Doubleday bringing out large-scale SF lines; we had academics beginning to teach science fiction, and "serious" critics beginning to study it. This was not altogether easy for writers. Writing is a nervous business; you have to please yourself, and maybe you have something to spare to please the editor you think might buy it. But if you are also aware of two or three other people standing behind your shoulder as you write your story—the critic who gave you a hell of a good review last time (will he like this one as well?), the doctoral student who is doing a dissertation on your life, the university that wants to make you an immortal—there is more self-consciousness than is easily handled.

When you add to that the necessity for conducting business and legal dealings on a blue-chip scale (and it is blue-chip; the top ten per cent of science-fiction writers are in the top one per cent of incomes), you find that you don't really have time to put in eight hours a day writing any more, not if you try to do everything else you're supposed to do by yourself. You've got the lecture tours and the TV appearances, the ritual editorial luncheons and the autographing parties. You've got a hell of a complicated tax return to prepare, and so you need an accountant. You've got complex contracts to study, and legal angles to shoot, and so you need a lawyer. Public-relations people want to get your name known, newspaper writers want to interview you . . . and young writers beg for advice, fans send you flattering letters, old friends suddenly remember your name. You're not obliged to answer these people, but what kind of a person are you if you don't? All of this is interesting and maybe even, in some sense, good; but there are only 168 hours in any week, and you do have to spend a certain number of them in sleep, in eating, in going to the bathroom and in just sitting and breathing hard, and what is left is no longer "full-time" for writing.

Worse than that.

The conditions of writing change. If you write a story for a science-fiction magazine editor, that's not too complicated. If you write it for a major book publisher, then complexities begin. If they take it seriously, then they want to beat the tomtoms for it well ahead of publication, with their sales force, the trade press and everyone else. That means you have to tell them what it is you're writing well before you have written it; and if you miss a deadline it can mean a lot of heartburn for a lot of people. If you reach the point where it's not just one publisher who wants to do your book, but a hardbound publisher, a paperback publisher, a magazine for

the serial rights, a French, English, Italian, Spanish, Japanese, and God knows how many other publishers for foreign rights, then the logistics become almost frightening. People call you up from Sao Paolo to say, "I'm translating your new one, and I wonder what you mean by the term 'gafiate'." German television sends a camera crew over to photograph you in your home. Film producers want you to tell them the story of your next one over the phone, so they can make an offer before anybody else sees it.

Even that is bearable. But once you have reached that point, the inevitable next step is that the performing arts get interested in you, and you are offered considerable inducements to write a TV series, come to Hollywood, help someone adapt your work for stage, screen or cabaret. That way, I swear, madness lies. There are some very nice, bright people in film and TV. But there are even more who are not either of these things, and generally speaking the people in category 1 work under the people in category 2. They spell out the rules for you. There are things you can do. There are things you can't do. There are things you must do. Writing television is a lot like trying to write a novel blindfold, without using the letter "E" while a lunatic is screaming into your ear.

And in all of this, where is the human contact between artist and audience? Gone, that's where it is. Gone.

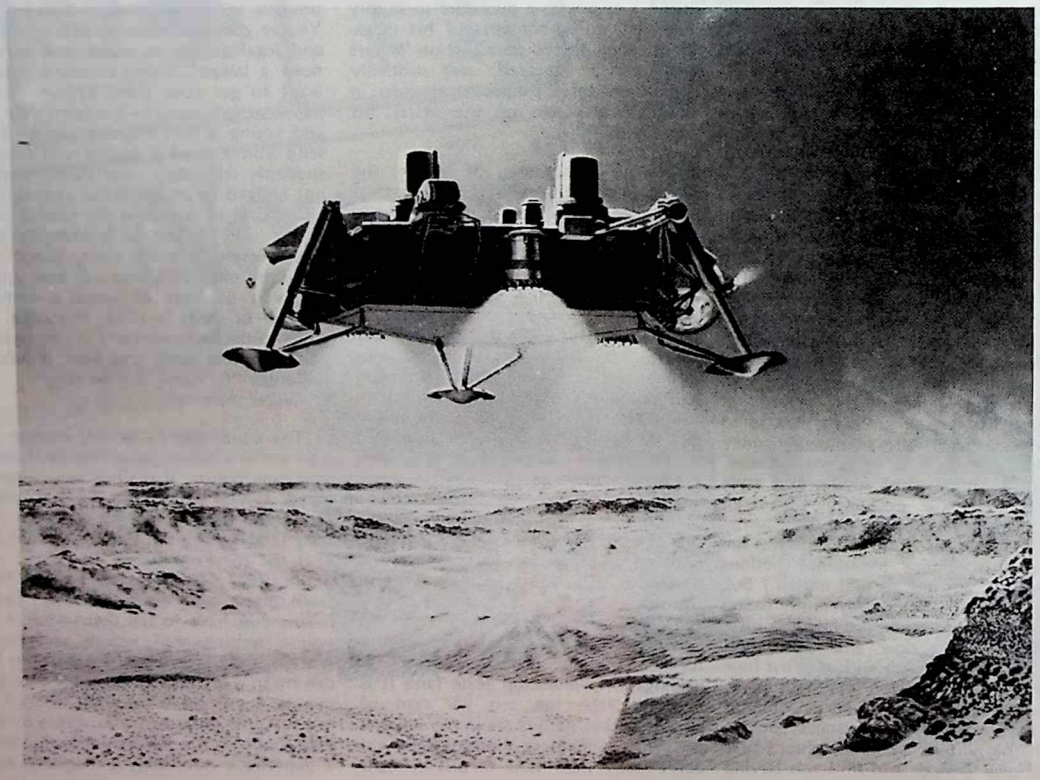
Now, listen, I'm not complaining. As others have said before me, I've tried both rich and poor and rich is better. But something is lost in all that gain, and what is lost is *person.*

TV producers don't really produce anything. What they do is "package." They take what someone else invents and they ornament it and vitamin-enrich it and wrap it in polyvinyl chloride and fling it onto sixty million television screens, and because they command such immense audiences (and such immense money), everybody else has learned to do what they do. It is the Age of the Gimmick. Maybe that's not so bad when you take good stuff and find a way of punching up the cover copy to make it seem even better—dishonest, oh, yeah, but not damaging to the stories themselves. But what happens when you decide on the package first, and then pick up the phone and order twelve different stories from twelve different authors to make it real? After all, who knows best what story an author should write? The author himself, or some packager?

But all that is hard to resist, friends, when the plastic packaging people wave those big checks under your nose. And so we get a writer into a position where he calculates, Let's see, I can type 40 words a minute, this fellow wants 3000 words; it doesn't have to be good, just not so bad that everybody will notice; why, an hour and a quarter from now I can have earned enough money to buy my wife a Christmas present. (At certain altitudes, the present can be a mink.)

And so he does . . . and so it goes; and the bigger it is, the worse. I don't think writers should starve. But I don't think they should be bribed to do bad work, either, but that is the way things are.

So I am not altogether in sympathy with those esteemed colleagues who quit SF because it doesn't pay enough, or get reviewed in the daily New York *Times,* or receive the odd Pulitzer or Nobel Prize. You can't have it pay off like television unless you are willing for it to *be* like television, and who among us really wants that?●



WEIRD HEROES VOLUMES 1-5
EDITED AND PRODUCED BY BYRON PREISS

WHAT DO YOU SAY TO A MAN WITH WINGS?

If his name is **Doc Phoenix**, you don't say anything. You just wait for him to **leave** your mind.

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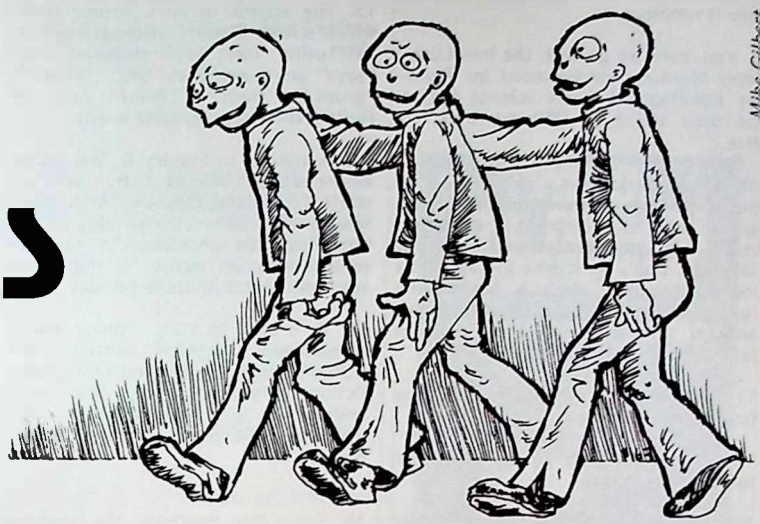


Mike Gilbert

ALFRED BESTER

A Complete Short History of SF Writing With Fifty All-Purpose Footnotes

"Tell me again about your experiment, professor," the brash young reporter sneered.[1]

"Einstein's Theory of Relativity[2] shows us that time[3] is the fourth dimension,"[4] the professor explained.[5] "And my hyper-transmitter can reverse time[6] in space and bring back the past."[7]

The professor pulled the electronic hyper-switch[8] and a hideous shape[9] appeared on the laboratory bench. As the professor's beautiful daughter[10] screamed, Brick[11] Halsyon X-beamed the monster with his Cathode Disintegrator.[12]

"That 'thing' was the giant Jovian henchman of the space-pirate[13] which he has been [14] looting spacecraft and murdering innocent Venusians throughout the universe," Brick gritted.[15]

From the ichor of "The Thing" arose a mother-of-pearl tree. "Oh, so, bubie," the petals giggled, "you like hear velly funny story we tell on Mars about these two canals that—"[16]

"There is no Mars," the professor said. "There are no planets. Our dedicated group of robot scientists is trying to prove the theory that the solar system is a mass hallucination induced by eclipses."[17]

"There *is so* a Mars," his beautiful daughter whispered. "Mars is beautiful."[18]

"Now let's compute the data," Dr. Halsyon said. "I've taken my doctorate[19] in Advanced Studies[20] on Extrapolation[21] faster than the speed of light[22] and those catabolic aliens[23] are *not* from *our* Andromeda nebula.[24] They are from a para-Andromeda[25] in a parallel time."[26]

Nathan Brick[27] reloaded the supersonic, shrugged and shot the girl and her father.[28] "There's a time for love and a time for death," he reported to the C.I.C. Solar Counterspy, actually a double-agent,[29] while he annihilated the clumsy goon squad[30] and stepped onto the neuro-plastic escalator which lofted him to the lair of the Alien Queen-bee[31] so determined to prevent him from discovering who "THEY" were. "Let's get my death over with," he smiled. "I want to scrootch[32] like the Old Ones."[33]

"Look," she said reasonably, "if you want to sell me your soul, we can make a deal[34] and no swindles from Hellsville, which is really schlock-city for us Faust-type demons,[35] but you've got to remember that soul is just another four-letter word."[36]

"Scatology has always been a hang-up with the schizoid sado-mac[37] types living split-level lives," the Esper[38] transmitted on the Delta Cranial Wavelength to the Analysand Vigilantes[39] at war with the Id and the Super-Ego of that monster called *Homo sapiens.*[40]

So they ravished the beautiful daughter and mangled the professor's butt[41] with an Aston-Martin overhead camshaft[42] and gave the monster an autographed manhole cover for a souvenir[43] and Lennie asked George[44] to tell him about the future again[45] only he thought the future was named "Clyde."[46] but King Dragon[47] he esplain that time is a spaced-out Necro[48] so they all like go out to rip off their resident Honk[49] on their way to Milwaukee, Mother of Men, or was it Waukegan?[50]

1. Back in the Stone Age most science fiction stories began with an explanation of "the experiment" to a skeptic.

2. The authors adored "relativity," which they couldn't understand, much less explain.

3. And they loved "time" after H.G. Wells showed the way with his novel, "The Time Machine."

4. Good old fourth dimension. It was science fiction's portmanteau gimmick. A sort of "The butler done it."

5. Don't go into details. Just make it sound plausible.

6. "Time" was always an accommodating harlot in the early days of science fiction. You could get her to do anything you damn pleased. They're still manipulating her in the TV science fiction shows.

7. Including turning her into a virgin again.

8. Always have a laboratory scene, but keep it simple.

9. Yep, here we go with the inevitable: *Enter Monster Accompanied by Trumpet Voluntary.* I figure science fiction has used up 5,271,009 monsters, to date.

10. There was always a girl, half-naked and screaming, on the magazine covers, so she had to appear in the stories, usually as the professor's beautiful daughter. She's in science fiction films today, but now she's a businesslike colleague with a doctorate in phlebotomy or something and a difficulty in pronouncing words like "nuclear."

11. Action heroes often had butch-type front names.

12. And a gun is a gun is a gun, no matter what you call it.

13. At this stage science fiction fell into the hands of the Western hacks who simply translated the Lazy X ranch and cattle rustlers into the Planet X and space pirates.

14. They had to write too fast, at ½ cent a word, to bother with polish and style. S.J. Perelman calls this form "the Hollywood subjunctive."

15. The stigma of hack writing from which science fiction suffers as much as any other form. No character ever "says" anything. They "grit," "growl," "grunt," "sneer," "shout" *und so weiter.* These are surrogate words.

16. A tribute to Stanley G. Weinbaum who electrified science fiction with his story, "A Martian Odyssey." Weinbaum was the first to create charming and/or terrifying alien creatures who made no sense in human terms. He inspired a vogue which continues to this day.

17. A tribute to Isaac Asimov whose monumental "Nightfall" remains as the classic example of how and why science fiction is written. Any novice who wishes to "play the sedulous ape" would do well to take "Nightfall" as his model.

18. Enter Ray Bradbury, the exquisite pastel artist. No one could ever imitate his delicate style, although many have tried. And Bradbury practically invented Mars, which has always been his turf. With Bradbury, poetry began to color science fiction.

19. The action hero has given way to the sincere scientist. This marks the advent of John W. Campbell, Jr., puissant editor of *Astounding* (later *Analog*) science fiction magazine, who almost single-handedly elevated it from adventure-in-outer-space to stretching-the-inner-mind. Campbell gave the Good Guys and the Bad Guys diplomas.

20. And most of them lived next door to Einstein at Princeton.

21. It's my fond belief that the Great Campbell invented this word which is one of the foundations of "The Golden Age" of science fiction. In primer terms it means taking an idea and exaggerating it plausibly. The Watergate crowd used it too.

22. This is science fiction's "Big Lie." Contemporary physicists insist that nothing can exceed the speed of light. But how can you carry action throughout the universe within a reasonable length of time? Stars and galaxies are centuries away. The answer is, fake it with spaceships traveling in "paraspace" "subsonic space" "over-drive" "phase-drive" "star-drive," you name it. It's one of the conventions cheerfully accepted for the sake of the story, even though we know it's impossible. All the rest of literature makes these concessions, too. Read "The Eve of St. Agnes" or "Lassie."

23. You'd better have some grounding in science. Just plain "monster" doesn't work any more. They have to have a biological *raison d'être.*

24. And get your locale out beyond our solar system. Science fiction exhausted our planets and moons years ago.

25. "Para" has always been a convenient gimmick for authors. It enables them to sneak around difficulties. "The para-butler done it." Another favorite is "Warp."

26. And the same for "parallel time" which is a "What would happen if–?" device. "What would happen if Napoleon defeated Wellington in a parallel time?"

27. Still the same hero, but the names are getting realistic.

28. The tough *macho* style of Robert Heinlein, dean of the science fiction authors, who has had as much influence on the field as Shakespeare had on drama.

29. Heinlein anticipated the "James Bond" mystique.

30. His hard-nosed, cool protagonists

set a pattern which wiped out the "Gee! Wow!" school of science fiction.

31. Heinlein was one of the first to use women for his Bad Guys. The "THEY" syndrome was typical of science fiction; the invisible "THEM" who own us and control us. It's also typical of real life. Aren't the current speculations about Watergate and the Kennedy and King assassinations a search for the invisible "THEM"?

32. A tribute to Heinlein's creation of a new religion in his "Stranger in a Strange Land," which has become a powerful cult today. Science fiction often tries to start religions.

33. The field often suffers from a "father" or a "mentor" complex. They usually belong to a lofty race of exalted power, intellect and morality, and they guide, protect and defend the Good Guy and the American Way of Life.

34. Enter *The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction* which delighted readers with its light, amusing touch. Humor had at last made its epiphany in science fiction. It had always been sadly lacking. In the eyes of F&SF the world didn't end with a bang or a whimper but with a giggle.

35. In science fiction you can always poke fun at anything.

36. But sex and street language were taboo until recently. This is why the "New Wave" science fiction authors of today are so wildly extravagant.

37. Enter *Galaxy* magazine which introduced science fiction to psychoanalysis, or vice versa. *Galaxy* was shaped and edited by Horace Gold, and I would love to believe that he was the illegitimate son of Sigmund Freud (1856-1939). Today you can't write any story in any genre without a firm Freudian foundation.

38. At the same time, science fiction was beginning to explore extrasensory perception, and taking it very seriously. Today, ESP and the Psychic bit have become new religions.

39. But despite the advent of psychiatry there still have to be Good Guys and Bad Guys in story-telling. Damned if I know why.

40. I don't think Freud would have approved of this comment.

41. Ah-ha! Ah-ha! Enter the "New Wave" science fiction. Sex and street language have arrived. The authors are intoxicated with their freedom. They kick all the established rules and customs overboard, and why not? Only accountants in soul, if not body, would expect any art form to conform.

42. Sometimes the "New Wave" writers are a little demented, but every revolution has its excesses.

43. And sometimes their humor is preposterous.

44. And sometimes they climb on the bandwagon of contemporary literature, hoping that the Establishment will recognize them as "mainstream" authors. In this case, the male buddy-buddy *schtick* which seems to upset the Women's Lib ladies.

45. I should have had Lennie ask George to tell him about an *alienated* future . . . whatever that might be.

46. We all speak black musicians' jive today.

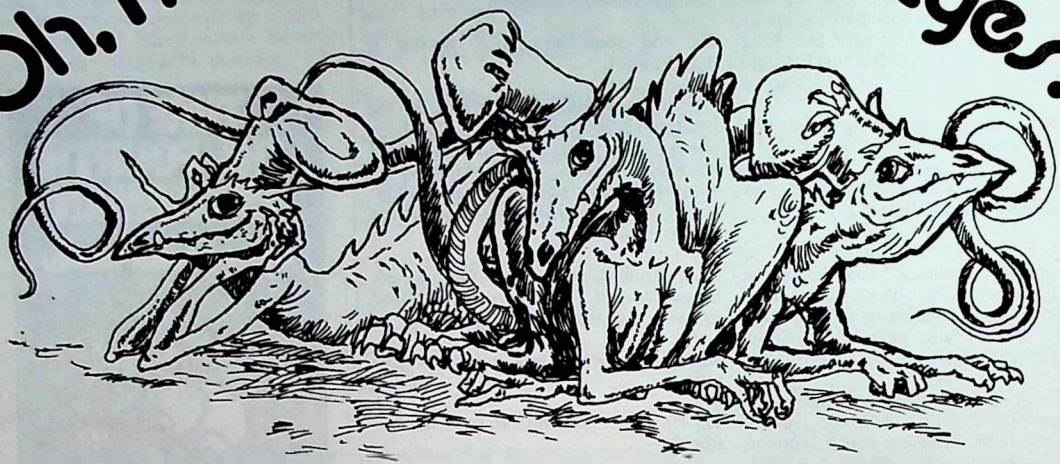
47. How the hell did *he* get into the story?

48. The loved one of the necrophiliac, a role which we all may play if you extrapolate sexuality and sensuality into the future.

49. Gee, science fiction is sore as hell these days. It's probably reflecting the way we all feel. But you better be angry, too, if you want to read it and/or write it. Its purpose is to rack you up, knock you around, and shatter glass with a penetrating "A" in the upper register.

50. I have now cloned—which is to say, replicated—the science fiction stereotypes which were, are and inevitably will be written in one form or another. But keep in mind that there *are* some magnificent science fiction stories which remain in our literature forever, and there will be more. Alas, they can't be cloned. No one can replicate the impact of color, ideas, brilliance and excitement which is really what science fiction is all about. One can only clone the clichés.●

Oh, Those Trepidatious Eyes!



Mike Gilbert

R. A. Lafferty

Winchilsea the restaurateur was a prideful man. He sold arrogance, he sold elegance, he sold exclusiveness. And he provided the best and most adventuresome fare in town, and perhaps in the world.

It was only before the three Epicures that he was subservient. He groveled for their approval. No dish could be truly good or adventuresome unless they certified it so. The three Epicures met the first Tuesday evening of every month in a private alcove of Winchilsea's Far Eastern Restaurant.

"We do not ask that you satisfy us, Winchilsea," Alban Raffels, one of the Epicures, would say. "We do not ask for a faultless or even an adequate dish. We don't require gratification. We demand ecstasy."

Alban Raffels was Commissar of the Gross Arts.

"We are impossible to please," said Vanessa Van Wyck who was another of the Epicures, "because it isn't mere pleasure that we wish. We do not ask to be pleased, but to be astonished. And we are easily astonished: it takes no more than total novelty and total excellence, and the transcendence to be found in one dish in a million. Astonish us now, Winchilsea."

Vanessa Van Wyck was Commissar of the Fine Arts.

"We ask for adventure. We ask for discovery," said Cushman Sweetbasil, the third of the Epicures. "We ask for the future here tonight on stoneware platters. We no longer, as earlier members of the Epicurian dynasty did, require on a platter the head of the restaurateur who fails in our expectations. The heads have proved to be mostly gristle and bone and have been no real improvement over the dishes that have failed. We do, however, require of the failed person something much more appalling than the loss of his head. No, no, 'twould spoil the mystery and horror to explain it."

Cushman Sweetbasil was Commissar of Extraordinary Aesthetics. And the Commissars, in those days, wielded the power of death and damnation over private citizens.

So, once a month, in breathless trepidation, Winchilsea provided the best and most adventuresome food in the world to the three Epicures. And he would wait in great uneasiness for the verdict from the three of them. His eyes would be like large stoneware saucers as he waited.

"We will let you know, Winchilsea, we will let you know," Sweetbasil would say as he assaulted a new presentation with only a two-tined fork and a horn-spoon. "Why are you apprehensive? Do you doubt yourself?"

Oh, those apprehensive eyes of Winchilsea!

"Why do you worry?" Vanessa Van Wyck would ask as she worked her way into some new succulence with lancet and Malayan chop-sticks. "You don't worry for the morrow, do you? Isn't it wonderful that we are so highly placed? It is because we are so highly placed that, if we are not astonished, there will not be any tomorrow for you."

Oh, those tremulous eyes of Winchilsea!

"We almost envy you for the rich flavor of your apprehension, Winchilsea," Raffels mumbled as he worked his way into a transcendent (though bony), roasted excellence, using a Swiss Army Knife with its scissors and saw and blades and awl and scoop-spoon. "Do you know that absolute excellence and abysmal failure are no further apart than the width of one Mandarin mushroom? And, to us, all failures are abysmal."

Oh, those trepidatious eyes of Winchilsea!

So Winchilsea worried and fretted, and he worked himself into a state of hysteria by the time of the first Tuesday evening of every month. But it was a creative hysteria and he continued to

supply transcendent excellence, month after month. And he compensated for his anguished position before the Epicures by his withering scorn and arrogance towards all his other customers.

But, one first Tuesday evening, Winchilsea enjoyed a surpassing success.

"Snap-Dragon Steak!" Sweetbasil cried with uncontrollable delight at the first morsel. "No, no sauce, nothing else. This is perfect! Ah yes, just one drop, careful, one small drop of that New Iberia Alligator-Sail Sauce. Perfection! A new god is enshrined tonight!"

"Oh, it's the roasted tail of the fabulous Anagenno Draco Draco," Vanessa Van Wyck sang her delight. "They *did* survive the Ming dynasty. Delight, delight!"

"Baked Pop-Tail Parfait!" Alban Raffels pealed his pleasure. "Let time stand still! This is the high instant of salivary lightning! It's struck!"

Yes, those Epicures knew real excellence when they met it. August Winchilsea shone with pleasure for many days after that. He had scored a culinary triumph. And it might be repeated, with judicious variations, again and again.

The Anagenno Draco Draco is the giant, snap-tail lizard. Indeed it had not become extinct at the time of the Ming Dynasty, for Winchilsea had come into possession of three of the creatures by accident. These had been sold to him for ordinary giant lizards to be used for lizard-tail soup. Then he discovered that they were snap-tails. With that discovery, came the days of delight.

The Anagenno are the most intelligent lizards or dragons in the world. They are the best natured. They are the most anxious to please. And they are the most sensitive. All snap-tails are highly sensitive, but these rare and giant snap-tails had a sensitivity beyond that of any other creature.

When frightened, snap-tails will snap their tails off, or at least the last long section of their tails. And they are able to grow new tails to replace those they have lost. The tails or tail-sections of all these lizards are highly edible. Those of the giant Anagenno or Draco Draco are of the most noble edibility in the world.

The snapped-off tail-sections would dress out to about forty pounds each, and they could be regrown three times in twenty-four hours. The giant lizards themselves weighed about a hundred pounds each when in good tail.

It was only necessary to frighten the creatures badly to make them snap. And then they would be put into the nutrient vat for tail regeneration. Nine tail sections of forty pounds each, sliced into one pound servings on that buzz saw that was always buzzing in the charnel room right off the kitchen, that would give three hundred and sixty snap-tail steaks a day. And anything approved by the Epicures for the month would go for a hundred dollars a plate. And it could be done the next month, and the next, and maybe even the month after that.

A proven pleasure might be served to the Epicures more than once, but not an automatically repeated pleasure. Oh, but there were variations and garnishments. It could be done.

The three Draco Dracos were very friendly and they became part of the family around Winchilsea's Far Eastern Restaurant. They were even given the names of Maco, Caco, and Draco. Lizards have almost-human hands, and these big, snap-tail lizards had almost human dexterity. They were able to do much of the work in the kitchen, even to the preparation of their own tails. They learned how to use the buzz saw and the nutrient vat and the ovens. And they rolled their eyes in delight when they sniffed their own savorine.

It took more ingenuity every day to scare them enough to make them snap their tails off (since they had become so friendly and unafraid generally). But when was ingenuity ever in short supply around Winchilsea's Restaurant?

But, as the first Tuesday of the next month approached, Winchilsea felt the return of his apprehensions. He had never been more secure, but he must still plan and improvise and execute with his old genius. All garnishes must be considered and all savories. And the little tricks of fine cookery must be enhanced. Oh, don't blow it now, Winchilsea, when you have the main thing already approved.

To aid him in his enterprises, Winchilsea got in a twitchy person known as Herman Boggle-Eyes. No, he didn't get him in to aid in the preparation of the exquisite foods. He got him in to scare the snap-tail lizards. These had now become so friendly and trusting that they laughed at attempts to scare them. But Boggle-Eyes, a person with terminal Grox Disease, had a really fearsome appearance and voice and he succeeded in scaring them to the snapping-point for a while yet. Things were bright around there.

"Winchilsea," Boggle-Eyes said one day, and Winchilsea went white with fear at the very sound of that dread voice, "I'll not be able to scare them three times a day till the end of the month. It's wearing pretty thin. Let's try it once a day."

So they did it once a day only, even though it meant a great loss of revenue. It is the business of all snap-tails to be scared when it is called for. Why couldn't they, good fellows though they were, fulfill that requirement?

"Winchilsea," Boggle-Eyes said one day a week before the fateful Tuesday, "It is simply no use. I cannot scare them even once a day. I may, just possibly, be able to scare them one more time, on the fateful day itself. We will see."

So they dispensed with the scaring entirely for that last week before the first Tuesday, and the Snap-Tails grew in friendliness and trust. Winchilsea continued to devise variations for the great coming presentation, sauces, spices, flavorings, garnishes. He experimented with exotic varieties of poke weeds and fungi. He obtained genuine Manchurian apples and Turkestan sheep pellets. He brought in bottled swamp gas from a real Dixie-Land swamp to burn in his ovens instead of the bland natural gas from the mains.

Of course he could not use old steak. The snap-tail steak must have been snapped fresh within one hour. And one whole forty-pound hunk must be served to each of the Epicures. It was theirs to select the best morsels, but they must be given a holocaustic hunk from which to make their selections.

But it went well. It went well right into late Tuesday afternoon as the baking hour approached. Winchilsea had his ovens just as he wanted them. He had more than one hundred sauces and additives lined up. He went to the carcass room with its ever-spinning buzz saw and its charnel aroma.

"The tails, Boggle-Eyes, where are the tails?" he asked. "Everything else is ready."

"Still on the lizards," the terminal-Grox-Disease monster croaked miserably. "I can't scare them, Winchilsea. I can't scare them even once more."

"Get out, get out!" Winchilsea shrieked. "I abhor a failure." And Winchilsea ran Boggle-Eyes and all the kitchen help out of there with his screeching. All that were left were three giggling lizards facing him and a deadline to meet.

"Won't scare, huh!" Winchilsea roared. "I'll scare the tails off you, I bet!" And he put on a fearsome display of shouting and gesturing for a livid five minutes. The lizards didn't scare. They applauded by clapping their human-like hands together. They had been scared too many times, and by an expert. They were sorry about their own failure to produce, but they weren't scared. And they couldn't snap if they weren't scared.

Then Winchilsea waxed thrice livid and carried on furiously. In his frenzy, he stumbled and fell into the buzz saw, and it cut off one of his legs just below the hip. No one else was there. The lizards were distressed, but they didn't know what to do. As Winchilsea had become very noisy about losing his leg,

the snap-tail lizards put him into the nutrient vat to grow it back again.

But he drowned instead.

There was still a deadline to meet, an oven waiting, and the important thing still undone. The snap-tails tried to jam Winchilsea's leg into the first place they thought of. It was too long. They cut it in three pieces on the buzz saw and then jammed it in.

"We do not ask you to satisfy us, Winchilsea," Alban Raffels, one of the Epicures was saying. "Oh, you're not Winchilsea, are you? You're the three snap-tail dragons yourselves. So much the better. We'll cut out the middle-man. Or is it that you have cut him *up?* We demand ecstasy! Why are you fearful, little dragons? Do you doubt your own competence?"

Raffels was working his way into the transcendent (though encased in burnt fabric) and roasted excellence of the presentation using his Swiss Army Knife. The presentation was somewhat longer than the platter, but was otherwise all in order. But would the Epicures *like* the presentation? That was the worry.

Oh, those apprehensive eyes of the snap-tail dragons!

"We ask for adventure. We ask for discovery," Cushman Sweetbasil was saying. "We ask for the future here tonight on stoneware plates. Oh, the future is longer than the plate, isn't it? Where is Winchilsea? Oh, I guess it won't matter."

Sweetbasil assaulted the excellent meal with only a two-tined fork and a horn-spoon.

"Why are you apprehensive?" he asked the Dragons. "Do you doubt yourselves?"

Oh, the tremulous eyes of the snap-tail dragons!

"We are impossible to please," said Vanessa Van Wyck, "because mere pleasure isn't what we wish. We wish to be astonished. Where is Winchilsea? Oh, I guess this is enough of him here."

Vanessa worked her way towards the succulence with lancet and Malayan chop-sticks, but she had started at the wrong end and it looked as if she would be there a while.

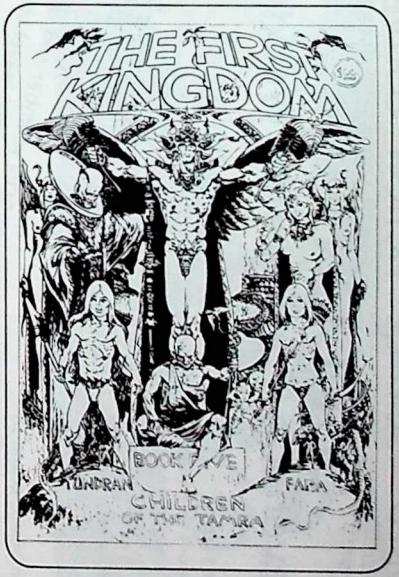
"If we are not properly astonished, Dragons, there won't be any tomorrow for you. Oh, don't go to pieces over it. Don't snap your tails. We will let you know."

Vanessa had the piece of Winchilsea's leg with the shoe on it. And she was tasting the shoe first, and she was so deliberate about it. Would the Epicures *like* the presentation? That was the worry. They were so slow about it all, and so much depended on it. Fiddling with shoes and baked pants.

Would they never get to the meat of the thing! Worry! Apprehension! Trepidation!

Oh, the trepidatious eyes of those dragons!●

THE FIRST KINGDOM



BY JACK KATZ

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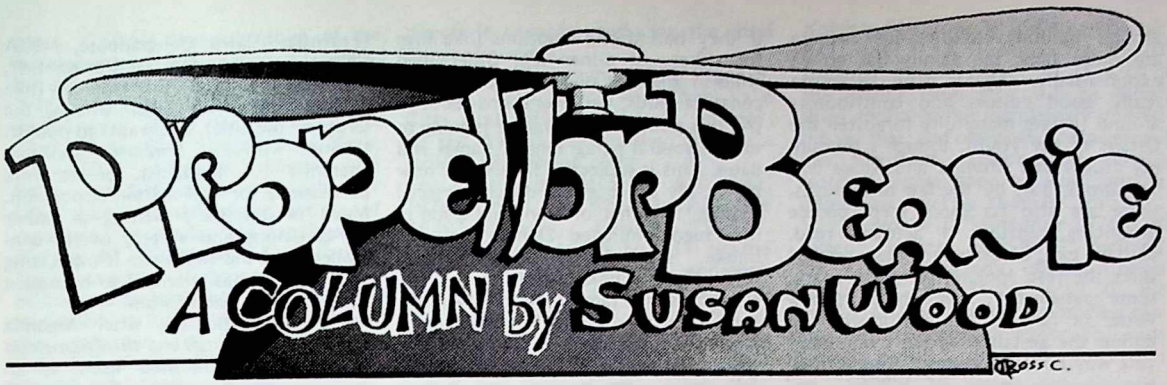

I won't be 30 for another 21 months, but already I'm a victim on the wrong side of the generation gap. Today, in my English 100 class, we were talking about aid to third world countries; the short-haired, clean-cut, job-hungry young people in front of me dismissed it as an ideal of "those hippies, way back there in the '60's." And here I am this evening, reading through Joe D. Siclari's *Fanhistorica*, a fannish zine reprinting such historical gems of fannish writing as Jack Speer's "After 1939—What?" and Ginjer Buchanan's WPSFA Baycon report, "I've Had No Sleep and I Must Giggle," and . . . What? Wait a minute! I remember that piece; it came out only a few years ago, in *Granfalloon* #5. I was a neofan, trying hard to be a real published fan, and Ginjer's account of WPSFA's descent on the Baycon made me feel that I'd been there too. It's not historical; it was only published . . . back in . . . 1968?

Fannish generations succeed each other even faster than student ones: once every two years, it's estimated. In the three and a half years since I've left Toronto fandom, there have been, now that I think of it, at least two new, distinct fandoms, as neos arrive, feud, form new groups, burn out, gafiate. There's a whole new WPSFA; I don't know the new BNFs on that vast new Midwest convention circuit; the names on all the fanzines are new: what's going on here?

In my mailbox, though, fanzine fandom still seems the same. Arnie Katz with his fannish humor, Joyce Katz with her fine writing, are active again with *Swoon:* a comfortable 30 pages or so of wit and chatter, columns, letters and Ross Chamberlain hand-stencilled cartoons, all mimeographed on twiltone, folded over, stapled into the neat, traditional fannish package that arrives in my mailbox. Terry Hughes' *Mota* is even more timebinding. Trufen reprint Walt Willis columns; superfan Hughes recently printed a *new* Willis column presenting the Irish Legend's return to fandom, at the 1976 British Eastercon, after an 11-year gafiation. Then, to top that feat, he published fan Tom Perry's account of *his* return to fandom after an equal absence: a long, personal article in which Perry gives his view of the same Eastercon, and his search there for his former *Quark* columnist—the legendary Willis, of course.

There is no generation gap, in fannish fandom; the good writing keeps its human interest, and, in the originals or in the continual flow of reprints, finds its way into neofans' hands to give them a sense of their family history. At MidAmeriCon this year, for instance, I was able to give Tom Perry—who gafiated a couple of generations before I discovered fandom—some instant egoboo for his fanzine reviews in Norm Clarke's *Honque* #2, which Norm had given me the previous week. Tom thanked me, asked if the Clarkes were coming to worldcon, and mentioned that he'd started publishing again, as casually as though he'd only been out of touch for two months—when in fact he'd never met me, and had published those reviews in 1965.

Time seems to stand still, in fannish fandom, because fans keep their past alive in the present. I can tell Baycon stories about the pillars in the banquet hall with the best of them, or joke about sliding down the laundry chutes —which Ginjer doesn't even mention, being too busy looking for food.

The real signs of change are in the genzines—the general interest fanzines. Oh, their publishing format doesn't seem to change: the editor takes whatever he/she can get—poetry, fanfiction, a couple of articles (an essay on Russian SF, or SF poetry, submitted by the school club's English major), some skritchy doodles by whoever has some artistic talent, a Harry Warner letter and a Rotsler cartoon or two—wraps it all round with an editorial pleading for contributions, in a graphics package best called functional, and calls it a magazine (calls it, in fact, *Starfire* or *Dark Star* or, unless he/she's been around fandom long enough to know better, *Spaceship*). Magazines last an issue or two, die, are reborn interchangeably. The only new content wrinkle seems to be the proliferation of unimaginative interviews with SF pros, probably corralled by the editor at one of the equally proliferating regional conventions.

The success of the motley collection still depends entirely on the editor: on his/her ability to attract talented contributors, select good contributions, produce the magazine regularly and legibly, and above all, infuse the package with personality—in short, to edit.

Inflation, though, has hit the genzine. The lovingly, badly mimeographed magazine of "my" fandom is now a lavishly offset product. The uninspired words are jazzed up with Selectric typefaces. The covers are slick. (Think of it wearing a stylish long velvet skirt, and suede boots, instead of hippie blue jeans.)

I used to associate these expensive, impersonal, generally empty graphics packages only with 12-year-old comics fans from wealthy Texas families, and the occasional would-be-prozine editor; now they arrive in my mailbox at the rate of one or two a day. The personal labour of love, once traded for another badly-mimeoed fanzine or sold for a sticky quarter, now demands a dollar or $1.50, has a print run of 1,000 copies, needs 500 subscribers to break even, and may have semi-pro pretensions. Ironically enough, its faults were summed up nicely by Tom Perry, in that Winter 1965 issue of *Honque*, when he reviewed the (quite beautiful) first issue of Tom Reamy's *Trumpet* (from Texas, offset, costing 50¢) in these words:

"Looking through these fullsize pages with their beautiful layouts, multiplicity of type styles, and painstakingly justified double columns, one cannot avoid the thought that the outlay of time, effort and especially money is just too lavish for the quality of the material."

Yes. And there are more of them

around—innumerable titles—just as there are more fans; the family has grown exponentially. There may be more really good editors and contributors around (I have mercifully forgotten the *Osfans* of my youth, though I treasure my *Hugin and Munins* and *Kevas and Trilliums*); but, by the law of averages, there are also far more inept people producing genzines. I actually read, perhaps two, of these fanzines a week. I skim the rest, looking for some spark, some personality, some brilliant new writer or fanartist, an editor who can define the gestalt of a fan community (the way Linda Bushyager's *Granfalloon* became the center of WPSFA, and perhaps created its center, by commissioning and then providing a forum for pieces like Ginjer's which defined that community at that place and time). Then I put the zine on the pile to be donated to the Vancouver SF club (because contact with other fans, with models, is essential for defining yourself). I know I should spend two hours on each of those two-fanzines-per-day, writing long, helpful, encouraging letters. I mark termpapers instead (trying to give them the encouraging words)—130 more to go before term ends in 2 weeks, if you want to know. (I have had no sleep, and I must scribble. . . .)

The genzines listed at the end of this column are all, in some way, notable; and each would probably interest a reader new to fandom. Only a few stand out, though: *Anduril* for its artwork, *Knights* and *Scintillation* for infusing standard material with personality, *Simulacrum* especially for its sheer excellence.

Quietly, though, a real, positive change has taken place, in fandom and fanzines: a broadening of the community and of its approaches, not primarily to SF, but to living.

The stereotyped fan, in my generation, was still the bespectacled young, white, middleclass male, highly intellectual and socially inept. Some notable women, "femme" fans (as distinct from real fans?) (boyfen, anyone?), published, wrote, ran conventions: Lee Hoffman had gafiated, but Bjo Trimble was involved with artshows and the *ST Concordance*, Juanita Coulson and Elinor Busby were coediting notable fanzines, as was Joyce Katz, then Fisher, whose woman-produced *What About Us Grils?* directly inspired my own first fanzine, several years later. Still, women were accepted mostly as appendages to notable fans, or as Token Men, at least until the WPSFA Phenomenon which was, as Joe Siclari notes, "the largest invasion of single females ever to hit fandom til the Star Trek Eruption."

As for the men, if they were gay, or if they had strong emotions (like love for others of either sex) other than childish anger in one or another of the constant feuds, we never heard about it. (At this point, Harry Warner is going to submit several paragraphs of names and dates. This is subjective fanhistory: how it felt. My point is that deeply personal writing, like that of Don Thompson in his Hugo-nominated *Don-O-Saur*, and unlike, say, Laney's "Ah, Sweet Idiocy!", was unknown in my generation. Personal fannish writing was the sort of witty fannish chatter, which Arnie Katz and others still do so well, in which the emphasis is not on how you felt about some incident, but on how cleverly you can retell it.)

Today, I think the fanzines with the strongest and most interesting identities are those produced by people—mostly female people—in the process of defining strong identities for themselves, seeking mutual support and validation for their efforts within the fannish subculture. They're not "ideal" fanzines by any means. One's writing isn't necessarily "better" because one is a feminist or a gay liberationist. Certainly, somy of them will bore, enrage or offend you with their political or social stances. What they do have is energy. Enthusiasm. Distinct personalities.

Perhaps the most open and challenging of the new fanzines is *Women and Men*, an anti-sexist fanzine and letterforum. Editor Denys Howard is a self-styled "faggot"—an "effeminist," also a pagan, a comics fan, an interesting human being, and a writer who communicates. And much more, I gather. His sexual preferences are not his definition, but are part of it. He began publishing *WaM* "because I heard virtually *no* one else speaking with my voice. I had no assurance that criticism of sexism in sf and comics would be welcomed by fen, so the safest thing to do was to start from my own territory." He did; it was; and the discussion and mutual questioning/support of the *WaM* letterzine is the result.

Denys' MidAmeriCon trip report, *Wandering About From Place to Place Without Apparent Reason*, is more personal, quite indescribable. From a less intelligent or self-aware person, it would be an embarrassing or self-indulgent emotional striptease. As Denys writes it, it's a revelation. He, and his correspondents in *WaM*, have the sheer courage to be vulnerable, to live on the edge of lifestyles, exploring sex roles and everything else relevant to being human right now. You may feel threatened, or offended, I warn you. Me, I like and admire the process tremendously.

(One passing quibble: Denys, please stop using "real" as an adverb!)

Orca is also a personalzine, edited by feminist, lawschool-graduate, SCA fighter, Star Trek fan Jennifer Bankier, to reflect these and other interests (like a fascination with killer whales, the Orcas of the title). She wants to publish "items with a feminist, socialist-anarchist . . . humanist, or atheistic persuasion," or well-written opposition. Much of Jennifer's writing is rather self-conscious and stilted, overly controlled; but the first issue is interesting and the zine has potential to become a first-class discussion forum.

Equally distinctive, sister Amanda Bankier's *The Witch and the Chameleon* has quickly established itself as an excellent feminist genzine. For many of us, it's become indispensible: a rap group with friends, a support system, a source of laughter, insight and ideas. And—I suppose I have to say this—I am recommending it equally for its fine writing, graphics and such, and its approach, its politics, its community of interest: women, and the few men joining with us, concerned with sexism in the supposedly visionary SF world.

Janus, the two-headed, Jan-and-Jeanne edited fanzine, is an increasingly personable, interesting genzine, with the usual articles, fiction and reviews. The editorials, a running dialogue between Janice Bogstadt and John Bartelt, and Jeanne Gomol's artwork, are helping to create *Janus'* personality: relaxed, perceptive, humorous. Issue #3's triple review of *Aurora: Beyond Equality* is particularly fine; it's like hearing an informal discussion between three intelligent, aware people whom I'd enjoy meeting.

Simulacrum #3 is more formal: impeccable mimeo (including some colour work), beautiful artwork, and attractive graphics. Victoria Vayne's high production values enhance a package of uniformly good, varied writing, everything from the fannish "what shall I write about" column (a tradition well-handled by Janet Small), gamesplaying by Mike Carlson, and conreports, through doug barbour on Canadian SF poetry, to Victoria in a sad editorial examining herself and her split with Toronto Derelict Fandom. A good lettercolumn augurs well for the genzine's future. And it all gells.

Simulacrum is, already, a monolithic, near-perfect example of my fandom's Perfect Genzine. In fact, it looks like *Energumen* reincarnated, and better-typed. It reads, however, like itself: *Simulacrum*, with distinct concerns and personality, its own community producing subzines full of fascinating letters, and an eclectic appeal.

Simulacrum is curiously reassuring. Not all that much has changed in fandom—even the level of excellence a fanzine can hope to attain. It's added some new people, some welcome new

ideas, a whole new subculture of the becoming-more-fully-human fanzines; but it's still my family.

THE FANNISH FANZINES:

Fanhistorica (JoeD Siclari, P.O. Box 1343, Radio City Station, New York, NY 10019. Irregular, mimeo with hand-colored illustrations; available for "the usual"—contributions, letters of comment, or trades—old fanzines, or 50¢ for #1, 75¢ for #2.) Gary Farber, Joe's co-editor (who contributes a brilliant editorial about, and illustrating, trufannish writing traditions) has left the magazine; Joe has married co-publisher Karina Girsdansky, they've moved apartments, and undertaken the massive task of publishing Harry Warner's second volume of fanhistory, *A Wealth of Fable*. Still, I am told, we can expect #2 Real Soon Now. This, too, is a fannish tradition.

Mota (Terry Hughes, 4739 Washington Blvd., Arlington, VA 22205. Monthly, sort of, mimeo; the usual or old fannish fanzines.) The best fannish fanzine around. Earn your place on the mailing list.

Swoon (Arnie and Joyce Katz, 59 Livingston St., #6B, Brooklyn, NY 11201. Irregular, mimeo; the usual or $1.)

THE GENZINES:

Anduril #6, August 1976 (John Martin, 101 Eskdale, Tanhouse 5, Skelmersdale, Lancs. WN8 6EB, England. Irregular, offset; 47 pp., 50p. or US$1.50.) Excellent fantasy genzine with articles, reviews, mediocre fiction, enjoyable fiction by Pat McIntosh, and lots of impressive artwork by Russ Nicholson.

Antares #1 (David H. Vereschagin, Paranoid Publishing RR#2, New Sarepta, Alta., Canada TOB 3MO. Quarterly, faded mimeo; 39 pp., $1.25 or 4/Can. $4.) David intends "to make *Antares* the best damn fanzine I know." I wish you luck, but what you really need is better reproduction (if you don't go offset, correction fluid will take out the paste-up lines on the Gestefax stencil). You also need more contact with general fandom, for inspiration and contributions. Edmonton may be at the end of the fannish universe, but so was Ottawa when *Energumen* got started; and it does have mail service, at least when the rest of Canada does. Push the local fans to improve their contributions, too. Despite a striking (editor-drawn) two-color cover, this is a stereotyped, anonymous first fanzine: essays on "man's quest for himself" in SF, on Van Vogt, and on Delany's "dialectical versus ... linear process" in writing which read like termpapers; attempted Star Trek humor; mediocre poetry; filler art; and an enthusiastic review of *Logan's Run*. There's a lot of energy at work here; I hope David harnesses and directs it towards producing the ideal fanzine he wants.

Harbinger #3, Summer 1976 (Reed S. Andrus, 1717 Blaine Ave., Salt Lake City, Utah 84108. Quarterly, mimeo?; 38 pp., $1.25) Distinguished only by a striking Mike Orton cover.

The Hunting of the Snark #10, Sept. 1976 (Robert J.R. Whitaker, P.O. Box 7649, Newark, Delaware 19711. Quarterly, offset; 56 pp., $1 or the usual.) The usual genzine contents, highlighted by a Lafferty section (including an interview), enlivened by humor, a good eye for layout, and distinctive graphics by Carol Ann Craddock.

Knights #16, June 1976 (Mike Bracken, P.O. Box 7157, Tacoma, WA 98407. Irregular, mimeo; 65 pp., $1.25, 4/$4 or the usual.) Issue #17 will be Mike's third annish of this increasingly interesting genzine; and obviously, perseverance has furthered. Sercon and fannish material, some good artwork, and an impressive cover by Thomas Canty.

Scintillation #10, September 1976 (Carl Eugene Bennett, Box 8502, Portland, OR 97207. Quarterly, offset on newsprint; 40 pp., $1.25, 4/$3.50, the usual.) Another steadily-improving genzine for the serious SF reader. This issue has an awful Sirois cover, interviews

Continued on page 68

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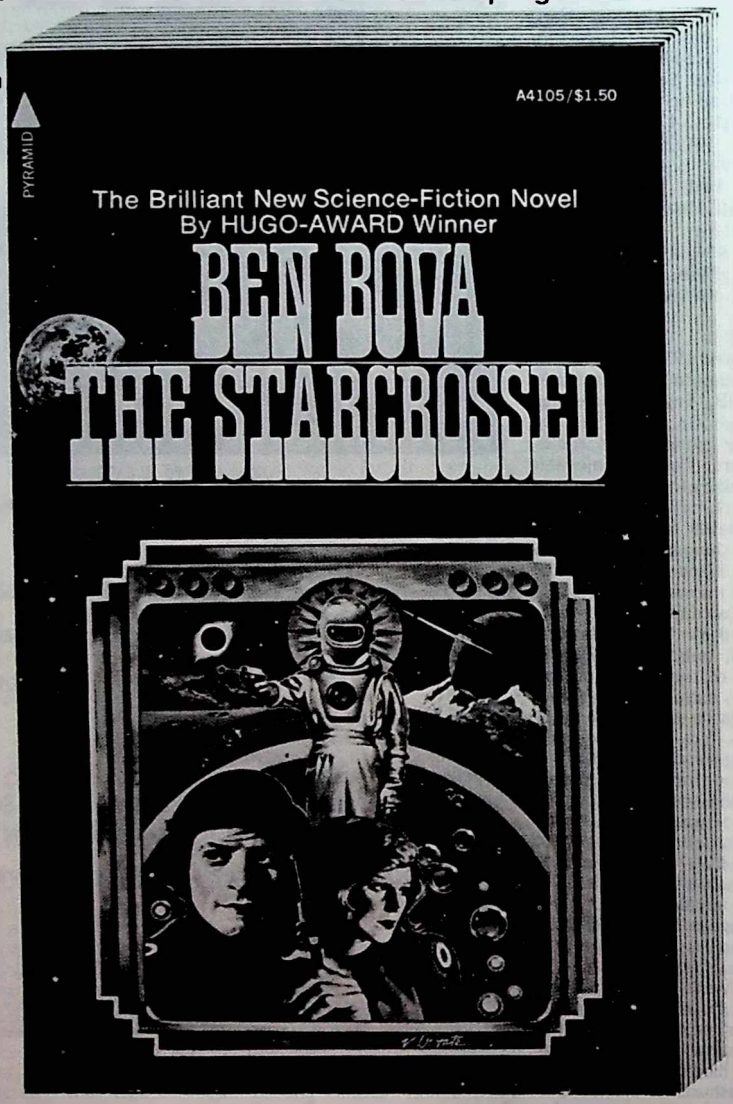

LUPOFF'S BOOK WEEK

RICHARD LUPOFF

SHADRACH IN THE FURNACE, by Robert Silverberg. 245 pp. $8.95. ISBN 0-672-51993-3. 1976. Bobbs-Merrill.

Bob Silverberg's long-announced retirement as a science-fiction writer has caused considerable stir in the field, but like that of Sarah Bernhardt from the stage, it has been most notable for the number of farewell appearances it has yielded. By this I do not mean to suggest that Silverberg has been kidding us. Rather, some of his recent books have been made up of recycled material —novelettes and novellas from original anthologies—while others, such as the impending Ace onslaught, have been flat-out reissues of old books.

This still does not account for everything; there remain Silverberg's previous "last" novel, *The Stochastic Man*, and his current "last" novel, *Shadrach in the Furnace*. These, one must assume, were "in the pipeline" at the time of Silverberg's retirement, and their later appearance is attributable to the delays inherent in publishers' inventorying, production time and the like.

The Stochastic Man was a glib and readable enough book in its own way, but I found it quite lacking in passion for all that it excelled in technique. Silverberg's newest, *Shadrach in the Furnace*, is not nearly so slick a book, but a far meatier one, thoroughly endowed with passion, an imperfect but powerful and generally most satisfying valedictory.

It's a rich book. Not an especially complex one: the structure is relatively straightforward and there is a clarity to the narration that makes the book far more of an "easy read" than a typical work of Samuel R. Delany or Thomas M. Disch, two writers to whom Silverberg's depth and intensity invite comparison. The flow of the prose is no sign of shallowness, but of careful craft. "Hard writing makes for easy reading."

Shadrach in the Furnace is a near-future novel, set roughly thirty-five years hence, which is to say, in an era which most of the book's readers can expect to witness. It is a sort of utopia (or at least a novel of social comment; at any rate we see the society of the day-after-tomorrow and it's quite changed from that of today). It's somewhat of a future history (we are not simply handed the world of 2012, take it or leave it; the author shows us how the world got from here to there). It's a superman novel, too (and I found Silverberg's Genghis IV Mao II Khan far more compelling and believable a superman than I did Olaf Stapledon's Odd John, Stanley Weinbaum's New Adam, or J.D. Beresford's Hampdenshire Wonder in past years). And, in a sense, it's a medical novel (the hero, Dr. Shadrach Mordecai, is Genghis Mao's personal physician, and we see the superman through Shadrach's physician's eyes, including some thoroughly researched and heavily detailed medical sequences).

All of this sounds like some sort of rich brew of ingredients, and it is. What the novel needs is a strong framework on which to place the ingredients, and Silverberg provides one. Specifically, Genghis Mao knows that he's going to die sometime, despite all the medical technology in the world. But his driving ambition to continue as the *de facto* dictator of the world (and a somewhat benevolent one at that—he's no straw Hitler!) forces him to seek a way to continue his rule.

How can this be done? Several parallel research projects are under way to permit it. Can a human consciousness be impressed on the brain of another human? This would be the ultimate "transplant." Could a metallic simulacrum be built, and a human consciousness be transferred to this? Or—could a method be found to stop the slow, natural deterioration of the human brain, so that the brain might be preserved, possibly transplanted, to a new body?

Dr. Mordecai, as Genghis Mao's physician, keeps liaison with all three projects. There are plot complications, reversals and surprises, which make for compelling reading.

The book is also quite long, and in a sense it suffers from its length and a corresponding looseness of narration. Several of Dr. Mordecai's experiences, as for instance with the quasi-religious cults of the 21st century, are not directly relevant to the plot; then, as the book draws toward its close, Dr. Mordecai takes a vacation and tours the world. With him we see San Francisco, Istanbul, Rome, Jerusalem. One gets the feeling that Silverberg didn't want the book to end and inserted digressive material to keep it going.

These digressions are not solely flaws, however; while they represent imperfections in the book's dramatic elegance they add to the richness and sense of presence of the experience. On the other hand, the climax of the novel struck me as arbitrary, almost perfunctory, and rather unsatisfying. "It doesn't really *end* like that," I said to myself, "there's another chapter missing." Well, there isn't, and it really does have that chopped-off end.

But for all its flaws, it's a fine and rewarding book; I enjoyed it far more than I did the technically slicker but emotionally uninvolving *Stochastic Man.* It is one of Silverberg's superior performances, a very fitting note on which to ring down the curtain. If the author ever decides to reverse his decision and return to writing fiction he'll pick up a career suspended with a triumph, not a flub, and if he does stay retired, he'll depart with some deserved glowing notices.

BLAKE'S PROGRESS, by R.F. Nelson. 190 pp. 95¢. ISBN 0-373-72013-0. 1975. Laser Books.

This is one of the darnedest books I've read in a long while. It's packaged and marketed as science fiction and I'm not at all certain that it is that. It concerns time travel, which is a theme of SF all right, but the time travelling is done by some kind of mystical hocus-pocus: you just gaze into the fire and concentrate for a while and—*zap!*—you're in a "place outside of time" and can slide into the past or future as you wish. There are ghosts in that "place," and one of them, the ghost of William Blake's brother Robert, manages to visit the "real" world now and then. That doesn't sound much like SF. But (buts within buts, eh?) the time travellers get involved in trying to alter and/or restore the time stream, and by so doing create and then destroy a series of lovingly crafted parallel worlds. This aspect of the book is rather reminiscent of Fritz Leiber's "Big Time" stories—and I mean that as a compliment.

Essentially, William Blake, the well-known mystic, author and illustrator, is portrayed as a natural time-traveller. I've come across this theory before—in some article in the fan press a few years ago. He teaches his wife Kate the trick of it, and then is off to fight the time-wars against a rival whose Faustian desire to alter history into utopian channels originates the series of parallel worlds.

I won't spoil the fun by telling you the divergence-points and the results—Nelson works them out beautifully. This is one book that could have gone on for twice as long, for my money.

Blake's Progress is the first piece of fiction that I can recall reading by Ray Nelson. Well—there was a collaborative novel that he did with Philip K. Dick a few years ago, but Phil Dick's style and ideation dominated that thoroughly; I'm not sure what Nelson contributed to that book but whatever it was it wasn't very noticeable.

But this *Blake's Progress* is a revelation. Nelson's style is sharply-focused and carefully colored, not in gaudy tones but in subtle and carefully-calculated ones. His plotting is exactly as complex as it ought to be in this kind of multiple-time-track story. His characters are nicely drawn: the moody, mystical William Blake; the canny Kate, at first ignorant and cautious and having to rely on William, then maturing and developing into a competent, clever woman . . . and the others, the lesser characters, including such surprising cameo-stars as Cleopatra.

I'd have liked to see Nelson go more into character than he did. In using historical personages he may have felt constrained from prying and/or speculating too much on their thoughts. But even so, I felt by the end of the book that I knew Kate pretty well, and William to a fair degree . . . and the ending of the book, if a trifle maudlin, was nonetheless touching and appropriate.

Blake's Progress is a real sleeper—one of the nicest little science-fantasy novels of the past year, likely to be overlooked in the flood of minimal-content adventure pamphlets that Laser seems to be specializing in. Don't let it slip past you! It's a very unusual, very special little book. I'll certainly be awaiting Ray Nelson's next.

ROBERT A. HEINLEIN: STRANGER IN HIS OWN LAND, by George Edgar Slusser. 60 pp. $1.95 ISBN 0-87877-201-4. 1976. The Borgo Press (P.O. Box 7589, Van Nuys CA 91409)

We're overdue for some revisionist criticism in this field, and I hope to contribute some over the next few years, in this column and elsewhere. Science fiction has developed its sacred cows, its whipping boys (and girls), and its Forgotten Persons, and some of us had better get busy doing something about it.

Just for the record, my nominees as severely underrated and due for major upward revaluation are a group of authors and editors including (but not limited to) Murray Leinster, Laurence Manning, Farnsworth Wright, David H. Keller (Yes, Harlan, I really meant it!), F. Orlin Tremaine, Otto Binder, Horace Gold, Ray Palmer, Clare Winger Harris. . . . You just wait—I may be wrong about a couple of those, but ten or fifteen years from now, most of them will be revered.

As for those overrated and due for some negative re-evaluation—well, I don't want to tip my *whole* hand, but here's a hint: go back and re-read Alfie Bester's section of *Hell's Cartographers.* And here is George Edgar Slusser offering some revisionist views of Heinlein. Slusser's little book deals only with the past twenty years of Heinlein's work, so he omits references, except in passing, to the early Heinlein magazine materials, and to the first decade's worth of Heinlein's books. I have the feeling that Slusser is preparing a full-length study of Heinlein, and that the present little book is a preliminary draft of only one section of that eventual volume. I hope so, and will look forward to reading a full treatment by Slusser.

But for now, Slusser is saying some things that have needed saying for some years, that too few of us have dared to say, while those who have dared to speak have been told to hold their tongues. It is a clear instance of the Emperor's New Clothes syndrome.

Thus, Slusser has the courage to call *I Will Fear No Evil* a "top-heavy monstrosity," which it surely is. Slusser has the honesty, in writing of *Stranger in a Strange Land,* to say that "Heinlein's real interest is power, not the spiritual force of Emerson, but the thoroughly material force that Mike wields with a free hand." Slusser has the admirable audacity to say, regarding *Time Enough for Love,* that "the scenes in this book lack any real dramatic power. Heinlein seems to have lost completely the unerring sense of drama that permeated his earlier works."

And in an afterword, Slusser suggests that any further books that Heinlein might happen to write, will be "philosophic, didactic, overly long, wordy, episodic, materialistic, preoccupied with death and old age, and even boring."

Now it would be all too easy to accuse Slusser of sour grapes, of flinging mud at his betters, of trying to build himself up by tearing Heinlein down.

But the fact is that Slusser's case is a valid one; Heinlein's later works have been dull, sloppy, narcissistic, racist, sexist, and philosophically alternately vapid and vile.

The question, then, is this: Were Heinlein's *early* works really all that good, or were we all mesmerized by some sort of deceptive glamour that attached to them? I remember reading *The Puppet Masters* in its serial appearance in *Galaxy* a quarter-century ago, and being thrilled beyond measure by the thing. Was it that good? Or was I fooled? Or maybe I was just fifteen years old!

I am tempted to go on here, but I'll hold back for the time being except to recommend Slusser's little book, and to offer whatever encouragement I can to any modern critics capable of putting aside the conventional judgments of our figures, both positive and negative, and looking with a fresh, clear eye.

HOWARD PHILLIPS LOVECRAFT: DREAMER ON THE NIGHT SIDE, by Frank Belknap Long. 237 pp. $8.50. 1975. Arkham House. ISBN 0-87054-068-9

SELECTED LETTERS, by H.P. Lovecraft, edited by August Derleth, Donald Wandrei and James Turner. Five volumes, total pp. 2033. $7.50, $7.50, $10, $12.50, $12.50. 1965-76. Arkham House.

H.P. LOVECRAFT: FIRST WRITINGS –PAWTUXET VALLEY GLEANER 1906, edited by Marc A. Michaud. 47 pp. 1976. Necronomicon Press.

TO QUEBEC AND THE STARS, by H.P. Lovecraft. 318 pp. $15. 1976. Grant.

THE DISCIPLES OF CTHULHU, edited by Edward P. Berglund. 288 pp. $1.50. 1976. DAW Books

The obvious explanation for the revival of interest in Howard Phillips Lovecraft, as we approach the fortieth anniversary of his death, is that a general pulp revival is taking place. Doc Smith has been around for decades, as have Edmond Hamilton and Jack Williamson; Edgar Rice Burroughs has been booming for fifteen years now, since the fresh burst activity by Canaveral Press, Ace Books and others in 1962; Robert E. Howard's stories were revived a quarter century ago by Gnome Press, then resubmerged until L. Sprague de Camp and Lancer Books re-revived them in the mid 1960s.

It's a pretty glib argument, but there's one major difference. The traditional pulp formula—eccentric but essentially paper-thin characters, exotic settings, and ceaseless lightning-fast action-*action*-ACTION—is totally antithetical to the works of Lovecraft. The fact that he appeared usually in *Weird Tales* (and once each in *Amazing* and *Astounding*), and has as a consequence been regarded as a pulp writer, is in actuality misleading.

Pulp writing is a primitive art form (in the strict sense of the term), and our favorite pulp writers (Hamilton, Williamson, Burroughs, Howard et al), in whatever affection we hold them, were and are still primitives. Williamson, himself an academic of impeccable credentials, would, I am sure, be quick to agree that such stories as his own masterpiece *The Legion of Space* are pure-quill pulp primitive writing.

Lovecraft, in contrast, wrote stories populated by deep and brooding characters; set in such mundane locations as contemporary Providence, Marblehead, Salem, the western Massachusetts hill country, and the Red Hook section of Brooklyn; the stories are frequently action-less, even plotless, studies in mood and character and style. In a word, Lovecraft was a literary writer by any standard of judgment. Even in *Weird Tales*, despite Lovecraft's popularity with a certain element of the readership, the most popular single author of the magazine's regulars was Seabury Quinn, a hugely prolific hack whose interminable series of Jules de Grandin adventures were an unveneered

cross between Sherlock Holmes pastiche and traditional psychic-gothic creepy.

Lovecraft's admirers always maintained that he was a latter-day Poe, and it was mainly the efforts of August Derleth over a span of 34 years, from Lovecraft's death in 1937 to Derleth's own demise in 1971, that saved Lovecraft from oblivion. (Non-irrelevant digression: Derleth did *not* publish Lovecraft's first book. W. Paul Cook, an amateur, printed a small edition of *The Shunned House* in 1927; for some reason he did not bind and issue the book but it was a good try. In 1936, the year before Lovecraft's death, William Crawford *did* publish *The Shadow Over Innsmouth* through his Visionary Press. This was a small book, issued in a limited edition at $2; failing to sell, it was remaindered at $1. It is now worth from $100 to $200 per copy, depending on condition. *It* is the first Lovecraft book. As far as I know, no copy exists with Lovecraft's autograph on it, but one *might*, and there, dear friends, would be a prize worth killing for!)

At any rate, Lovecraftiana is presently pouring from various presses at a rate greater than any before. In past installments of this column I reviewed de Camp's definitive biography of Lovecraft and Willis Conover's warm memorial to Lovecraft.

Dreamer on the Night Side by Frank Belknap Long falls somewhere between the de Camp and Conover books. It is a very personal book, a record of the friendship between "Ec'h-Pi-El" and "Belknapius"; Long was probably Lovecraft's closest and longest-enduring friend, surely among surviving men he knew Lovecraft better than any other.

There's no beating de Camp for solid scholarship, and Long doesn't try. But de Camp never knew Lovecraft, and Long offers personal glimpses that no one else in the world could possibly match. The story of Lovecraft shopping for a new fedora or Waterman, driving a sales clerk to distraction spending hours on end trying every nib (or hat) in the store before settling, finally, on just the right black pen (or gray headpiece) is absolutely hilarious, and at the same time illuminates Lovecraft's character in a way that no amount of cold, third-person scholarship possibly could.

The book is not scholarly, but it is a rich lode for scholars to mine, and for the enthusiast interested in knowing and understanding Lovecraft, it makes an all-but-indispensible companionpiece to de Camp's biography.

Lovecraft's *Selected Letters* represent one of the longer efforts in scholarly publishing this side of Will and Ariel Durant. The *Letters* were first announced (as far as I have been able to learn) in 1943, at the time of the issuance of *Beyond the Wall of Sleep* by Arkham House. Originally, the first Lovecraft omnibus, *The Outsider and Others*, issued in 1939, was to have been the whole production of Derleth and Wandrei's publishing venture. But it led to the second omnibus, and by then Derleth and Wandrei had determined that enough of Lovecraft's thousands of letters were recoverable and publishable to warrant a third volume.

Somehow, the work went slowly, other projects intervened, and the *Selected Letters* grew from an omnibus to an eventual five-volume set. The first volume did not appear until 1965. The fourth and fifth appeared in 1976. I have no idea how many letters Lovecraft wrote in his life; he was an amazingly prolific epistolarian. These five volumes contain 930 letters, ranging from little one-paragraph notes (or extracts) to virtual booklets of forty pages or longer.

The subjects range widely, from politics to Lovecraft's racial theories (there is much debate on this point; one could hardly do better than seek Lovecraft's own statements!), to his genealogy, the progressive state of his finances, his travels, his interest in geography and architecture, comments on his own works-in-progress at various times, and his wide-ranging notions on the subjects of art and literature.

Depending on one's interest in particular topics, the letters range from absolutely riveting in interest ... to quite tedious. (I could hardly care less about the architecture of Charleston, South Carolina; I could hardly care *more* about Lovecraft's opinions of Edwin Baird, Farnsworth Wright, Joseph Henneberger, Hugo Gernsback, Orlin Tremaine—all of the latter being editors or publishers with whom Lovecraft had dealings.)

As with the Long book, these letters (the dates of which run from Thanksgiving Day, 1911—an ode to Quaker Puffed Wheat—to the ides of March, 1937—the day Lovecraft died) are *absolutely indispensible* to the serious Lovecraft scholar. To the more casual browser, they will of course be of lesser interest. But no one with any interest in Lovecraft or his work could possibly fail to find something fascinating here, whether the books are read end-to-end, or picked over for references to particular subjects, or simply browsed in for piquant moments and phrases.

There are very valuable summaries at the head of each volume, indicating the date, addressee, and topic(s) of each letter included. An additional index would add further to the accessibility of the material. None exists at present, and I commend such a project to any public-minded scholar willing to spend several fascinated months with a strange but strangely lovable ghost.

H.P. Lovecraft: First Writings is a slim book (or booklet) published in an edition of only 500 copies; I don't know whether it's still in print but if it's o.p. there ought to be a second printing and you should be able to get a copy of that. *First Writings* was issued last July quite without fanfare; I happened to be in Providence, Howard Lovecraft's home town, doing some research at Brown University with the aid of John Stanley (special collections librarian) and Barton St. Armand (Dept. of English) when I stopped into a College Hill bookstore to pick up a city map and spotted a stack of copies.

These particular Lovecraft "writings" were previously unknown to me; in 1906 the sixteen-year-old Lovecraft began contributing a column on astronomy to the little Pawtuxet Valley *Gleaner*; they covered such topics as "October Heavens—Celestial Scenery for the Coming Month." The substance of this article deals with the visibility of various celestial objects, dates of phases of the moon, and similarly ephemeral information.

But other articles are much closer to the realm of speculation; they read almost like rough sketches for science fiction stories. Here we find articles titled "Is Mars an Inhabited World?", "Is There Life on the Moon?", "Are There Undiscovered Planets?", and "Can the Moon Be Reached by Man?"

The next-to-last of these is of course anticipatory not only of Clyde Tombaugh's eventual discovery of Pluto, but of Lovecraft's parallel "discovery" of the planet Yuggoth.

It's very early Lovecraft, some of the reading is fascinating, and the little book, compiled by Marc A. Michaud and with a foreword by Ramsey Campbell, will probably become a valuable Lovecraft collector's item in short order.

To Quebec and the Stars is another compilation of Lovecraftiana, some of it quite early but the largest single item in the book dating from 1931, when Lovecraft was 41 years old and six years from his death. The oldest item in the book, coincidentally, once more deals with the then-undiscovered ninth planet. It is a letter to the *Scientific American* dated July 1906 (thus antedating the *Gleaner* material of like topic by several months) titled "Trans-Neptunian Planets." There are sixteen more items in the book, dated between 1915 and 1934. Some of them deal with scientific matters, others with literature and the arts, and still others with travel and geography. Most of them are reprinted from amateur journals (not exactly fanzines as these later came to be known, but a very close approximation of them); some come from newspapers or magazines to which

Lovecraft contributed.

The major item, however, is published for the first time: "A Description of the Town of Quebeck," based on a trip there taken by Lovecraft in 1930, and written in 1931. It's some 75,000 words in length, or roughly 200 book-size pages. If you'd like another yardstick for that, consider that the average science fiction novel published nowadays runs around 60,000 words.

It is an absolutely charming, delightful book on Quebec, delving into the city's history, its layout, its architecture and cultural style, and even a description of its present (1930) transportation system and tourist aids. Lovecraft prepared the book in handwritten manuscript, including street maps and architectural sketches—and then left it. Did he write it purely for his own later review, as a kind of souvenir of his visit to the city? Did he plan to circulate it in manuscript to his friends? (Remember, this was long before the era of xerox-type copying machines.) I do not know.

In any case, he apparently had no intention of submitting it for publication, either commercially or by the amateur press. It was, by all available criteria, a pure labor of love.

But it is a delight to read. It's like taking a guided tour through the city in company of a knowledgeable and garrulous friend whose greatest delight is to share with you his own pleasure in the city and its past.

To Quebec and the Stars is an absolute treasure trove; de Camp is to be praised for compiling it and Grant is to be thanked for publishing it. Any Lovecraft enthusiast who failed to obtain a copy at the earliest possible moment would be a fool; but a fool of that degree would never be able to call himself a Lovecraft enthusiast.

Now we come to *The Disciples of Cthulhu.* Well . . . we-e-el-l-ll. . . .

Look, when the Burroughs revival hit we were deluged with a flood of imitation Tarzans and John Carters and Pellucidarian novels, some of them "authorized" by the Burroughs estate and others not. That flood has, happily, slacked off of late although it has not wholly ceased.

And when the Robert E. Howard boom started to get big, you couldn't walk past a paperback rack (or comic-book stand for that matter) without encountering at least forty thousand imitations, continuations, and pastiches of Conan the Barbarian. You know—Brak, Crom, Kothar, Kandar, Thongor, Upchuck. . . .

Now Lovecraft didn't write hero stories; there isn't a Tarzan or a Conan in all of his works. But there *was* the so-called Cthulhu Mythos, a group of more-or-less interrelated horror stories laid against a common macro-historical background. The notion is that a clutch of ancient entities of supreme power had once fought a cosmic battle in which the "good guys" emerged triumphant. But the "bad guys," although defeated, were not *destroyed,* and are still hanging around the depths of space (and/or of the sea) waiting for a chance to make a comeback.

It goes on from there, with a roll of Elder Gods and Great Old Ones, secret cults, forbidden volumes (the *Necronomicon* being the best known), and so on.

Even during Lovecraft's life various friends and admirers of his contributed stories to the cycle, Frank B. Long's "The Space-Eaters" probably being the first such pastiche (1928).

Now that Lovecraft is coming into vogue, a whole new generation of imitators has arisen, and Don Wollheim, always a sharp editor when it comes to spotting trends and riding them for sales, has been giving them free run of DAW Books. (He's already published two novels by the Lovecraft imitator Brian Lumley; I missed the first, *The Burrower Beneath,* but read the second, *The Transition of Titus Crow,* and found it alternately irksome and dull.)

The Disciples of Cthulhu contains nine imitation Lovecraft stories, and

they range in quality from the unreadable to the excellent, with a high degree of repetition and a low one of originality. Some of the authors are totally unknown to me, and one of the best stories comes from such a contributor, Walter C. DeBill, Jr. I don't know who DeBill is, but his story, "Where Yidhra Walks," manages to capture much of the most effective trapped-in-a-nightmare feeling that Lovecraft achieved in stories like "The Whisperer in Darkness." "The Feaster from Afar" by Joseph Payne Brennan (an old-time horror-story writer and Lovecraftian) also gets a fair amount of Lovecraft's New England rural feeling, incorporated into a sort of little joke by the borrowing of a gimmick from Long's "The Space-Eaters."

But the best story in the book, not very surprisingly, is Fritz Leiber's "The Terror from the Depths." Leiber was one of Lovecraft's last protegés (another was Robert Bloch, who contributes an introduction to *Disciples*), and it's interesting to note that the very last of Lovecraft's many letters is partially *about* Leiber. It's particularly gratifying to see Leiber not only productive but at the top of his form, at an age and a point in his career where most writers are either retired or selling on reputation rather than merit.

The book is worth its price for the sake of the Leiber. Several of the other stories are okay-reading, and the rest can be written off as the excesses of enthusiasts.

BRIEFLY NOTED

It's impossible for me to read all the books I receive, and even at that it's impossible for me to review all the books that I read. Andy Porter kindly supplements "Lupoff's Book Week" with his own reviews and those of others from time to time, but deserving and/or noteworthy books are *still* omitted all too frequently. With Andy's encouragement I'm going to try an experimental "roundup" section, knowing in advance that it isn't as good as the additional full-scale reviews would be, but in hopes that it will prove better than ignoring them altogether. So:

The Magicians, by James Gunn (Scribners) is expanded from a 1954 novelette. It should have stayed a novelette. The book starts pleasantly enough—a mildly incompetent private-eye pursues what he thinks is a stage magicians' convention and finds himself in a *real* magicians' covention (note the missing *n*). Unfortunately, the book turns into a weak swipe of the late Thorne Smith's *The Passionate Witch*. The Smith book was lovingly adapted as the film *I Married a Witch*, which in turn was ripped off by the later film *Bell, Book and Candle* and the TV series *Bewitched*.

I don't know how good Gunn's original novelette may have been, but the longer version suffers from a bogged-down plot, stolen characters, padding and digression, and the worst cheat ending since Sam Katzman stopped making serials for Republic.

Give this one a pass and read the Smith version or see the first film.

What Will They Think of Last, by Horace L. Gold (IDHHB Inc) is not, as I had hoped, a full-scale autobiography. Gold was a good pulp writer and a good comic-book writer in his day, and in my opinion was one of the *greatest* of all SF editors during his early brilliant years at *Galaxy*. *What . . . Last* is a collection of his *Galaxy* editorials, fun enough but not the real inside stuff I'd hoped for. The last piece in the book, written for *Galaxy*'s Silver Anniversary, is more like it, but it's only 10 pages out of 150.

A word concerning ethics. . . . There are a number of illustrations in this book, "re-rendered" from old *Galaxy* covers by a contemporary artist. The new artist—in essence, a copyist—is given credit in the book, without note of the original sources or artists' names. If not illegal, this is at least morally dishonest, and I find it very objectionable.

The book is still recommended, but not as enthusiastically as I'd hoped to be able to recommend it.

Ballantine Books has reissued Fredric Brown's wonderful *Martians, Go Home*, as originally published in 1955 and updated slightly in 1964. It's still one of the most charming bits of SF-whimsy ever written, and makes marvelous reading. The "newest" cover art is actually the original *Astounding* magazine cover illustration by Kelly Freas. 1955 was a long time before Freas had turned into the hack he's been acting like for the past few years, and this cover is a delight.

Now let's have a new issue of Brown's equally lovely *What Mad Universe* to go with those *Martians*, hey?

The Power of Blackness, by Jack Williamson (Berkley/Putnam) is an old-style interplanetary pulp hero adventure, strung together from a series of magazine stories over the past few years. It isn't quite Williamson at the top of his form, but there are enough flashes of the old magic to raise a lump in the throat of the veteran reader, and to give a youngster some inkling of what science fiction was all about in the heyday of the pulp magazines. I suspect that the hardcover is out-of-print by now, but there should be a paperback any time, and it's definitely worth the price. Also a nice Lehr cover.

Our Lady of Darkness, by Fritz Leiber (also Berkley/Putnam) is one of Leiber's best. It's a highly autobiographical novel with horror-fantasy overtones, a connection with Lovecraft's Cthulhu mythos (although only a slight one), and one of the scariest, most original, and most damnably *convincing* fantasy notions I've ever come across. The book may have some technical flaws in terms of pacing and the like, but they can be overlooked. Don't miss it—its virtues outweigh its faults overwhelmingly!

I've made mention of Seabury Quinn and his series hero Jules de Grandin whose psychic detective cases appeared in *Weird Tales* over a span of several decades. Yes, I said decades. Popular Library is issuing a set of them—something like five volumes of short stories and one novel (*The Devil's Bride*)—under the general editorship of Robert Weinberg, and with introductions by various fantasy-oriented people (Doc Lowndes, Lin Carter, etc), plus maps and illustrations.

More than a couple of these little yarns taken at a sitting tend to get tedious, but if you can ration 'em out to yourself, one or two at a session, they're still as much fun as ever. I love 'em, anyway.

The NESFA Press may be slow but they're steady. They finally succeeded in getting out *The Noreascon Proceedings*, some five years after that convention. It's a large, handsome book, lavishly illustrated with photographs of the convention, its attendees and their activities. The main content, of course, is the painstakingly transcribed proceedings themselves—the various panel discussions, speeches, award ceremonies and so on. If you attended the convention, this book will act as a time machine; if you missed it, as I did, it's the next best thing to having been able to attend.

The Space Machine, by Christopher Priest (Harper & Row) is one more throwback to Victorian SF. Priest takes two major Wells novels—*The War of the Worlds* and *The Time Machine*—as his source material, and comes up with a completely new, gripping and ingenious book. My only complaint is that it takes him about 100 pages to get into his story. From there on, for the remaining 263 pages (it's a long book) his performance is flawless! I suggest that you get ahold of the book and start reading at Chapter 6 or 7 or so. No kidding—it's a fine job; don't let the slow start stymie you.

Speaking of such things, *The Second War of the Worlds*, by George H. Smith, is still another run at those poor Martians. (See Wellman & Wellman's *Sherlock Holmes's War of the Worlds* also.) Smith's version (DAW Books) posits an alternate-universe earth and

Mars connected with our universe by the Shimmering Gates or some such sleight-of-hand. Smith's version is only about a third as long as Priest's, and doesn't show nearly the care and craftsmanship. But on the other hand there's a very sprightly feel to it, a sort of light-hearted sense of tongue-in-cheek, that makes it good fun. Certainly a pleasant enough time killer (but who has time to kill nowadays?).

Dave Kyle's *A Pictorial History of Science Fiction* (A&W Visual Library) is the victim of an incredibly bad piece of timing. Just a year ago the market was being deluged with illustrated histories of SF—by Aldiss, Gunn, Rottensteiner, Frewin, and Sadoul. Now Hamlyn has issued Kyle's *History*, and I'm afraid that the market has been saturated. At any rate, Kyle's book seems to have gone straight from bindery to remainder table without ever being properly "published" at all!

But somebody else's misfortune may be your benefit. You can get this *very* handsome book, lavishly illustrated with many pages in full color, hard bound and in large format, for $7.98 or thereabouts. That's about what you pay for the paperback reissues of last year's hardbounds.

Kyle covers the standard ground of how SF came up the Hudson from Hoboken, the apostolic succession of Verne, Wells, Gernsback and Campbell. Kyle is an old-time fan, small-time professional SF writer and illustrator, and co-founder of the vitally-important and now-legendary Gnome Press, and he knows his beans. His style is less than overwhelming, and the book is dotted with boners—Gernsback publishing comics in 1929 (it was '30), Frank Phillips as guest-of-honor at the first World SF convention (it was Frank *Paul*), Clark Henneberger as publisher of *Weird Tales* (want to try *Joseph* Clark Henneberger?), *Playboy* appearing in the late 1940s (how about the 50s?), etc., etc. But it's basically a sound book, and a bargain at the remainder price.

A couple of notable reissues—Ballantine has done a fifth printing of Peter Beagle's marvelous fantasy *A Fine and Private Place*. Neither musclebound bonehead nor eldritch horror appears in this book; it's a ghost story but more than that it's a love story, and the author's concern is not so much with action as with *understanding*. The book is funny, gentle, tender and profound; if you don't read it you're depriving yourself of an experience in beauty and sensitivity that you'll never forget.

And Pocket Books has taken over Avram Davidson's *Or All the Seas with Oysters*, previously issued by Berkley Books. This is a fine collection of vintage Davidson short stories—eighteen of them, from *F&SF*, *Venture SF*, and *Galaxy* where they first appeared between 1954 and 1960. There are classic yarns here: the title story, "Help! I Am Dr. Morris Goldpepper," "My Boy Friend's Name is Jello," and more. And check out Avram Davidson's "Dagon," the title of which invites comparison with Lovecraft's story of the same name. Davidson is one of our best (and distressingly unprolific) authors, and these are some of his best stories. There's also a marvelous, funny cover painting by Ed Soyka. I've never heard of this artist before, but I hope to see many more of his works.

Alfred Bester is another witty and deserving writer whose output has been regrettably sparse. His short stories have previously appeared in a couple of collections, but Berkley/Putnam has now assembled what I take to be Bester's own "definitive" selection in two volumes, *The Light Fantastic* and *Star Light, Star Bright*. Once again, the classic stories are here: "5,271,009," "Fondly Fahrenheit," "The Men Who Murdered Mohammed," "Adam and No Eve," "Time is the Traitor," "Oddy and Id," and more.

Of *great* additional interest, however, is Bester's running commentary giving

his own thoughts and experiences, the background and circumstances of each story's creation. This is the kind of inside stuff that is fascinating and hard to come by, especially from our better authors. (For some reason, a lot of dubs prefer to talk about their work while most of the real talent spend *their* time *doing* it.) Good collections, these two of Bester's.

Barry Malzberg has had one of the oddest of all careers in the field of science fiction, blazing across the sky with his unique, dark talent, then crashing from the sheer overweight of his own excess production. (Also, to be candid, his own sloppiness and self-imitation. I don't know how a man can get away with writing three drafts of the same novel and selling each of them to a different publisher under a different title; I don't know whether I'd be able to resist the temptation to do so if I could get away with that, but it was bound to catch up with Barry and it did.)

Further, Malzberg seems to be having a dreadful time saying good-bye to SF and making it stick. He keeps making farewell appearances. *Down Here in the Dream Quarter* (Doubleday) is a farewell collection of short stories gathered from a variety of places where they appeared between 1972 and 1976. I have long since gone on record as an admirer of Malzberg's, and I will stick by my assertion that several of his novels and a number of his short stories are among the most striking, original and effective science fiction narratives of recent years. But this continual moaning and self-pity and threats to take his baseball and go home, coupled with a still obvious willingness to milk science fiction for dollars and publishing credits, do not do credit to Malzberg and do not brighten the landscape of science fiction.

Dr. Cyclops, by Will Garth (Centaur Books) is a real oddity. "Garth" never existed; he was a house-name at the old Standard Publications chain (*Startling Stories, Thrilling Wonder Stories,* etc.). The name was used at various times by Henry Kuttner, Edmond Hamilton, and others. Nobody I've asked seems to know who wrote *Dr. Cyclops,* and no one has owned up to being the author of the book. Wise silence! It's an example of the old pulp stuff at its clumsiest, shallowest, and most unreadable. Sorry, folks: a loser.

Upon the Winds of Yesterday (Grant) is an album of artwork by George Barr, and a splendid, splendid book. Barr is a marvelously accomplished illustrator who has received relatively little notice, I suppose because he "snuck up on us" so gradually. He started as a fan artist somewhere back in the Eisenhower era, made his first professional appearances in the early 1960s (and *please,* Stuart Schiff, there never was a *Fantastic Stories Magazine;* The Standard chain had a *Fantastic Story Magazine* but Barr's early sales were to Ziff-Davis's *Fantastic* a.k.a. *Fantastic Stories of Imagination*), and has more recently done a series of paperback covers, plus stretching out into such areas as movie posters and greeting cards.

Barr is a superb illustrator, at best doing works of fantasy, of the outre, the fey, and the fanciful. He's not quite so good when he attempts horror or more muscular fantasy themes, but since he essays such themes rarely he's almost always playing to his strengths, not his weaknesses.

This book is priced at $25, and considering the amount of color (over fifty plates), the magnificent paper stock, the gorgeous printing job, it is a huge bargain. You can spend hours on end studying the marvelous pictures: it's like a combination of Bok, Finlay, and the old, careful Freas. The only problem for me is whether to save this magnificent book intact, or dismantle it and send my favorite plates off to be framed. Come to think of it, maybe I'll just blow my next wad of mad-money on a second copy so I can do both.

Larry Niven's *A World Out of Time* (Holt, Rinehart & Winston) starts out like a Saturn V and all too soon fizzles like a Vanguard . . . if you remember the performances of NASA's various rocket boosters. In case you don't, this is either a novel that begins well and then goes *dreadfully* wrong, or a cobbling-together of several novelettes the first of which is a beauty and the others of which are stinkers.

For his opener, Niven sets up one of the most ingenious forms of reincarnation I've ever come across. Future criminals are brain-wiped and reprogrammed with electronic replicas of personalities lifted out of cold storage. When the protagonist (one of the "imposed" personalities) realizes his situation, he discovers that he has to prove himself a winner—and do so in a socially useful manner—or they'll simply wipe *him* away, too, and try again. "His" body will continue in use, but *he* will be dead!

It reads like some fine old-style *Galaxy* social extrapolation, but Niven abandons his examination of future-earth society to send his hero off on a super space journey from which he returns to a far-distant future earth gone back (mostly) to semi-barbarism. From there on it's the most tedious, dumb chase-n-pursuit yarn since . . . since . . . I don't know *what.* Don't waste your money on this loser. Niven has done *so* much better in the past; I hope he'll do better again in the future, but in any case we can always re-read his older stuff.

Small press activity continues at a high rate; in fact, it seems to be accelerating, with former small presses approaching the commercial publishers in the volume and ambition of their projects (they've always done well in terms of quality), and newer, smaller presses forever appearing to fill the slots thus vacated. It's almost enough to give new credence to Fred Hoyle's generally discredited steady-state universe!

I've received two books from T-K Graphics (P.O. Box 1951, Baltimore MD 21203), both productions of Darrell Schweitzer, and both excellent. The first of them is *Essays Lovecraftian.* (Did I mention that Lovecraft-related publishing is at its all-time peak? I did? Good.) *Essays* is a very nicely produced digest-size paperback of 114 pages, featuring some 15 essays plus numerous excellent full-page illustrations by Richard Huber. (My favorite is "The Strange High House in the Mist.") The essays are mostly reprinted (although there are a couple of new ones), ranging from 1944, I believe, to the '70s, and the authors include such luminaries as Robert Bloch and Fritz Leiber (both members of the original Lovecraft Circle of the 1930s), Dirk Mosig (a leading academic Lovecraftian), and Robert Weinberg (who is lately emerging as *the* authority on *Weird Tales* and one of the major authorities on the pulps in general). These are the leading writers in the book from the viewpoint of sheer excellence. Mosig in particular, after a rather stodgy academic introduction, provides not one but four (or maybe five) extremely ingenious and convincing interpretations.

Another excellent essay is Schweitzer's own "Lovecraft and Lord Dunsany," I must say that I am suspicious on principle of editors who run their own copy, but this piece is most striking, most thought-provoking. A fine job!

Also from T-K Graphics is *SF Voices,* a compendium of interviews with 14 contemporary science fiction personalities, almost all of them "big names" so that I hesitate to name any without naming them all, but still I must single out the Williamson, de Camp, and Frank Belknap Long interviews as being of particular interest.

This kind of journalism—the verbatim interview—is largely a product of the electronic era, made possible by the ready availability of portable tape recorders. There were a few such pieces in earlier periods, performed by interviewers and taken down by shorthand stenographers, but this was a cumbersome procedure seldom used. Now, anybody can set himself up for business with an investment of well under $100.

Of course, transcribing and editing

those tapes is a monstrous job still (I've done some of this work and I know whereof I write), while learning how to conduct an effective interview is still another skill not easily developed. What questions to ask, how much of a predetermined format to follow versus "winging it," the technique of follow-up questions, the skillful application of the pregnant pause. . . .

Schweitzer, I think, is still sharpening his skills as an interviewer, and from time to time in the course of reading this book I found myself almost shouting, "But ask him about _____" (fill in the blank). Nonetheless, much valuable material here, and the book is recommended. Schweitzer also mentions that there is to be at least one more such volume; one would hope for a whole series of them.

Our own Algol Press has issued *Experiment Perilous*, three essays on science fiction by Marion Zimmer Bradley, Norman Spinrad, and Alfred Bester. All three originally appeared in these pages between 1969 and 1972, but if you don't have the back issues of ALGOL you might do well to buy the book. These *are* essays, not interviews, and consequently we follow the choice of direction of the author, not some journalist. This may or may not be for the best.

Bester and Spinrad take rather narrow spheres of discussion, each giving a very vivid and valuable insight into the development and/or marketing of his most famous novel—in Spinrad's case, *Bug Jack Barron*; in Bester's, *The Demolished Man*. Bradley starts off talking about the "New Wave." Ah, reader, remember the New Wave? How the passions of yesterday become the laughable recollections of today! Who cares if an author wants to spell and punctuate eccentrically, or use the word "weenie" in his prose? What were we all so exercised about?

Anyway, from the New Wave as starting point, Bradley wanders all over the lot in talking about science fiction, writers, fans, conventions, her own career and experiences . . . and in the process provides a most charming and illuminating essay. She is one dynamite essayist and critic! I'm sure that this book can be ordered from the same address as ALGOL magazine.

Arkham House is of course the *sine qua non* of fantasy small presses. Their latest noteworthy production is *Literary Swordsmen and Sorcerers: the Makers of Heroic Fantasy*, by L. Sprague de Camp. de Camp is himself one of our better (if not best) authors of science fiction and fantasy, not to mention history, biography, historical fiction, etc.

The newest de Camp contains chapter-length critical biographies of William Morris, Lord Dunsany, H.P. Lovecraft, E.R. Eddison, Robert E. Howard, Fletcher Pratt, Clark Ashton Smith, Tolkien and T.H. White. The material has mostly had previous publication in the fanzine *Amra* and/or the professional magazine *Fantastic* (the Ted White, not the Sam Merwin-Sam Mines *Fantastic*, not to reopen that confusing topic), but even if you've seen all the chapters in their original appearances between 1971 and 1976, I think it's worth the price to own them in this beautifully produced book with a gorgeous jacket design by Tim Kirk, frontispiece by Sidney Sime, and photo section of the subject authors.

Since the appearance of his full-length Lovecraft biography, de Camp has been subject to attack from Lovecraftian True Believers, which barrage may by now have been joined by sincere acoltyes of Howard and the others. Let me reiterate, then, my judgment that de Camp is an honest, thoroughgoing and perceptive researcher and commentator; *Literary Swordsmen and Sorcerers* will almost instantly become a standard reference source book, and you will regret it if you don't get a copy.

Back on the commercial front, I must mention the works of William L. Chester. Chester was one of a huge tribe of imitators of Edgar Rice Burroughs back in the 1930s. His Tarzan-analogue was a fellow named Kioga, a caucasian child marooned in Alaska, if my memory serves, and raised by bears. You know the formula, of course, and you also know whether or not it's your meat.

My point is this: the Kioga stories (in my opinion they were the best of the Tarzan imitations) first appeared in *Blue Book* magazine; the original Kioga novel, *Hawk of the Wilderness*, was filmed back in those halcyon days and published in hard covers by Grossett & Dunlap; a paperback appeared in the 1960s under the Wollheim administration at Ace Books. But there were a number of sequels in *Blue Book* which never were reprinted.

Wollheim has again performed a significant service by bringing out the first book edition of the second Kioga novel, *Kioga of the Wilderness* (DAW), and I believe that he intends to put all the remaining Kioga material into DAW editions. If you have the first book (*Hawk*) you will be delighted with the sequels. But if you don't, you'll probably find the first volume out of print again, and be faced with the frustrating prospect of picking up the series with the second book. So it goes.

Both Ballantine Books and the SF Book Club have put out editions of *The Compleat Enchanter* by L. Sprague de Camp and Fletcher Pratt. As usual the bibliography is a little complicated. These are the humorous/heroic fantasy adventures of Harold Shea, a modern man-in-the-street who keeps getting tossed into magical parallel worlds.

The first two Shea adventures, "The Roaring Trumpet" and "The Mathematics of Magic" appeared in *Unknown* thirty-odd years ago. They were combined as *The Incomplete Enchanter* by Henry Holt in 1941. A later Harold Shea novel, *The Castle of Iron*, also appeared in *Unknown* in 1941. Okay, *The Compleat Enchanter* contains all three stories. Good fun, light spirit, and wit that holds up pretty well after three-and-a-half decades—whole planes above the hackneyed gut-spillers and skull-smashers that pass for heroic fantasy down at your local paperback stand.

Ready for a little more convoluted bibliography? H. Warner Munn wrote a glorious Atlantis serial for *Weird Tales* back in 1939. This was *King of the World's Edge*, which didn't have a book edition until Ace Books put one out in the mid-1960s. This was followed by a sequel, *The Ship from Atlantis*, that had never been published before.

A third volume, *Merlin's Ring*, was issued by Ballantine Books, and Ballantine has now taken over the two Ace titles and put them out as an omnibus titled *Merlin's Godson*, with a lovely cover by Darrell Sweet. If you don't have the two stories in their previous incarnations, by all means get this edition: they're fine stuff. But don't be fooled into thinking that *Merlin's Godson* is a sequel to *Merlin's Ring*—it ain't.

Ballantine has also issued *The Complete Venus Equilateral* by George O. (*not* "H"!) Smith. The Venus Equilateral stories appeared in *Astounding* from 1942 through '47, and became a book issued by Prime Press at that time. When Harry Harrison got up a John W. Campbell Memorial Anthology in 1973, he got Smith to contribute a new story for the series, thereby rendering the existing book version incomplete, a *lacuna* remedied by the present volume.

There's also a nice little introduction by Arthur C. Clarke.

These stories are "hard" science fiction of the hardest Campbell variety, meaning that there are endless pages of exposition and/or dialog devoted to technical problems, during which sections there is little or no development of character, plot, atmosphere, or anything else except cramped *glutei maximi* in *my* chair. That's just so we know where we all stand. Or sit.

But if you're the old-type slipstick-wielding engineering-oriented *science*-fiction reader—and you have every right to be, of course; God knows that *my* preferences are *only* preferences, not

norms—you should love this.

I understand that the Avon Rediscovery series has been discontinued due to poor sales. This is very unfortunate, and I feel badly that I never gave these books even the small boost of coverage in this column. It's the old story of too many books, too few hours, and too little space. But as a parting salute, let me recommend four of the Rediscovery volumes that you might still find on sale.

A Mirror for Observers (1954) and *The Judgment of Eve* (1966) represent "early" and "late" Edgar Pangborn, respectively. I have to say that I fell in love with Pangborn's work from the moment I encountered "Angel's Egg" in *Galaxy* way, w-a-a-y back in the early '50s. Of the two present reissues, *Mirror* is a spacewar yarn, of sorts, and *Eve* is a post-holocaust book, but no Pangborn story was ever *really* about the things it was merely "about." Pangborn was a person of the utmost sensitivity to human feelings and the forces that push and pull against us all. His every sentence is a thing of beauty, and deserving of admiration. If you've never encountered his work before, this is a good time to do so.

Bring the Jubilee (1955) by Ward Moore, is one of the most ingenious parallel world stories ever written. Moore assumes that the Confederacy had won the Civil War, and projects forward to a parallel present time (as of mid-1950s, of course). Once more, I shall not forget the shock of recognition when I first read this story in *F&SF* as a teenager, and underwent the eerie experience of living in a *different* "here-and-now." Lovely.

The Crystal World (1966) by J.G. Ballard is the best of his group of somewhat similar "catastrophe" novels (*The Drowned World, The Wind from Nowhere, The Burning World*). Unlike most fiction in which the basic driving force is movement, in *The Crystal World* it is a *deepening* of character and mood and atmosphere. Idiosyncratic but highly effective; a very important science fiction book.

Two somewhat similar books, *The View from Another Shore* (Seabury) edited by Franz Rottensteiner, and *The Best from the Rest of the World* (Doubleday) edited by Donald A. Wollheim. The Rottensteiner is a trade paperback edition of a 1973 volume; the Wollheim is new. The basic notion in both cases is to widen the scope of reading for American (and other English-language) SF enthusiasts by presenting stories by numerous European authors, in translation. (In this regard Rottensteiner's title is far more honest than Wollheim's; I suspect that writers in Asia, Africa, and Latin America would rather resent being omitted from "the rest of the world," while "another shore" presumably refers to Europe.)

The overlap of authors is very slight, and of specific stories nonexistent, so it's pretty much a matter of choice between the two books. Rottensteiner, an Austrian doctrinaire Marxist, heavily favors the socialist bloc in his selection —six of the eleven stories are from the Soviet sphere and three of those are from the USSR itself. Wollheim gets all fourteen of his stories from western European sources. So in fact, the two books really supplement each other, rather than competing.

I think I like Wollheim's selections better, and I *know* I like his editorial commentary better. Something there is about Rottensteiner's unceasing paeans to Stanislaw Lem, "the world's greatest science fiction writer," that starts to smell a little bit fishy when one discovers that this "objective critic" is Lem's *literary agent* (with a corresponding monetary interest in Lem's commercial success).

Working class heroes indeed!

Two more Avon volumes deserve mention (and no, I ain't on the take from Avon; they've just been doing some good books and I've been overlooking them for too long—apologies, fellas). *The Circus of Dr. Lao* by Charles G. Finney (*not* Jack Finney!) is a classic fantasy-metaphor about a travelling wonder-show. If you saw the Tony Randall film a decade back you probably enjoyed it somewhat but that was *nothing* compared to the mind- and heart-twisting wonders that the book works. Don't pass this up if you've missed it to date . . . and if you have an edition which omits the Boris Artzybasheff illustrations that appeared in the original, take note that they have been restored in this latest printing.

And finally *The Book of Virgil Finlay* compiled by Gerry de la Ree is probably the best of the various Finlay compilations to appear since the artist's death. Certainly it's the best value—if you don't need the color plates and the hard binding of the two Grant collections. The Avon version is a $4.95 large-format paperback, and is worth owning for reference, or just to look at for nostalgia's sake, or to get a good look at the work of a top pulp-era illustrator in case you didn't see the pulps in their heyday, or for that matter to cut apart and pin up.

Another small-press note. The New England Science Fiction Association has been issuing annual indices of the science fiction magazines and original-material anthologies since 1966. Nothing here to read for fun, of course, but they're good reference material, especially since they're cross-indexed so

you can look an item up under story-title, author-name, or under the magazine or anthology in which it appeared.

I can't quote you on availability as new volumes appear from time to time and old ones go out of print—I have the 1974 and 1975 indices at hand, and the '76 volume should appear very shortly as I write. For details, write to NESFA Press, Box G, MIT Branch Post Office, Cambridge MA 02139.

THE LAST CELT, edited and compiled by Glenn Lord. 416 pp. $20. 1976. Grant. "A bio-bibliography of Robert Ervin Howard." (West Kingston RI 02892)

THE ANNOTATED GUIDE TO ROBERT E. HOWARD'S SWORD & SORCERY, by Robert Weinberg. 152 pp. $7.95. 1976. Starmont House (Box E, West Linn OR 97068).

The three *Weird Tales* "greats" (my mention of Seabury Quinn notwithstanding) are generally agreed to be H.P. Lovecraft, Clark Ashton Smith, and Robert E. Howard. None of them was exactly Mr. Average. Lovecraft was an eccentric of such proportion, and has received so much attention, that I need say nothing further here. Smith was a highly regarded young poet who retreated into a strange semi-hermitage in Auburn, California, and produced almost no writing after his early burst of verse and short stories. And "Two-Gun Bob" Howard was a bizarre, paranoid mama's boy who killed himself at the age of 30 when he learned that his mother had lapsed into what proved to be a terminal coma.

In a short writing career, Howard was amazingly prolific, and unlike Lovecraft or Smith who wrote almost exclusively for *Weird Tales* during their careers in fiction, Howard produced an amazing breadth of material for a wide variety of outlets. He wrote heroic fantasies (for which he is best remembered), historicals, sports stories, oriental tales, "spicies," etc. Each of these types of stories went to the appropriate type of magazine, as well as such general pulps as *Argosy*.

And since the reissue of long out-of-print Howard material began in the 1960s (I suspect as a kind of rider of the then-current Burroughs revival), Howard has become both the subject of a cult and one of the hottest of popular authors for specialty houses, mass paperback publishers, comic-book and poster publishers, record producers, and (so-far, only in rumor) film makers.

The Last Celt is a good general introduction and reference work on Howard; it is *not* a definitive biography. Rather, it is a compilation of short biographical (and autobiographical)

Continued on page 68

CHELSEA'S LUPOFF WEEK

LISA KANE, by Richard Lupoff. 129 pp. $7.95. ISBN 0-672-52125-3. 1976. Bobbs-Merrill.

Lisa Kane is a delightful New England schoolgirl just on the edge of puberty. She lives with her professor father in a small town. About her only problem, other than a vague malaise associated with an absent mother, is coping with the unfamiliar sensations of her emerging womanhood.

Sounds like pretty standard fare, if a little daring in bringing up something so generally taboo in juveniles as secondary sex characteristics? Not so. For not even the most benighted youngsters of Victorian prudery thought that women grow hair on their palms as part of their monthly cycle. Lisa does. The full moon exercises a very strange power over her. She is faced with disturbing, feral urges. Lisa, being a bright kid, soon realizes that this is not like the symptoms her friends have, and she learns that she is lycanthropic.

In the hands of a lesser writer, this juvenile might have become a sentimental version of *I Was a Teenaged Werewolf*, but Richard Lupoff is much too skilled to fall into this trap. Lisa is not horrified by her condition, but rather intrigued. Since she is an intelligent person, she does some research on lycanthropy and is understandably distressed to find out what the fate of werewolves has been in the past. Much of her fright is lessened when she discovers that she is not the only werewolf in town. To make this even better, she likes the other werewolves.

If a juvenile—or any other book, for that matter—needs a justification beyond its entertainment value, then *Lisa Kane* has credentials on several fronts. To begin with it is a believable story about a believable heroine; it deals with the bewildering process of change that overtakes all human beings along about age thirteen (even if teenagers do not in general turn into werewolves, the usual changes can be equally traumatic); it shows some of the anguish endured by single parents, for Lisa's father admits to missing Lisa's werewolf mother; and most obviously, it takes the whole frightful thoughts about lycanthropy and shows werewolves not as beasts attempting to be human, or as guilt-ridden humans overwhelmed by a ravening, voracious beastiality, but as an acceptable alternative to usual human development. Lisa likes being a wolf, she likes the other werewolves she encounters, and through her lycanthropic dealings is able to bring about some changes for the better in the other characters' lives.

There are a few notes that ring false. Lisa's academic father, against all the twitchings of academics, has absolutely no inclination to make academic hay with his daughter's surprising abilities. No matter how commendable this attitude is, it is also sadly unrealistic. Another disturbing element for me (but not for the fourteen year old daughter of a friend, who read the book) is the incredible insouciance with which everyone in the book reacts to the information that there is a werewolf in town. Now, it is true that we live in enlightened times, but surely one of the characters would be startled. The third problem does not have to do with the writing, or the story, but with the illustrations. The superb jacket and less successful interior illustrations were done by Marika, who has succeeded in giving away the whole book with the first line drawing, and has also made the error of doing pretty drawings—static, sweet, something like *Seventeen* magazine looked ten years ago. As a result, Lisa lacks the character in illustration she so clearly has in the writing, and the wolves have little of the compelling presence that mark them. It is as if Marika, in removing the threat from the wolves, also removed their majesty.

Lupoff deals in part with the genetic factors of lycanthropy, but does not dwell on it. He spends rather more time on the logic of the werewolf condition, and does it very well. This is not a werewolf-out-of-a-hat, but a thoughtful examination of one of the most persistent folk traditions the world over. This particular attitude gives good muscle to the story as well as giving the reader a chance to explore the superstitions that surround the phenomena of lycanthropy.

I admit that I have weakness for stories of this sort, as well as a life-long love of horror stories, but this has tended to make me more demanding of a writer in any aspect of this genre, as well as more enthusiastic about a work when it succeeds. With that in mind, let me say that *Lisa Kane* is well worth reading, not just by juvenile readers, but anyone with a serious interest in horror literature. Certainly Richard Lupoff deserves a great deal of credit for doing a sympathetic book about werewolves which neither mocks the werewolf nor the reader.

And if you are looking for a book to give a teenager that is not a Heinlein juvenile or a retold fairy tale, *Lisa Kane* should make a hit with him or her—it certainly did with the fourteen year old I mentioned earlier. But be sure you read it yourself before handing it over to the teenager. Otherwise you'll be missing a treat.

—Chelsea Quinn Yarbro

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RANDOM FACTORS: LETTERS

The response this issue was less than overwhelming, due mostly to the late receipt of ALGOL by many subscribers due to the Christmas mail mess (United Parcel Service, which ordinarily handles millions of parcels during the rush, was on strike this year; the Post Office, which usually handles about 3 million parcels, had to cope with over 8 million.) Also, many Canadian and foreign subscribers copies were delayed more than the usual time—it takes from 3-6 weeks for printed matter to go from New York to Toronto, about the same amount of time to go from New York to Europe—and the letters at the tail end of the lettercolumn came in after most of the issue was already pasted up, and are out of order as far as the Porter Procedure of clustering topics is concerned. So, battle lasers at the ready, carrot concentrates restocked in our food dispensers, force bubbles on maximum, we wade into the letters. Watch Out! *—here comes the first one . . .*

Robert A. Bloch
2111 Sunset Crest Drive
Los Angeles, Calif. 90046

ALGOL arrived in time [November 24] to give me something to be thankful about. My only quibble would be the absence of the names of Shaw, White and ATom on the cover: don't you feel obliged to warn your readers? As a result, before I realized it, I was perusing this material and enjoying it.

Another thing I noticed—the Asimov interview and the articles by Gunn and de Camp were written in plain English. Isn't it amazing how the Big Name Pros manage to express themselves in simple, declarative sentences, while the neo-writers-turned-critics must resort to prolix pontification and polysyllabic pseudo-profundity? Saying what you mean is just as important as meaning what you say, and the real pros have learned how to do both. It's refreshing to see the same standards upheld in the reviews. This is certainly an outstanding issue, and I'm grateful to you for it.

Jeff Frane
P.O. Box 1923
Seattle, Wash. 98111

Jesus, I don't know how you do it. Such a beautiful package. As you said, ALGOL can no longer be considered a fanzine, if only for the reasons that de Camp has stated in his article. As he said, professionalism requires full attention (as you have evidently given ALGOL) and "the gap between the amateur and the professional yawns wide . . ." Perhaps this gap, more than anything else, should be an indication of the qualifications for the fan categories in the Hugos.

I found James Gunn's article to be the best in the magazine. If it is widely enough read, it should do much toward debunking the current mythos surrounding the "dangers" of academic interest in the SF field. Things seem to have improved since my own experience five years ago. I enrolled in an SF class offered by the University of California at Davis, and found myself alone among a sea of high school English teachers. Apparently, they had all been put in a position of having to teach courses in SF and knew nothing about it. The fact that the instructor knew little more was apparent only to me, and I left them to their spelunking expedition into the depths of Heinlein and Bradbury.

I have a real fear that the demands my college generation made, for "relevant" courses and student control of curriculum, has had a significant part in creating the present supply of near illiterate high school and college students. I don't think any of us suspected a result like that, and if the presentation of entertaining genres such as SF can entice them to read I am all for it. It's a great improvement, at any rate, over the attitude that pervaded my college years as an English Lit major. To my instructors, modern literature ended, rather than began, with Hemingway. One hopes that any science fiction course would avoid concentrating on Wells and Verne.

In addition to the texts that Gunn mentions, please, please, add Robin Scott Wilson's *Those Who Can: A Science Fiction Reader* (Mentor, 1973, $1.50). It contains sections on plot, character, setting, theme, point of view, and style, with each category represented by two stories. Each is followed with a critique, by the author. The book is particularly invaluable to the would-be author.

It's pretty bizarre to find myself agreeing with Barry Malzberg, but I feel he is right about the objectionable use of "mundane" to describe fiction outside the speculative realms. I much prefer "vulgar," as defined by Webster's: "1. Of or pertaining to the common people, or general public; general; public, popular. 2. Vernacular; also, written in or translated into the vernacular. 3. Belonging or relating to the common people as distinguished from the cultivated or educated; plebeian; boorish; also, offensive to good taste or refined feelings" (How's that for an elitist attitude toward SF?)

My, my, but Darrell Schweitzer is omnipresent, isn't he? I'd like to smash his tape recorder. Seriously, I would have liked to see him gouge Asimov a little more about *The Foundation Trilogy* and the business with the Roman emperor. I can't help but feel that it helped spawn a host of similar inanities culminating in *The Mote in God's Eye.*

DiFate's column is aptly named. He manages to capture my interest and then zip on to another subject, another artist. I think the idea of him concentrating on one author at a time is a good one, and I am particularly pleased that he will be dealing with Powers. This great artist deserves much more recognition than the field has given him in the past. Do you suppose DiFate could get around to the Dillons? All the books on SF art to date have completely ignored them. How can anyone ignore the covers they did for the Ace Specials?

[Well, ALGOL used to get my full and undivided attention, but that's not true any more—see my editorial—so perhaps ALGOL goes back to being a fanzine? Somehow, I don't think that's a valid statement. And how about the editor who divides his attention between several magazines? It's possible Vincent will talk about the Dillons. The fact that they live a few blocks from myself and within phone distance of Vincent does help. They have shown, though, that good design is not necessarily a plus factor—their artwork was dropped from the covers of the Ace SF Specials toward the end of that series first incarnation, and I've been told that the Dillon-designed Harlan Ellison series at Pyramid has had less than overwhelming success. AIP]

Darrell Schweitzer
113 Deepdale Rd.
Strafford, Pa. 19087

ALGOL 27 was gorgeous, but I'm sure they all say that by now . . .

I was particularly interested and sometimes amused to see the reader response to my Delany interview—amused when you ran the letters of Mark Gisleson and Michael Cassutt one right after the other, showing how they think I do interviews. Gisleson says I should stop reading off lists of prepared questions and learn to follow up what is said. Cassutt says the problem is I ad lib the entire interview without preparation. Contradictory, methinks.

The truth of the matter is that I don't use prepared questions. I used a list of questions once, with Sprague de Camp, and he used them all up or rendered them redundant in the first five minutes. I haven't done it since. For me the technique does not work beyond the very narrow areas of 1) starting point, 2) change of subject when the interview seems to be dragging. This means that maybe one or two questions per interview were thought out beforehand, and the rest is 100% follow up. Gisleson complains about the absence of something that's been there all the time. If anything I tend to follow too passively and let the interview drift into tangents, although at the same time the most worthwhile material frequently results that way.

My readers and I seem to have some disagreement over what an interview is and should be. Cassutt wants gossip. Barbour wants me to be "tough and embarrassing." Sorry, but I'm not into the disemboweling school of interviewing. A question like "Do you have any odd sex practices? " would not only be irrelevant but *incredibly* rude. It is none of the interviewer's business and the interviewee would have a perfect right to walk out at that point.

Neither am I running a gossip column. What I'm interested in are the writer's ideas on writing in general and his art in particular, with whatever biographical information as is relevant. Some writers will really open up in an interview, which is all the more interesting. One writer I've interviewed didn't, and I knew nothing at all about his background so I pressed him and about all he would say was that he'd been in the Air Force and had a technical background. You see, you don't get the same results with different writers. Conditions matter to some degree (Delany was quite sleepy by the time I was done and I couldn't have continued) but mostly it's the personality of the writer being interviewed which determines what the result will be. Outgoing and gregarious writers like Bester make the best interview subjects. Delany impresses me as someone with a lot of ideas about a lot of things. He's not strong on anecdotes but he's very interesting when expounding ideas which are important to him. He's probably more in love with the English language than anyone else in SF, and I knew he would have something worthwhile to say on the subject, which is why my opening questions steered him in that direction. One bit of preparation I make for interviews is to read critical articles by the writer ahead of time. For this one I reread Delany's "About 6400 Words" (or whatever the length was) from the old series SFR before approaching him.

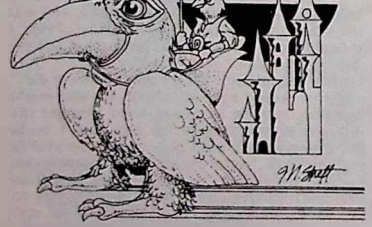
I'm not sure my ideas on *Dhalgren* really belong in an interview with Delany. If I was the Nasty Interviewer I would say, "Hey I thought your earlier books were great but the last one stunk. How about that?" And Delany would say, "Well I don't think it did," and that would have been that. He also might not have spoken so freely if he thought the interviewer was hostile. In any case I think the interviewer should play a very low profile second-fiddle to the person being interviewed, because the readers are (to use this one as an example) interested in what Delany has to say, not particularly in what I have to say. When enough of them are, then somebody can interview me.

One other thing I might mention about interviewing, which some of the readers don't seem to grasp. When *Playboy* interviews somebody they take about three days doing it, and cut the tape down till there's only a little bit left. When I interview somebody I can't reasonably expect to take up more than about 45 minutes of their time, so I run just about the entire conversation minus the

"um's," "you knows," and fragmentary sentences which are left dangling when the interviewee jumps to another subject without completing his first thought.

Sprague de Camp's article/speech on professionalism is one of the most sensible things I've read on the subject in quite a while. There is quite a controversy going in Lovecraft fandom at the moment about the desirability of the professional approach (mostly attempts to defend HPL for not having one) and I've always countered the amateurophiles with the argument that professionalism means the author's responsibility to his art. If he's at all serious as an artist, he will try to see that his work is published and preserved. (This means not only the initial sale, but a constant campaign of reprints.) Lovecraft left his best novel, *Charles Dexter Ward*, in manuscript all his life. He never submitted it anywhere even when he needed money desperately and the publication of a novel would have helped his career greatly, and at the same time book publishers were asking him for something of novel-length. That was foolish. And as a result the novel was almost lost to posterity. It was thought to be so for a while, but the scattered pages of his handwritten draft were later reassembled. If it had been lost, that would have been unforgivable.

[I have to amend your letter by saying that the editor is also responsible for the final form the interview takes. I do extensive editing to take out redundancies in questions and answers—numerous answers in the Asimov interview that began with, "Well. . ." for instance—and to make the flow of the interview smoother. This means trimming the interview by anything from a dozen to several hundred words. Without, of course, distorting the meaning of what's said, or putting false words in the interviewee's mouth. And in the Asimov interview, I felt the questions and answers ended too abruptly, resulting in the additional questions I asked Isaac in order to both answer some questions I thought should be asked, and to provide a finality, a definite end to the interview. This issue inaugurates the "profile" form of interview, where rather than the bare question-and-answer form we have an interview that's closer to a story, with the impressions of the interviewer and description of the interviewee added to give a better sense of depth. Let me know what you think about its effectiveness. AIP]



Dr. A.D. Wallace
2119 NW 21 Street
Gainesville, Fla. 32605

James Gunn's piece is illuminating, though why one should "like SF&F for the wrong reason" smacks of the Oriental mystique. And I cannot refrain from shuddering at such nonsense, as well as the position taken by Bova, Ellison, and del Rey, that they saw in academic interest disaster for SF. This is just so much crutting codswallop, "academic exploitation of science fiction" indeed! (Gunn is doing the reporting, not the formulating of such drivel.) The hierarchy, as always, is fearsome that its prestige might be attacked, and that its influence may be weakened by external examination. Nor does it want those whom it has not annointed traipsing through its "ghetto." A situation in which SFWA asks SFRA for help is amusing. It creates mirth and excites derision, and is enough to make one snap one's cane.

Bless Isaac Asimov for his frankness! He excels as a pragmatic hedonist, or hedonistic pragmatist. He likes what he can do and does it because he likes to do it. Or perhaps the other way around.

As to Professor Benford's random factor, I seriously doubt that SF can do better at showing that science is a *process* than mainstream can. In several senses music, pictorial art, philosophy, and novel writing are also processes. "Process" is a large and ambiguous term and I would welcome reifications.

Stephen A. Antell
45 Pineapple St.
Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201

The Gunn article was intelligent and thought-provoking. In particular, he brought up the old thing about the science fiction ghetto. I'm not really sure I like the way people toss around terms like this with so little regard for their appropriateness. This leads to the type of meaning change recently dubbed "semantic wrenching" by the distinguished scholar R.A. Hall, Jr. in his review of Dardano's *Il linguaggio dei giornali italiani* in the March 1975 *Language*. Hall further refers to this phenomenon as "artificially induced, violent shift," and implies it results from attempts by special interest groups to force changes of attitude on the general populace. Then, surprise, surprise, he cites as an example the use of "ghetto" to designate "parts of towns where no-one (is) being forced to live or shut in at night."

Well, I don't know. I feel Hall is right about most modern uses of the word, but the case of SF is not so clearcut. I admit to a modicum of sympathy with Gunn's statement about the "ghetto mentality." Human beings just seem to like seeing themselves as members of a persecuted minority, and I'm no exception. I look back fondly on the days when I read that trashy space stuff by flashlight under the covers and argued futilely with older and wiser heads who said, "*1984* isn't science fiction, it's good." Shouldn't I be glad now to come out of the closet and join all the academic types (like myself) who are making SF respectable?

No I shouldn't. Gunn claims that SF has been a ghetto and should now stop being so. Hall would probably say that it was never a ghetto to start with. I have to disagree with both of them. The word "ghetto" may constitute a rather fanciful metaphor, but my own experience tells me it doesn't really have to be wrenched that far to be applied to SF. And if we do live in a ghetto, are we sure we want to leave it? More experience—sad experience—tells me that good things often do tend to be cheapened when they become too popular. This threatens to be the case with SF. I'm a member of the SFRA, and I read *Extrapolation* faithfully. I admit I've gotten some good and valuable insights out of it, but by and large so much of the stuff printed in its pages is so much pseudo-intellectual crap. Enough so as to sometimes make me yearn for the good old days.

A lot of people, as Gunn notes, have compared this with the evolution of jazz. I think an equally apt comparison would be with the evolution of a religion. Take Christianity, for example. At its inception, it boasted of a mere 12 adherents; despite this, it was healthier then than it's ever been since. Even an old unregenerate atheist like me will admit that the first Christians probably felt some dedication to some cause greater than themselves, some higher code of morality. In today's Christian world, where a citizen is judged by his show of piety, of how many church-goers could this same sincerity be said to be characteristic? And just as Christianity has lost in quality what it's gained in quantity, so has SF degenerated to the point where I daresay most academics and fans who are involved with it really don't like science fiction. In short, my final sympathies lie with del Rey when he says (and I'm sure this is what he really meant): "If you think it's a ghetto, and if you don't like ghettos, then stay out of it."

You scored a real coup with your publication of the Asimov interview. The man is amazing; he could probably write a blurb on a box of breakfast cereal and make it readable. The things he said to Schweitzer have, it's true, been said before, but they do bear repeating, and anyway, he says them so well. Two things in particular attracted my attention. First, his comments on the timelessness of some SF that was written back in the 40s. He meant, of course, his own stuff, but this applies equally well to the other fruits of that decade. Too much of the SF being written now is too obviously inspired by such current controversies as over-population, the energy crisis, and the like, and consequently will date rapidly. The same is not true of *Foundation* which I predict will be read long after *Stand on Zanzibar* has become a period piece. Second, what he said about labels. Too many of the people who are now talking about scrapping obsolete categories and getting out of the SF ghetto (back to that again, are we) ignore the maxim that if the shoe fits, it should be worn. You don't make rose petals out of Camembert cheese by changing the label, nor do you convince the reader that he's reading literature when it's right in front of his nose and he knows damn well it's just failed science fiction.

One thing I like about Lupoff's reviews is that they're so predictable. I knew what he was going to say about *Dhalgren*, and he said it. Now he's pulled it off again with his review of *Triton*. A "thoroughly absorbing, highly rewarding reading experience," he calls it. And, just as he did with *Dhalgren*, he fails to give any reason for this judgment. From the description he gives of the book, it sounds like a piece of externalized subjectivity, a pseudo-anti-Establishment adolescent wish-fulfillment fantasy. He concludes by describing it as "a noble and fascinating experiment." The last Noble Experiment we had in this country was Prohibition.

Susan Wood's column was interesting, although I left it with some doubts about the depth of her understanding of British people in general, hence of British fans in particular. Many Unitedstatesians might think that Canadians are really just a funny kind of Britons themselves, and so are more to be trusted to write about them, but the fact is that by most criteria Canadians and USAers form one group, as opposed to Britishers and other Europeans, who form another group. This is apparent in Wood's remarks on "Male Chauvinist Piggery," which she evidently sees from an American viewpoint. Europeans in general don't see anything sexist about the kinds of things that aroused Wood's ire; they don't feel a man to be any the less a man because he admires a well-shaped breast. In fact, they consider our views on the subject to be rather odd. One of the most frequently heard criticisms of Americans by Europeans is that we have allowed our society to become a matriarchy.

I am also distressed by Wood's reference

to "anti-intellectualism" among Britfans. I am as firmly opposed to anti-intellectualism as anyone. But one thing I hate almost as much is pseudo-intellectualism, and I hope that Wood is willing to admit that such a thing exists and that it deserves my condemnation. Granted, it is sometimes difficult to tell the difference between anti-intellectualism and anti-pseudo-intellectualism, but the fact is that a great deal of what passes for SF criticism in this frantic age would fit perfectly in the "Pseuds Column" of the British satirical magazine *Private Eye*.

Richard Brandt
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"Every picture tells a story": Eddie Jones' cover for ALGOL 27 is an episode, and there must be a fantastic SF story that springs direct from it. For one thing, the outcome of a conflict between the two figures is far from certain; the space vehicle looks a bit ramshackle, has certainly taken some abuse, and next to the alertly poised native looks positively decrepit. If not for that compelling alien sky, one might even wonder if the scene took place on old Earth; perhaps the savage is a good blue-painted Briton? It's even possible that the ship is an uninhabited animal, making the humanoid's view of it quite close to reality.

James Gunn's remark that if colleges lack SF courses it's probably because they can't find anyone to teach them, is somewhat muted by his admission that there are those teaching the subject who are ill-qualified.

Isaac Asimov is probably being more modest than he would have the modesty to admit when he doubts that his name would sell more copies of a magazine. He has probably attracted more media coverage than *any* SF writer (I hedge on the accounts of Clarke and Bradbury), including a profile in *People* magazine; his nonfiction writings have earned him a devoted following in the ranks of academia (even High School teachers will touch his stuff); even my Mother likes to read his Sci-Fi because it is so practical, so (pardon the expression) "Down-to-Earth." "He writes stories that could really happen," she explains. Explaining perhaps why the mainstream is so interested in SF as "prediction." To extrapolate, one must begin with the here-and-now.

So many of the popularly accepted SF works show a familiar society surviving into the future, or a satiric look at modern life. Despite the complaints, Asimov's treatment of a Roman Empire recurring in the Foundation series continues to be read eagerly; despite complaints that writers fail to remove contemporary elements from their evolved future societies, writers continue to write so and readers continue to eat 'em up. Yes, we may not be so accepting of change as we think. SF may be popular because it shows future societies made adaptable to our needs.

Nothing wrong with Marta Randall reviewing Lupoff's books—you might have had Dick reviewing his own books, and then consider the stink! And then we see James Gunn and L. Sprague de Camp plugging their own books—oh, well. . . . One hopes that Lupoff will not write any angry locs in reply.

There was an interesting little story by Richard Phillipps back in '53 where Earth kept getting involved in a succession of wars with each of the Solar planets, as the natives refused to part with native elements vital to our updated technology. And how could you imagine life without automatic doors and robot kitchens and vidphones, a recruiter asks a wife and mother—as he sends to their dooms first her husband, then her son, and finally herself. Finally two aliens land on Earth and find the technological wonderland totally deserted. Puzzled, they ask each other where all the people went—as they toy with all the lovely little gadgets.

That tale seems more relevant to me today than when it was a cute little antiwar fable—not just because we might get into it all over the Arabs not wanting to sell their oil, either (we call this "trustbusting" on our Free Market economy). But it seems people would really rather die than do without some of their splendid technological innovations. Of course, we now have a technological culture which spares people the trouble of thinking. Most won't be bothered with criers of doom—they'd rather watch their TV shows. I can at least understand the popularity of whitewashed porn like *Charlie's Angels*, but how a crowd can watch a sophmoric soporific like *Happy Days* is beyond me.

In any case, the TV set at my school fizzled out and was carted away for repairs, leaving me to plow through my heaps of mouldering prozines. I've decided that maybe I am literate after all. (Just barely.)

Arthur D. Hlavaty
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I suppose there will always be romantic souls who believe that the literary world is divided up into pure and noble amateurs who create great art because they do it for love, and nasty old professionals who create

nothing but hackwork becasue they do it for money, and I wish L. Sprague de Camp luck in trying to disabuse them of this notion.

Nevertheless, I think de Camp has gone too far in the opposite direction by saying that the best SF is produced by professionals (i.e., those for whom SF is the sole or primary means of livelihood). You might say that de Camp is surrounded by counter-examples. James Gunn makes his living as a professor of English. Isaac Asimov says in so many words that he can make more money more easily writing nonfiction, but he continues to write SF out of love. Nor are they the only ones. A few issues ago, Robert Silverberg described how he made enough money out of writing professionally (and often badly) to "retire" and write whatever he wanted to without worrying about having to support himself by doing it. Frederik Pohl has stated that he is able to live on past royalties. R.A. Lafferty is an engineer by profession. James Tiptree, Jr., has another job, though he refuses to say what it is. Larry Niven is an amateur in the classical sense—a gentleman of inherited wealth who writes solely because he wants to. I'm sure there are many others. I certainly do not oppose professional competence or professional ethics, but there's a lot to be said for writers who do it for love.

Gene Wolfe
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Now what do I do with all these subs, Andy?

Anyway, you have finally said it: "ALGOL ... is a magazine, not a fanzine. . . ." You're over the hump! When you go to talk to the bankers, get a three piece suit of some dark color. Blue is traditional (vide the debates) but I think a dark brown is even better—it doesn't look like a get-the-money suit, but it *is* a get-the-money suit. Oh yes—wear a solid-color tie tied *tightly* in a *large* knot.

I am perhaps the only person on Earth who can explain the "special reasons for such growth [in SF courses] in Kansas" mentioned by Jim Gunn, and who is willing to speak publicly. While I was a MAC I learned of the existence of an elderly and very wealthy woman known forty years ago as "Emerald Dorothy" Gale; for the past quarter century she has been out of the public, but she has been funding research in science fiction and fantasy with an open hand.

[I don't think I'd better answer this letter, except to tell you to watch out for low-flying houses. . . . AIP]

Ira M. Thornhill
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I finally decided that I don't particularly like the cover of ALGOL 27. The sky is a *bad* color (as is the "primitive" who looks as if he is slowly sinking into what (from his bluish tinge) one can only assume to be snow; and the vehicle looks like some sort of plane that has somehow lost its wings. And the star and "71" on the side of it don't seem reasonable accompanied as they are by at least three varieties of "alien" looking characters. Other than that (and the fact that the entire thing is dreadfully bottom heavy in spite of the title and such all over its top) the cover is *really* nice. At least it makes one look twice and do a little thinking about it. And it helps to keep one from noticing the price increase right away.

Every time I get a new ALGOL I get this horrible, frustrated feeling that a book review column in a zine published only three times a year is just such a *waste*—something that I could never bring myself to do if I were publishing the zine. And every time Richard manages to entertain me, excite me, and totally change my mind—not to mention inspiring me to spend more money than I really should on things I might've been able to leave alone if not for his glowing reviews of them. I *do* notice though that Richard tends to review a large number of small press items—things that not every reader will have already seen and purchased (or, for that matter, even have heard of)—maybe this is a large part of the secret of his success in doing an infrequent review column.

I *loved* "The Exorcists of IF." Combining history and humor with yet another case of "wouldn't-it-be-nice-if-everybody-could-be-fannish." Yes. It's undoubtedly much more nice to do one's fighting in print than in the streets. One can only hope that someday there'll be a sequel written—with a *happy* ending. It was also beautifully illustrated. And you've got to be one of the most lucky bastards alive to've been able to get it at all. Things like this—even if they *are* somewhat rare—are what make ALGOL a fanzine in spirit (and you'll just have to forgive me that one.)

[You'll notice this issue that Dick Lupoff has a long section of short comments. Again, I'd like to hear from people whether they think this is a Good Idea or no. I think that Dick hasn't been providing as much coverage of paperbacks as he could, and this should cover that base. One of the positive things that Dick does, and does well, is provide the coverage of small press items—things that aren't covered well by the other magazines—and yet are well worth knowing about and buying. Incidentally, Dick's new book, Sword of the Demon, *says in its jacket blurb that, "his short stories have appeared in* Fantasy & Science Fiction, Amazing, Algol, *and* Fantastic." *Owell . . . AIP]*

Martin Morse Wooster
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Your comment made me realize that I, too, am one of the "Closet Canadian" fen; I have been known to argue about the character of John Diefenbaker with some noisy Toronto types on a Saturday night during a SF convention. (But then, people have been known to argue about stranger things at cons . . .)

What puzzles me is that the prominent Canadian fen are perfectly willing and able to dissect or praise American or British SF, but when it comes to Canadian SF, they are silent. (And Québecois SF? Forget it.) Is this because Canadian SF is primarily for home consumption, or what? When I try to talk about Canadian SF with Canadian fen, they usually brusquely discuss the worst examples of the genre—*North by 2000, The Last Canadian,* Richard Rohmer's novels—and mention one or two decent books in passing. Perhaps this is the celebrated Canadian inferiority complex, perhaps there really isn't any worthwhile SF from Canada—it's hard to tell, and I haven't yet been able to find the answer.

The answer does, of course, depend on how one phrases the question. What, for example, is a "Canadian writer"? Does one define a writer's nationality by his birthplace, or his settings for his fiction, or what? If one means by a Canadian writer someone who was born in Canada, then Saul Bellow is a Canadian writer. But Canada-hood does not depend on length of residence—I have read of one children's writer who has lived in Canada for twenty-five years, but is still referred to as an ex-Australian. If we go by the nationalist's creed that Canadian fiction must have both a Canadian-born author and a Canadian setting, then Brian Moore and Mavis Gallant are not Canadian authors, despite each one's prestige and popularity, and someone like H.A. Hargreaves, an otherwise minor *New Worlds* contributor of the late fifties/early sixties, can have his book praised in such words as "At last! Sci-fi (sic) that takes place in Canada, instead of America or outer space or other distant places."

The key question is whether or no one considers Gordon Dickson a Canadian author. He was born in Canada, and many of his works (parts of *Necromancer,* "The Immortal") have Canadian backgrounds. I have heard that he has stood at a Midwestcon banquet when Canadians were asked to rise (albeit slowly and reluctantly). Fen I have talked to are divided as to whether he is a Canadian or no.

Perhaps this is a long letter dealing with a short comment hook, but I have been looking for the Great Canadian Science Fiction Author/Novel ever since I was riding my bicycle across Alberta in transit from Victoria to Montreal, and have yet to find it. A piece by Susan Wood or (preferably) Douglas Barbour about Canadian SF would be most illuminating.

[Oh, arguing about Dief is commonplace; even mundanes do it . . . Wait 'till you've sat in the dome car of the Transcanadian, arguing about nationalism with an Australian businessman, a Japanese tourist, and a schoolteacher from Toronto, as the wheatfields of southern Alberta roll past. Très étrange, as John Douglas would say. You forgot about the profile this issue of the well-known Canadian author A.E. Van Vogt. ALGOL has reported on Canadian SF, when it's available: there ain't too much out there. There's a new Québecois SF novel out, in the tradition of Joanna Russ: an alien female comes to Earth, and we see our society through her eyes. If I can get a copy, it'll be reviewed here (as Esther Rochon's excellent In Hommage to Spiders *was, several issues ago). There's an article about Gordon Dickson's Childe Cycle in next issue, and an interview with him coming up. Hopefully interesting topics like the Canadian content of his novels will be covered. Then there's always Sterling Lanier . . . AIP]*

David Bratman
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Richard Lupoff continues to be the best reviewer in the field. I often find myself violently disagreeing with his opinions, but he is still the most entertaining of that obscure species of writer to be found. His piece on *Interview with the Vampire*, in particular, is an example of the unorthodox work that an experienced and skillful reviewer can get away with, and make his readers love him for it.

I know virtually nothing about SF art, but am slowly being lifted towards comprehension by Vincent DiFate's column. I decided to assist that process by going through my *entire* collection and noting down which artists drew what covers, and I certainly learned a lot from that! Now, perhaps, I can vote for best artist awards with some idea of what I am doing. I note, however, with some distress, that nearly half of my paperbacks do not say anywhere who the artist is. (With my newfound artistic knowledge, however, I was able to figure a few of them out.)

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Dick Lupoff appears to have completely misunderstood the end of *Triton*. He suggests that Bron's act of becoming a woman fails in the end and that the book ends abruptly not because the story was over but because Delany found himself unable to carry it on, and that the novel therefore "ends in failure." This is completely wrong.

To understand why I say this it is necessary to note Delany's comment in Appendix A "From the Triton Journal: Work Notes and Omitted Pages," at p. 333, to the effect that "Everything in a science-fiction novel should be mentioned at least twice (in at least two different contexts.)" The meaning of the concluding paragraph, which is admittedly obscure when taken in isolation, becomes clear when viewed in the light of the principle set out above.

In the last paragraph Delany focuses on Bron's sudden (and fortunately temporary) conviction for 37 seconds during the night that dawn would never come. This is the second place in the book where a character experiences or describes such a sensation. The first example may be found at page 212 where the Spike is telling Bron about the time when she was in love, but the love was unrequited so that she felt she had to leave, and during the last night "I lay there, all night, on the floor beside him, completely alone with myself, waiting for a dawn I was perfectly *sure* would never come."

As I read the interaction of these passages, the implication is that Bron, whose problem is that he is completely self-centered and unable to interact meaningfully with other people on a mutual basis, is in fact learning to love people (in this case, the Spike, who does not requite his love because of this fault in him), is in fact learning what it means to really love someone, and is suffering the same sort of symptoms as the Spike described earlier. While this is happening too late to help him with her and the immediate problem, it is a positive sign that in the long run he may be able to work his problems out. This is a process that is likely to take some time, and a book that fully described it would probably be of an unreasonable length. In my view, it is reasonable for Delany to bring *Triton* to an end at the turning point where the critical change in Bron's personality takes place, at least if *Triton* is viewed as a study of Bron's personal development and problems (which Delany views as being common to many males in modern society, although they are rare in the future society described in the book).

Robert A. Heinlein
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If this is of any interest to your readers, let me add that Mrs. Heinlein and I intend to attend as many SF and/or ST conventions that hold blood drives as possible—i.e., subject to health, strength, and conflicting dates while continuing to average three months per year for writing fiction (that being the average time I have devoted to fiction for the past 39 years) and while continuing our on-site investigation of blood services abroad (one or more months each year). But those restrictions will still permit us to attend many conventions; we are already signed up for seven in '77-'78, and each of us is in excellent health.

Mike Glicksohn
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Highly enjoyable as Susan's look at British fanzine fandom is, I think some of her statements are somewhat suspect merely because she is not British. Second-generation immigrants, especially those lacking first-hand experience with the country and culture of their parents (in Susan's case, her mother) simply don't have the empathy necessary for full understanding of the people left behind. I'm speaking primarily of Susan's reaction to the insults and the seemingly rude writing that pervades many of the English personalzines. That this material exists is unquestionable. The point is, though, that one has to understand the British people to understand how much of this to take seriously. Brits are by nature more sarcastic, more caustic, more inventively nasty than North Americans. And it takes both a personal and a cultural knowledge to know how to take it all. Unlike Susan, I *have* met all the principals in British fandom and her reaction tends to be excessive. John Brosnan is a delightful man, witty, creative, imaginative and friendly. And while some of the insults he's tossed off have been serious at the time, many of them were entirely facetious, mere examples of a peculiarly British "artform." And Greg Pickersgill, possibly the most acerbic, vitriolic and "rude" writer in England is a pussy cat, who just happens to take fanning seriously and has grown up out of a culture that produced the Goons, the Beatles, Monty Python and an entire tradition of British music hall style common culture. I believe you have to take these things into account to understand British fandom's current incarnation. (And I agree fully with Susan when she says many of the very best writers and faneds active today are doing their thing in England!)

Vin [DiFate] is an excellent writer as well as a superb artist. He manages to talk technically about the SF art field without sounding pretentious and without baffling the non-artistic reader. His column is a major addition to the literature on SF art both for its content and for the clear, attractive prose Vin uses to share his obvious expertise with us.

"The Exorcists of IF" is on my list of The Year's Best Fanzine Material for 1976, and would have been in the 1976 Fanthology had you not reprinted it in ALGOL. It is definitely a classic piece of fanwriting, and much deserves the far wider exposure ALGOL can give it. It's an interesting commentary on current fandom that probably the three most brilliant pieces of fanwriting of 1976 were created by James White, Bob Shaw and Lee Hoffman, all veterans of some two decades or more of fanac. A lot of newer writers had good pieces published, but the outstanding work came from the Old Guard of fanwriters. I guess experience plus talent still wins out over mere talent.

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Canada

Undoubtedly one of the finest pieces of pure fan writing you've been privileged to print, and we've been privileged to read (and I don't throw words like "privileged" around lightly), is James White's "The Exorcists of IF," not to mention Bob Shaw's definitive intro. As one who has never felt a participant in any fan grouping the way White obviously did, and as someone who while admitting he must be a fan because otherwise why would he be reading all these zines and writing to them, I was nevertheless truly moved by both the conclusion to White's piece and all the spacey humour of the reminiscences—pardon me, the ghosts—throughout. Such a totally *felt* presentation of friendship is the main delight of the piece. That its conclusion is both right and moving of itself, only adds a superb pathos to an already classic fanarticle. I also noted that, in many ways, it provided a perfect continuation of Susan Wood's column of the previous ish, Ireland of the not-so-distant past and Australia of the almost-present having this much in common: that fans could meet and join there as both those fine writers have told us.

Richard Lupoff continues his merry way, and I enjoy, enjoy. One of the reasons I do is that Dick is one of the few regular reviewers in SF who truly has a sense of what Samuel R. Delany is trying to do. I disagree with Dick about the ending of *Triton*, in so far as I see Bron's final desperation, and despair, as necessarily arising out of everything that has gone before. The fact that Delany chose a protagonist who fails for this novel is itself interesting in the extreme—at least in terms of

his somehow expanding the borders of some of the basic and most used narrative images of the genre. The comparison with *Imperial Earth* is not just intriguing, it is extremely useful in pinpointing how Delany is pushing SF further out, *while refusing to leave it.* He is an SF writer, and a believer in SF.

I must switch to the lettercol, and Barry Malzberg's loc. As a reader who admires both Delany and Malzberg, I am saddened when one of them can't seem to understand or appreciate the other. Malzberg's point is an interesting one; for surely the informed reader of SF should know a lot of fiction without the ghetto's walls. I would say that Delany very clearly does, as even his first novel, written when he was eighteen, shows. That what he knows includes a lot of European fiction, and, more importantly perhaps, a lot of the most interesting contemporary poetry, is, to me, of the utmost importance, because I believe that those contemporary poets he knows have been the leaders in the most important new writing of the past 30 years. I suspect that Delany has read most of the novels Malzberg refers to. I have read many of them, and what interests me—as a reader who has only so much time and therefore chooses with care what he *re*reads—is that I would rather reread any number of fifties SF novels, despite the many awkwardnesses they reveal, than any of the books Malzberg mentions, with the possible exception of the Kerouac or the O'Connor, and maybe the Mailer. This is not because these are poor books, though I believe Updike and Salinger will eventually be seen for the rather poor writers I take them to be, but because they seem terribly limited by their temporal context. However awkwardly, however inchoately, the best SF of that period addressed itself to issues that no other fiction even seemed to be aware existed. And it's the inheritors of that SF, the *Dune* books, for example, and more importantly, Le Guin's novels, and, differently, Delany's and Russ's and Wolfe's, and others', which have continued to probe such fictional areas, areas—of politics, social possibilities—which much mainstream fiction has seemed to refuse to recognize as even existing for fictional handling. Malzberg's list of books isn't 'negligible' exactly, but somehow most of those books seem thin to me. I wonder if Delany doesn't find them so, too, compared with some of the European fiction of the same period or a bit earlier—as an example, Hermann Broch's *The Death of Virgil*, an extraordinary work, and in its handling of narrative time, one which he could perhaps have learned a great deal from.

I'm glad someone like James Gunn, a writer who is also a college instructor, is speaking out for those SF writers who aren't afraid of the new academic interest. Undoubtedly a lot of people teaching SF don't know much about it, but what strikes me is the fact that just as many are people, like myself, who read SF when young, left it when they took the academic trip through grad school, etc., and yet came back to it, discovered it had grown with them, and teach it because they love it, as much as any fan. That can't be all bad, surely? Gunn's right, finally it's the fiction itself that has to do the trick and reach the reader. I believe the best of what has been written and the best of what's still to be written will do that: reach more and more readers. That has to be a Good Thing for everyone concerned. As for academics 'killing' SF, they haven't been able to 'kill' Shakespeare, either, and they won't kill anything that's really alive. Not for the readers who care, and they're the only readers who finally count anyway.

Martin Ricketts
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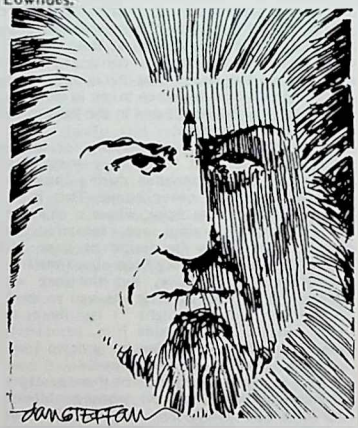
Kingswood, Bristol BS15 2YN, U.K.

I am not a keen reader of Isaac Asimov's fiction (but a great admirer of his ideas and plots—is that an anomalous statement?) but I much enjoyed the interview, perhaps because his honesty and unpretentiousness came over so well. I must object, however, to his dismissal of Nevil Shute's *On the Beach*—"there's a sort of Victorian flavor to it." The relevance of this novel lies not in whether nuclear warfare is going to work that way, but in its examination of human behaviour in a certain situation—a relevance that will always be there, just as a Shakespeare play does not 'have meaning only for the English people of 1600' (Despite its Elizabethan flavour?). This, to my mind, is the important thing about all literature, science fiction included. Scientific and technological speculations and extrapolations are by themselves little more than—to use what I believe is Harlan Ellison's term—schematic illustrations; it's the examination of their effect on humanity that makes literature, if it is any good, provide insights that will still have value long after the speculations/extrapolations are rendered obsolete.

It's interesting that Richard Lupoff thinks Bertram Chandler's *The Bitter Pill* was condensed. In fact it first appeared as a novelette in the U.K. in 1970 in the now-defunct *Vision of Tomorrow.* I should have thought that a considerable amount of filling out would have been needed to take it to even the length that Lupoff says the novel is.

WE ALSO HEARD FROM: Marshall Tymn, Beverly Kanter, William J. Denholm III, John R. Gebhart, Fred Jakobcic, Brendan DuBois, John M. Koenig, Bob Frazier, Robert A.W. Lowndes.



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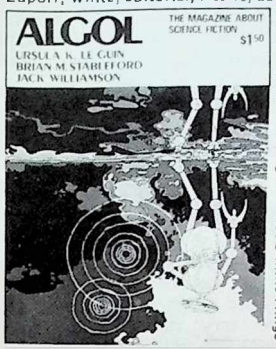

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PROPELLOR BEANIE
Continued from page 45

with Frank Herbert and the Galileo editors, letters, masses of reviews and a report on a Milford writers' conference which proves that John Shirley should work on developing his writing skills and his senses of humor and human perception. Bennett's printrun is now a mind-boggling 1,000 copies . . .

Tangent #5, Summer 1976 (David A. Truesdale, 611-A Division St., Oshkosh, WI 54901. Quarterly, offset; $1.50 or 4/$5.) A monstrous 96 pages of the usual forgettable poetry, fiction and awful artwork, plus interviews (with Leigh Brackett and Edmond Hamilton, Jack Williamson, and Ray Bradbury) and articles (on feminism and SF, and Ray Bradbury being interesting on the theatre of the future.) There's good material, a lot of garbage, and a dearth of personality and direction. Truesdale needs to edit, not just assemble. That could sum up the problem of most genzines.

THE INDIVIDUALS:

Janus vol.2, no.2, September 1976 (Janice Bogstad and Jeanne Gomoll, 143 W. Gilman #303, Madison, WI 53703. Irregular, mimeo; 48 pp., 75¢ or the usual.)

Orca (Jennifer Bankier, 485 Huron St. #406, Toronto, Ont., Canada M5R 2R5. Irregular, mimeo; 41 pp., $1 or the usual.)

Simulacrum #3, October 1976 (Victoria Vayne, P.O. Box 156, Station D, Toronto, Ont., Canada M6P 3J8. Irregular, mimeo; 80 pp., the usual, or, "reluctantly," Can$2.50.)

The Witch and the Chameleon #5-6 (Amanda Bankier, 2 Paisley Ave. S. #6, Hamilton, Ont., Canada. Irregular, offset; 32 pp., the usual or Can.$1.50, 3/$4.)

Women and Men #6, May 1976 (Denys Howard, Box 8975, Portland, OR 97208. Irregular, mimeo; 38 pp., available "for a wide variety of absurd excuses" including trade, request, contribution, or 50¢ and up.)●

—Susan Wood, Department of English, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C., Canada V6T 1W5

LUPOFF'S BOOK WEEK
Continued from page 58

pieces about Howard, along with a *very* useful bibliography. Probably the best piece ever written about Howard is "A Memory" by E. Hoffmann Price. This was written long ago, first published in a fanzine in 1945, revised for the Arkham House omnibus *Skull-Face and Others* the following year, and is to be a chapter, eventually, in Price's volume on his fellow pulp practitioners, *The Book of the Dead.*

Of all these appearances, only the version in *The Last Celt* is readily available, and it is must reading for anyone interested in Howard.

There are other very worthwhile pieces by Harold Preece, Lovecraft (who survived the younger Howard by just over a year), Alvin Perry, and Lord himself. And, of course, there are five pieces *by* Howard, all more or less autobiographical.

The Howard bibliography occupies almost 250 of this book's 416 pages, and it is a most commendable piece of work. Howard's writings are listed and cross-listed, by books, short fiction, verse, non-fiction; cross-indexed by title of periodical in which he appeared; translations, unpublished works, series, "unborn" works, adaptations, and associational matter.

Finally there is a section of miscellanea including Howard holograph pages, amateur publications, maps, cartoons, book and magazine covers illustrating Howard stories, "The Battle That Ended the Century" (an anonymous short story, generally attributed to Lovecraft, in which Howard appears as a character) . . . and at the end, Howard's obituary.

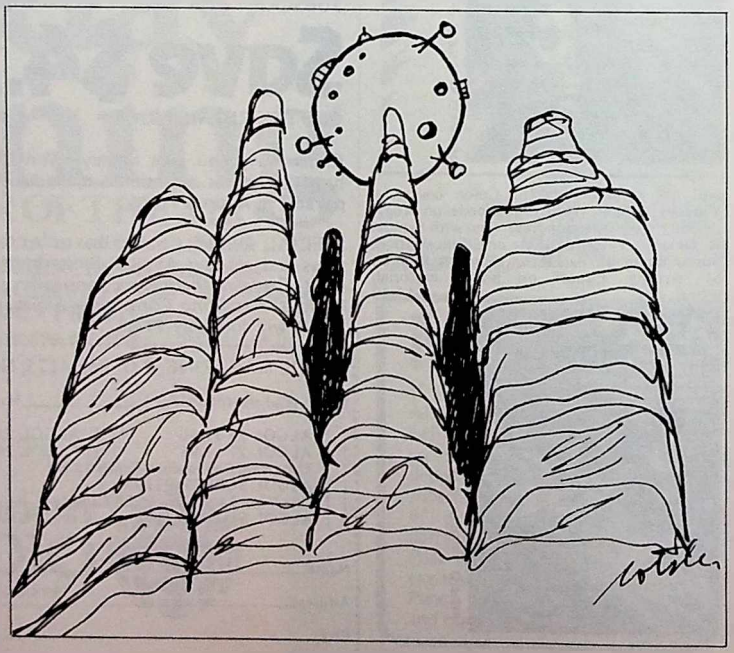
An outstanding reference work.

The Annotated Guide to Robert E. Howard's Sword & Sorcery is of narrower interest than the Lord volume, but does not substantially overlap it in content, and will be of interest to the more advanced reader. Weinberg is a young Chicagoan with a passion for the old pulps, who in the past few years has established himself as a fine editor, commentator, and re-publisher.

In the *Guide* Weinberg provides character-lists, series guides, plot summaries and critical commentary on Howard's major heroic fantasy series figures (Conan the Barbarian, King Kull, Solomon Kane) and a few similar though unconnected stories. I do not recommend this book (or any of its sort) as a substitute for reading the stories themselves, but it is a very useful roadmap for finding one's way among them, and offers excellent reference material for the person seeking specific data concerning Howard's works without actually reading them through.

The major shortcoming of the Weinberg is its lack of coverage of Howard's works outside the heroic fantasy area; in this regard, however, the Weinberg can be used in conjunction with the Lord to good advantage. The books are very valuable treated in tandem; far more so than they would be taken singly.

(A note on physical production: *The Last Celt* is printed on heavy paper, hardbound, heavily illustrated in black-and-white, and furnished in a colorful, pictorial jacket. *The Annotated Guide* is also very nicely produced; i.e., it is attractively printed on good paper. It is, however, paperbound, and the only illustration is a black-and-white pictorial cover. These differences in production account for the difference in price between the books.)●



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Final Thoughts...

This issue is late again, which is getting to be a Bad Habit. I may have to change publication dates in the future if this continues, perhaps to March, July and November...

Cover stock, despite what the editorial says, is actually 10pt. This is heavy stuff -- the same weight as well as stock as the Peacock Press books -- and the covers should show it. This issue's # of pages -- 72 -- is also the highest in 10 years, and represents the largest issue ever of ALGOL, with typesetting taken into account. Why? Just happened: I had a lot of fine material that couldn't wait for future publication. This issue continues a 4 issue trend by being Up in ad pages, which is a Good Economic Thing for ALGOL.

ALGOL's People returns next issue, with more true-life action adventure stories by contributors. Deadline for letters is May 15th. See you all next issue.

ANDREW PORTER, Editor & Publisher

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ALGOL's CONLOG

Mar. 11-13. LEPRECON 3. South Rim of Grand Canyon at Kachina and Thunderbird Lodges. GoH: Robert Silverberg; Toastperson: Marion Zimmer Bradley. Registration: $5, $6 at the door. Write: P.O. Box 1749, Phoenix AZ 85001.

Mar. 18-20 MARCON 12. Howard Johnson Motor Lodge North, 999 E. Granville Rd., Columbus OH 43229. GoH: Howard DeVore. Toastperson: Mike Glyer. Write: Ross Pavlac, 4654 Tamarack Blvd., C-2, Columbus OH 43229.

Mar. 24-27 AGGIECON VIII. Memorial Student Center, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX. GoH: Frederik & Carol Pohl. Special Guests: Tom Reamy, Andrew Offutt, Chad Oliver. Registration: $4, $6 at the door. Write: Aggiecon, P.O. Box 5718, College Station TX 77844.

Mar. 26-27 TOTOCON. Ramada Inn, Manhattan KS. GoH: Joe Haldeman. Registration: $5, $10 at the door. Write: Jan Finder, P.O. Box 9195, Ft. Riley KS 66442.

Apr. 8-10 BALTICON 11. Hunt Valley Inn, Baltimore MD. GoH: Philip Jose Farmer. Fan GoH: Meade Frierson. Special Guests: Norman Spinrad, Samuel R. Delany, Rick Sternbach. Registration: $4, $6 at the door. Write: Martin Deutsch, 6135 Waterloo Rd., Ellicott City MD 20143.

Apr. 8-10 LUNACON '77. Biltmore Hotel, New York City. GoH L. Sprague & Catherine de Camp. Registration $6 to 3/5, then $8. Write: Lunacon c/o Walter Cole, 1171 East 8th St., Brooklyn NY 11230.

Apr. 8-10 MINICON 12. Minneapolis. Write: P.O. Box 2128 Loop Station, Minneapolis MN 55402.

May 27-29 DISCLAVE. Sheraton Park Hotel, Washington DC. GoH: Joe Haldeman. Registration: $3 to May 20, then $5. Write: Alexis Gilliland, 4030 8th Street South, Arlington VA 22204.

May 27-30 NOCRESCON. Holiday Inn, Barron's Island, LaCrosse WI. GoH: Tom Reamy, Martha Beck. Registration: $3.50. Write: Mark Riley, 2646 15th Ave. South, Minneapolis MN 55407.

May 28-30 ERATICON. Hilton Inn, Houston. GoH: Ben Bova. Registration: $5. Write: Clifton Davis, 2602 Cherry Lane, Pasadena TX 77502.

Jun. 2-5 SF, HORROR & FANTASY WORLD EXPOSITION. Convention Center, Tucson AZ. Guests: Frederik Pohl, Jack Williamson, Robert Bloch, Harlan Ellison, Buster Crabbe, James Doohan, George Pal, etc. Registration: $10. Write: P.O. Box 4412, Tucson AZ 85717. See Display Ad, facing page.

Jun 17-19 X-CON '77. Red Carpet Expo Center, Milwaukee. GoH Gordon R. Dickson. Fan GoH Bob Asprin. Registration $5 to 6/1, then $7. Write: X-Con '77, Box 97, Greendale WI 53129.

Jun. 24-26 MIDWESTCON. Quality Inn Central, Cincinnati OH. Relaxacon. Write: Lou Tabakow, 3953 St. Johns Terrace, Cincinnati OH 45236.

Jul. 1-4 1977 WESTERCON 30. GoH Damon Knight, Fan GoH Frank Denton. Totem Park Residences, Univ. of British Columbia, Vancouver BC. Membership $6 to 7/76. Write: Westercon 30, Box 48701 Stn Bentall, Vancouver BC Canada V7X 1A6.

Jul. 22-24 AUTOCLAVE II. Howard Johnson's New Center Motor Lodge, Detroit MI. GoH: Don D'Ammassa and Don Thompson. Toastperson: Jon Singer. Registration: $5 to 7/1, then $6, $7 at the door. Checks payable to Metro Detroit SF Soc., Inc. Write: Leah Zeldes, 21961 Parklawn, Oak Park MI 48237.

Jul. 29-31 RIVERCON III. Stouffer's Louisville Inn, Louisville KY. Registration $5, $10 at the door. Write: Steve Francis, 5503 Matterhorn Dr., Louisville KY 40216.

Jul. 29-Aug. 1 SUMMERCON. Ryerson Polytechnic Institute, Toronto, ONT. GoH: Philip Jose Farmer. Fan GoH: Andy Porter. Registration $5 to 7/1, then $6. Write: Apt. 1210, 411 Duplex Ave., Toronto Ontario M4R 1V2 CANADA.

Aug. 26-28 DEEPSOUTHCON. Parliament House, Birmingham ALA. GoH: Michael Bishop. Fan GoH: Charlie and Dena Brown. Toastperson: Hank Reinhardt. Registration: $5. Write: Meade Frierson, 3705 Woodvale Rd., Birmingham ALA 35223.

Sep. 2-7 SUNCON. 35th World Science Fiction Convention. Hotel Fontainebleau, Miami FL. GoH: Jack Williamson. Fan GoH: Bob Madle. Registration $15 attending, $7.50 supporting. Write: Worldcon 35, P.O. Box 3427, Cherry Hill NJ 08035.

Aug. 30-Sep. 4, 1978 IGUANACON. 36th World Science Fiction Convention. Hotels Adams and Regency Hyatt and Convention Center, Phoenix AZ. GoH: Harlan Ellison. Fan GoH: Bill Bowers. Toastperson: F.M. Busby. Registration $15 attending to 12/31/77, $7 supporting. Write: Iguanacon, P.O. Box 1072, Phoenix AZ 85001.

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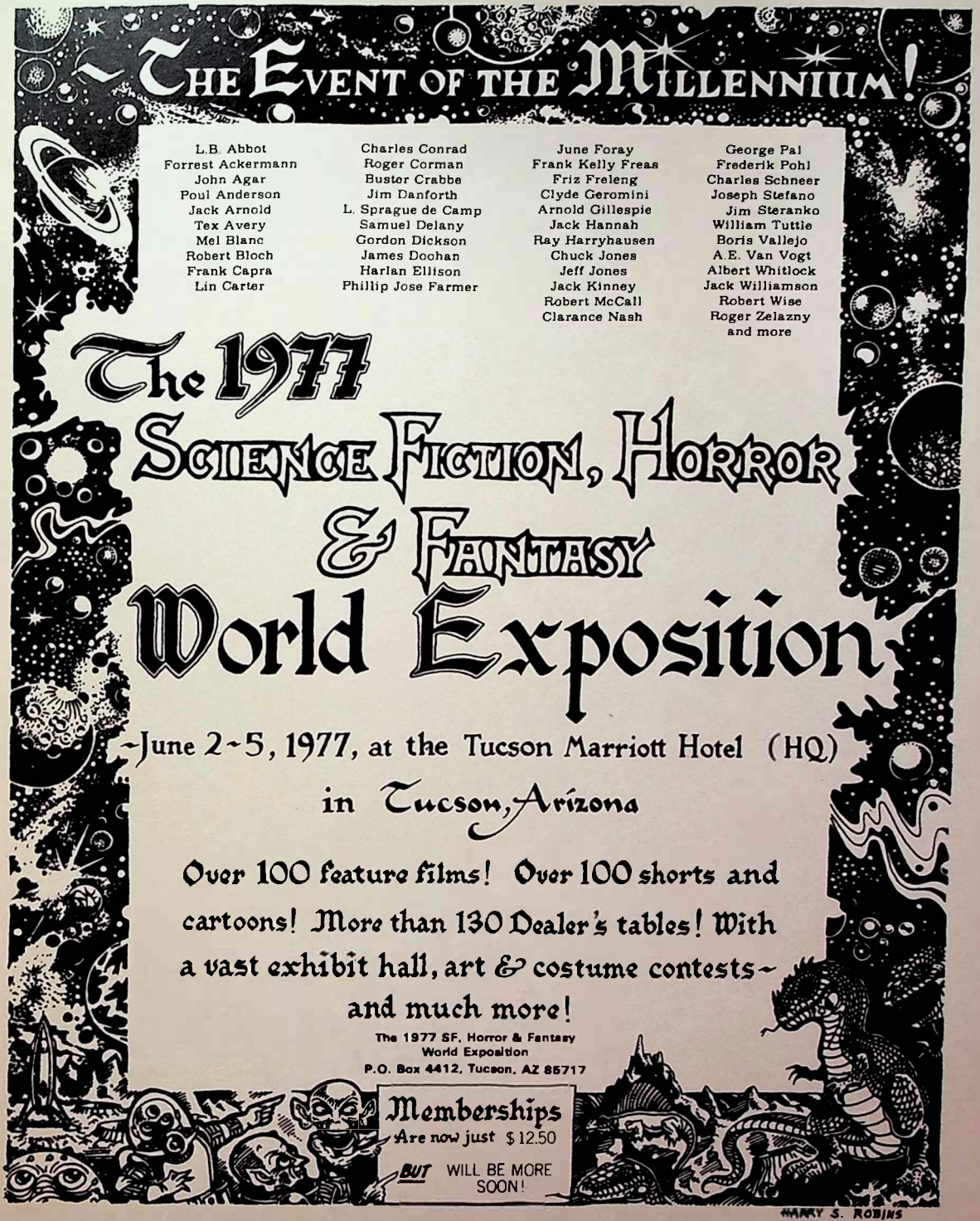
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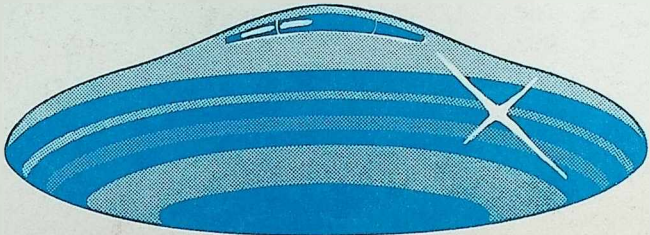

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