



NIEKAS

SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY

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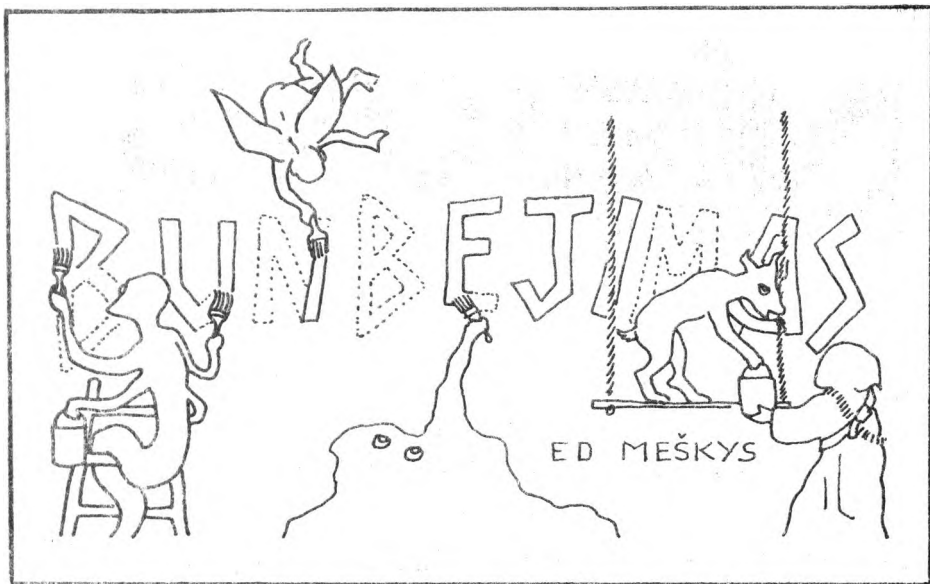
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ADDRESS UPDATE

Sometime after June, the Post Office will be coming out with 4 number additions to all Zip Codes. I can see why they are doing it, but it makes things particularly hard on us bulk mailers who are required to use such innovations before the general public. We do not know what the deadline will be for us, but we would appreciate it if every one of you would drop us a post card with your additional 4 digits as soon as you know them. If ours are announced before we put this issue to bed, we will include them on the contents page.

As you know, the PO is handling more and more mail all the time, and the rates keep going up as it is a labor-intensive industry. Each letter or fanzine must be hand sorted several times between origin and destination. To try and cut this down, the PO will use new technology, namely the Optical Character Recognition on computer systems that made the Kurtzweil Reading Machine possible. The PO is installing machines that can read and recognize Zip Codes, and automatically sort the mail. For example, in New Hampshire all mail goes through a sorting facility in Manchester. If I send Sherwood a letter in Laconia, about 15 miles away, it will not be sorted in the Center Harbor Post Office, but will go 75 miles to Manchester and come back. If sorting were done in each small post office, additional staff would be required and it is more economical to ship it to Manchester. They only sort out mail for Center Harbor and Meredith, 5 miles away. I am not sure, but they might also pull the mail that goes to the

Moultonboro Post Office. (While I live in Moultonboro, I get my mail through the Center Harbor PO). Under the new system, mail coming into New Hampshire will come to the Manchester Center and be machine sorted so finely that each individual mailman's load will be a separate bundle. Thus the mail coming into the Center Harbor Post Office will already be broken down into separate bundles to go to the boxes in the PO, and on various rural and star routes. They will not have to be resorted except by the individual carrier who will put his load into whatever order he delivers it in. In large cities there are brown storage cabinets on street corners. Trucks from the PO deliver sacks of mail to these boxes and the carriers pick them up and take them to individual homes. There is a separate bundle for each block. With 4 additional digits at the end of the Zip Code, the mail will be machine sorted down to the individual packet for each block.

But beware the glitch! Every time a new computer system of major proportions is introduced, there are many bugs. I would guess that mail service will be unbelievably lousy for about two years until all the bugs are worked out. But once the system is cleaned up, the PO will be able to handle the additional load with a smaller increase in employees. And with the strength of the Unions and the inability of government to say no to them, postal wages are ridiculously high. Such automation will have to take place. Also more and more mail must be handled by the system each year and I believe it is currently on the verge of breaking down. Do you remember the trouble the telephone system was

having about a decade ago? With their current technology, the system had gotten too large and was failing. Phone service was impossibly bad for a while, until the new technology was in place, and today it is better than ever.

The following are either old NIEKAS readers and contributors whom we have lost track of, or are current readers who have moved and whose NIEKU have bounced; no new address being provided by the PO. Jeff Arnold, John Baxter, Terry Belanger, Makiwo Chew, Richard Flinchbaugh, Bob Foster, Keith and Wendy Freeman, Pon and Louise Gatland, Tony Glynn, George Charteres, Dan Goodman, Annette Harper, Wayne Hooks, Middle Earth Distributing Company, David Peloquin, Glen Primm, Len Rosenberg.

NIEKAS MARCHES ON

With the last issue, we experimented with 3 column format and a wrap around cover. The response to both was for the most part favorable. Only one reader expressed displeasure with the 3 column format. It would probably look better if we could have justified margins, but that is unlikely for the foreseeable future ... unless one of us gets a word processor with a program that allows us to achieve it automatically. If you are wondering, we type NIEKAS on a 12 pitch Selectric with a Letter Gothic golf ball. We set the margins at 35 spaces, but are fairly free at releasing it for a 36th space, and will go on to a 37th only for a punctuation mark or hyphen. Last issue we typed one character narrower and switched after a few items for this issue were already typed. We will see how it looks this time, and decide whether to increase the width again, keep the new format or go back to the old. We type the copies to any convenient column length and cut and paste to achieve the 9.5" after reduction. We will keep experimenting and adjusting until we achieve a layout which pleases us and our readers.

Our silkscreened cover this ish is a gift of Tad Jordan and John Geisel of R J & D Screen Printing of Laconia, N.H. If you need custom silk screening, we recommend their services most highly.

THE MAD BLINK OF MOULTONBORO

Last October while Sherwood and Mike

were swearing over the paste-up board and press, finishing up NIEKAS 24, I went to New York for 10 days. I had not been in the Big Apple for a year and I spent much of that time with fen, especially John and Perdita Boardman. I also attended a meeting of the New York City Chapter of the NFB.

I arrived in New York on a Saturday after an all day bus trip from New Hampshire. Sunday at noon I met John in Manhattan near the Holland Tunnel Toll Plaza, where the Lithuanian church is located. We walked the two or three miles to the Southport Maritime museum. It had been established after I stopped spending a lot of time in New York, and I had not been there before. The museum has two piers with no buildings on them next to the old Fulton Fish Market on South Street. Tied up to one are a number of sailing and power ships open to the public. It was a lot of fun exploring these, tho Ned did not care for the steep stairs or the wobbly gangplanks.

There were two related exhibits which were most interesting. A 3/4 scale Viking long boat was up on the dock and various walkways were constructed around it to permit detailed observation. In a log house, open on one side, a group of Norwegian woodcrafters were building, by hand, a traditional fishing boat. It was about 3/4 finished and they let me behind the rope to explore the construction. The boat is so low and wide, I found it hard to imagine how crews could safely take them out beyond the sheltered Fjords and bring back loads of fish.

The Fulton Fish Market was converted into a series of gift shops and booths, something like TPUC in Cambridge and the Cannery in San Francisco. We made a quick pass through there and picked up a giant chocolate chip cookie each at a booth recommended by John. Across South Street is a small gift shop run by the museum, where I got a rubber walrus and a squid for Stanley. A new museum building is being constructed across Fulton Street from that.

We left the complex at dusk, after sitting on some benches at the end of the pier to observe the river traffic and rest our legs. A couple of blocks from the museum, a Canadian TV crew was taping a movie. They had a van with all the taping, mixing, and editing equipment, with several cameras set up on tripods. An actress finished an apple and threw it several times

in a small open area across the street, and walked off around the corner.

John and I walked a mile or so to Chinatown for dinner.

When I am in New York, I try to attend some local fan meetings but things were rather disappointing this time. I last surveyed the NY fan scene about 15 NIEKU ago. At that time there were 5 organizations in the New York City area. In New York itself the two organizations which are oldest, were the Lunarians and the Fanoclasts, both which dated from the late '50's. They met in members' homes and were founded by two mutually antagonistic groups of people. They were invitational and had no overlap in membership. While I lived in New York until June 1962, I belonged to neither faction and so was not invited to either club. Both clubs had a policy of being open to any out of town fan passing through New York. Thus, paradoxically, when I moved to California in 1962 and New Hampshire in 1966, I became welcome to attend meetings of both groups, when visiting New York and continued to attend ever since.

The Lunarians have a formal membership policy and people are voted in. When I moved to New Hampshire and was coming down to New York about once a month, I joined the Lunarians. I did not make it to N. Y. often enough for meeting weekends to maintain the minimum attendance to keep a full membership. But I continued to attend meetings whenever I could. There is no official organization for the Fanoclasts. There are no officers or official procedures for membership. A person is considered a member by consensus of the other members.

As I said, the Fanoclasts and the Lunarians started with mutually exclusive memberships. By the mid '60's there was a general era of good feeling in New York fandom, and more and more people belonged to both groups. The Lunarians met monthly, the Fanoclasts bi-weekly, in various members' homes. The openness of the groups varied with the time and the willingness of the host to have certain people in his or her home.

When I first became active, the Fanoclasts met in Brooklyn at the homes of people like Ted White, Steve Stiles and Andrew Porter. The center of "fannish"

activity has now shifted to Washington Heights, and the Friday I was in New York, the Fanoclasts were to meet at Stu Shiffman's place. However, the club has turned in on itself and has switched from a period of openness where a lot of "outsiders", including those from NY, were welcome, to one of isolation. They have so withdrawn that not even out-of-towners are permitted to attend. Of course, a host has the right to select whom he invites into his home. However, if a club decides to meet in someone's home, that means that there is an agreement between the club and the host as to who can attend. It looks as if the Fanoclasts are becoming as incestuous as Arnie Katz's little circle. (This is a very small splinter group that separated from the Fanoclasts a half dozen years ago and has vanished except for an occasional "limited circulation" fanzine.)

The next day was a Lunarian meeting. I have rarely hit the right weekend in New York to attend one of these. Unlike the Fanoclasts, the Lunarians have a business meeting which tends to be VERY dull. When I first started attending in Frank Dietz's apartment in the Bronx, these were snort, kept unstuffy by the inclusion of some zany antics, and were followed by refreshments. By the late '60's, when the meetings were at the Boardman's, they had gotten longer, but the house was large and people who weren't interested could retreat to the kitchen or other areas. In the early 70's I did not make any meetings for several years, until I made one at Devra Langsam's house, a couple of years ago. Again there was a long, dull meeting, but there was room to escape. By now the refreshments were accessible at any time so that the incentive to adjourn early was gone.



ALIEN OASIS

This was the next meeting I attended. It was at the home of Steve and Elyse Rosenstein in Brooklyn. I arrived early, when only a few others were there. There was only one large room for the guests, but there was good conversation as other guests filtered in. Unfortunately, there was no good logistical way to keep people out of the refreshments before the meeting, and the various hosts had given up trying a long time ago. The business meeting was started about 10 pm., and since it was not over after one hour, there was a mandatory break. I understand I had the misfortune to hit one of the worst meetings of recent times.

There was no escape and at the end of the hour, a number of us were ready to crawl up the walls and across the ceiling. I remember someone suggested combining two motions to save time, since they were routine and unopposed. This got some idiot mad, so he wasted 20 minutes on parliamentary wrangling over the matter. Just as we broke up, several people I really wanted to talk to, like Julius Postal and Jack Chalker, arrived. However, the meeting had so unnerved some people that I was with, like Brian Burley, Art Saha, and John Boardman, that they opted to leave immediately for a bar and drown their agony in beer. About eight of us left immediately. I think we would have done better to wait until the meeting was reconvening, but people's nerves were too shot.

Among the other clubs in the New York area is FISTFA which meets on weekends, alternating with Fanoclasts, is similar to them, but has always had a much more open membership. When I was active in the late '60's, one of the top clubs, and the only one with open membership, was the club at the City College of New York. Randell Garrett and Larry Jannifer were active at that time and meetings were a LOT of fun. That club has passed away many years ago. There are now clubs at New York University and Columbia, both of which have some outside membership. I have not attended either yet, but John Boardman particularly recommends the Columbia group.

The Eastern Science Fiction Assoc. met in Newark, N.J., since the late '40's. I started attending occasional meetings in 1956 and regularly in 1958. For many years the group met in Slovak Sokal Hall. Meetings seemed to have 30 to 40 attendees, and most months the club had an author in as a guest

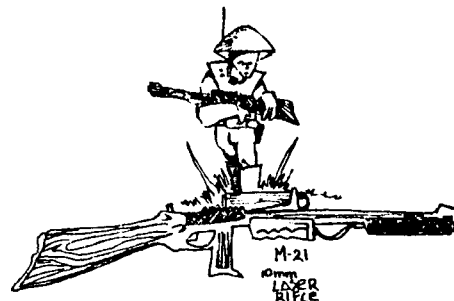
speaker. It met on the first Sunday afternoon of the month, and after the meeting most went to dinner at an inexpensive restaurant. Slovak Sokal Hall closed unexpectedly and without notice on the last meeting of Alex Osherooff's term as President. For a while, the club met in the back room of a bar. This was a low point in the club's history with attendance dropping to six at some meetings. A half year later it started meeting at the Newark "Y" in a rented room in the basement. The club also has an annual open meeting which drew up to 200, for which a large hall was available. The club prospered in its new surroundings and by when I left New York in mid 1962, average attendance was 50. I have not been to a meeting in many years but I understand that attendance has fallen to about 10. For reasons of economy the club has switched its meeting site to the Wayne, N. J. Public Library, which is very far from New York City and is almost impossible to get to by public transit. I understand that there is now a new group active in New Jersey, the Bergen County SF Society.

Last ish I spoke briefly of my despair with local politics, taking off by free association from my thoughts on re-reading Heinlein's Double Star. The sweep of the primaries had inspired this despair. Fortunately the general election proved me wrong. Despite the tenor of the times, an explicit proponent of the John Birch Society could not get elected even in New Hampshire.

DOGS, STICKS, AND LASERS: SOME AFTERTHOUGHTS

In Laiskai, Terry Jeeves wondered at my statement that I am not a dog lover. He expected a bond between me and my guide dog, Ned. Yes, there is a very strong bond. What I did not make clear was that I do not have a strong affection for dogs in general. When sighted, I had never had or desired a dog for a pet. While I do not dislike dogs in general, I am not strongly drawn to them either. I have always been a "cat person" rather than a "dog person".

A guide dog is a mobility tool; the proper functioning of which my life depends. As I said, there is also an emotional bond. I take the best of possible care of Ned; both as my companion and as my tool. On the



FROM THE GLASS DEBENT OF OLD
CINCINNATI TO THE JUNGLES OF
MARIQUA, THE M-21 BUMP
LOSER IS THE MONSIEUR OF
EARTH DEFENSE. WORKING
MANUFACTURED BY COAT THIS
RIFLE RE-OUTLINED THE
CONCEPT OF WAR IN THE 20th
CENTURY.

other hand, I do not think that a very strong dog lover COULD use a dog guide. I have seen such people who would not put a proper collar on a dog because it might "hurt it". If the dog were properly trained and its discipline properly maintained, the dog would never hurt itself on the collar--but the collar would still be there for emergency control. Or they do not believe a dog should be confined, but has an inalienable right to run free. One person I met in dog guide training had had his pet dog destroyed. His city had a leash law and the dog could not enjoy itself outdoors. I wonder what he has done with his guide dog? I have seen too many guide dogs turn aggressive because their owners did not follow the explicit directions of the Seeing Eye School and did let him run free. Still others make their dogs unfit to take into restaurants by insisting on feeding them from the table at home while they are eating. The dog does not understand the difference between home and restaurant and starts acting up and beggin while out too. To use a guide dog properly you must have affection and discipline. In Krantz's book To Race the Wind, he explains that he did not have the necessary affection for his dog to make the relationship work. It does take a balance.

After reading Buck Coulson's letter I have had some more thoughts on the concept of Seeing Eye Parrots. I did not like the idea but was restrained in my rejection, trying to remember that other innovations such as the long Hoover cane and the guide dog were also rejected initially. I was skeptical but wanted to give the innovator a chance. Buck's letter helped clarify my thinking.

The problem with something like a Seeing Eye Parrot is that, despite its intelligence, longevity, color vision, and everything else; it is up there on your arm, shoulder, or

whatever and not down on the street.

When you are walking with the dog and come to a curb, the dog stops so that your toes are a few inches from the edge of the curb. With your intelligence and full vocabulary, try to verbally direct a person walking with closed eyes to confidently approach a mark and stop right at it. The long cane helps you stop inches from the curb just as efficiently as the dog. Another thing: the dog is supposed to give the job full attention and pay no mind to other animals or distractions. He is busy walking and HAS to pay attention to where he is going or he would fall or run into something. Such pressure is not on a bird or other animal on your arm or shoulder. I would find it hard to trust it not to be distracted.

The man who worked with the parrots is a movie animal trainer. He is used to making animals perform on the spot for one or more special occasions for rehearsal and while the cameras are running. He does not have to deal with on-going working situations.

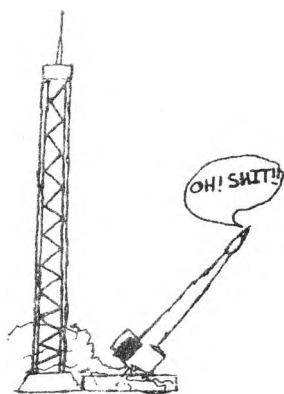
Trying not to be too negative and rejective of new ideas, I can see one possible use for such an animal, whether it be parrot, monkey, or some other animal that would be carried. Perhaps it could serve as a suppliment to a long cane, the way the sonar glasses do. That is, the animal would provide additional information about the environment and use its memory to help guide the user to things like doors or along familiar paths, but would take second place to the long cane which remains the primary mobility aid.

* * *

VIKING FUND UPDATE

I just got an invitation to attend the formal presentation to NASA of the monies collected to prolong the Viking mission. A total of \$80K has been collected and by January 7th, the date of the presentation, they anticipated a total of \$100K would be available.

They mentioned that people who had donated \$20 or so, expressed strong interest in funding a new mission to Mars which would, of course, cost many millions of dollars. They had indicated that should something like this come up, they would make a major change in their lifestyles to come up with thousands of dollars each. As a result, the Viking fund with another group called Delta Vee (anyone know anything about them?), are holding a conference in Colorado in early March to study future directions for Martian



exploration. For information on the Viking Fund for the conference, write to: The Viking Fund, P.O. Box 7655, Menlo Park, CA 94025 and their new special project group Delta Vee, 357 Saratoga Ave., Santa Clara, CA 95051 (408-243-1600).

* * *

BLIND PANTHERS UPDATE

I continue with my volunteer work and financial support of the National Federation of the Blind. As I explained in past issues, this is a civil rights advocacy and self-help organization. It is the only one trying to change public attitudes towards blindness and to make things better for the NEXT generation of the blind. In parallel to the Black Panthers and Grey Panthers, I refer to the NFB as the Blind Panthers.

The NFB has its national convention every year about the first week of July. This year it will be from July 5-10 in Baltimore. At the banquet, our president gives his traditional speech which outlines our philosophy and program for the next year. There is usually a unifying theme to the speech. In 1973-1975 he gave a series of three related presentations: "Is History Against Us?", "Is Literature Against Us?", and "Are the Public Against Us?". These are available in print, in Braille, and on record and tape. The middle speech surveyed how blind people were portrayed in literature; both in light fiction like detective stories and by major writers like Milton and Shakespeare. From this, President Jernigen drew conclusions as to the attitudes of the authors and their readers towards the blind and what we could do about it.

The 1975 speech is probably the best one ever given by Dr. Jernigen. It has been reprinted several times in various books and anthologies. If any NIEKAS reader is interested, I would be glad to provide a copy in any medium.

In this speech he surveyed a large number of contemporary sources and the many encounters he has had with newspaper and TV reporters, advertising agency personnel, charitable organizations, and the like. He pointed out the attitudes were unconscious. He found great parallels between these and general attitudes held by many towards the Negro a few decades ago. In popular literature the Negro was regarded as lazy and shiftless, good-natured, and with natural talents for music and rhythm. His misery was exploited by social workers who were making a living by serving him. Jernigen showed that almost the same is true of the public's attitude towards the blind, today.

I lent records of these three speeches to Anne Braude and we corresponded about her reactions. She felt that the parallel between the NFB and the women's movement was even stronger than that between us and the Black movement. Women are told that they should not try to compete with men for meaningful work, but should stay at home and allow their men to take care of them. This is parallel to agencies like the American Federation FOR the Blind and various welfare departments telling the blind not to think for themselves but allow the trained professionals to do it for them. If they want to, women could earn a little by being secretaries or maids. The blind could work in sheltered workshops for less than minimum wage. Anne had drawn several other parallels which I do not remember and the tape letter has been erased. Anyhow, Anne had made a very strong case for that particular parallel.

It is an observation not too likely to be used widely by the NFB itself. The whole women's rights issue has gotten sidetracked by peripheral issues like lesbianism and abortions which cause very volatile reactions. Nationwide and in the NFB also, many women reject the whole women's rights movement because of these issues and because groups like the Mormons believe that women are inferior and should not compete.

* * *

Something happened last June at the Helen Keller centennial celebration which has me very upset. A conference was held in Boston last June and associated with it was an exhibit area with booths of many agencies and manufacturers of aids and appliances.

[continued after Laikai]

Notes from Elfhill: Varieties of Religious Experience in Fantasy

by Diana L. Paxson



In some ways, Elfhill is a particularly appropriate setting from which to be writing a piece for an issue of NIEKAS which focuses on science fiction and religion, since we have in the house three writers and one agent, and a considerable variety of religious experience. It is, moreover, a topic that has interested me for a long time.

Some years ago, it might have been possible to summarize Religion in Science Fiction in a short article. Now it would take a Ph.D. dissertation. Therefore I will confine myself to discussing one aspect of the subject-- the varieties of religious experience portrayed in a number of recent fantasy works.

The sceptic would approve this choice on the grounds that religion is a fantasy anyway. Some religious folks would disapprove of discussing religious truth in the same context as fantasy fiction, lest the two be confused by the unwary. But however the idea may be disliked by either extreme, there are some connections between religion and fantasy which make the topic a productive one to consider.

For the sake of clarity, I had better begin by defining the sense in which I am using both terms.

With some trepidation, let me describe Religion as a catch term for all the ways in which humans try to establish a relationship with some Power that will give meaning to their lives. This Power (or powers) is usually considered to be greater (not necessarily 'better' in any human sense) than man, non-physical, immortal, and concerned with Nature or the cosmos as well as with men. Most religions identify both benevolent and hostile faces of the deity, or divide the divine power into two or more spirits concerned with various aspects of reality.

Religious systems suggest ways in which human beings can ally or align themselves with these Powers so as to live happy and prosperous

lives (in whatever senses the individual defines happiness and prosperity). Thus, the term religion can be applied with equal validity to the most philanthropic self-sacrifice, the most appalling evil, and simple self-interest. Theology uses non-fiction, as mythology uses stories, to explain and illustrate the tenets of the religion in question.

Please note that none of the above is intended as a reflection on the objective existence or nature of the Deity, only on the ways in which humans have tried to approach Him/Her/Whatever...

If this is how I define Religion, what am I calling Fantasy?

For purposes of this discussion, let us confine the term to works of fiction written since literature began to split into 'genres' in the nineteenth century.

Works which are labeled fantasies tend to feature one or more of the following characteristics:

- . strange occurrences caused by supernatural entities;
- . humans who have or acquire unusual mental powers;
- . 'magic' objects which affect humans variously or give them these powers;
- . characters, creatures, or settings drawn from traditional or invented mythology or legends;
- . some sense of moral purpose-- there is a difference between Good and Evil, and individual choice has meaning.

In some respects, the definition of Fantasy is much stricter than that of Religion. Even so, it is often rather difficult to differentiate fantasy from other forms. For instance, a novel about Moses will be shelved with the historical novels, whatever its interpretation of the burning bush. A book like The King Must Die, which treats ancient religion as being real, is classed as fantasy, though there is about an equal amount of historical evidence for the reality of Theseus as for Moses. At the other end of things, the difference between fantasy and mainstream often seems to depend on whether the author is coming out of the science fiction ghetto or academe.

Nonetheless, it can be said with some safety that both religion

and fantasy tend to be concerned with man's relationship to supernatural powers.

Religious elements in recent fantasies can be loosely classed into four types:

- . stories which depend strongly on the existence of an established religious system either (a) Christian, or (b) pagan;
- . stories set in a mythological environment, in which divine beings are present and active;
- . stories in which the gods are potential but not present-- though the heroes may be involved in some supernatural struggle, they mostly fight alone;
- . stories in which the gods are not mentioned (though devils may appear) and the protagonists are motivated by moral imperatives.

An example of the first type of story with a Christian religious system would be the Deryni books by Katherine Kurtz. In this series humans inhabit an area somewhat like medieval Wales alongside the Deryni, who are sufficiently human to interbreed, but who have semi-magical powers. Much of the conflict in the stories derives from the changing attitudes of the Church towards the Deryni, many of whom are as sincerely Christian as the humans. The books' most numinous scenes are those in which Christian ritual is combined with the exercise of Deryni psychic powers.

The occult novels of Charles Williams illustrate another way in which Christianity can appear in fantasy. Williams' books are all set in contemporary England, in which Christianity is of course the majority religion. Into this ordinary setting a variety of supernatural objects intrude, whose presence threatens to disrupt the fabric of life. The plots depend on the efforts of the heroes to prevent the villains from making use of such talismans as the Holy Grail, which they do by the active exercise of metaphysical principles. Williams is one of the few writers to succeed in making Holiness as believable (and sometimes even more terrifying) than Evil.

Although pagan pantheons are common in fantasy, the organized religious systems which in pagan civilizations usually serve them are often absent. There are however some works of fantasy in which various forms of paganism are

treated as real religions with real deities.

Moyra Caldecott's Stones trilogy has a neolithic setting and a religion with links to Egypt and Atlantis. Religious observances in these books range from peasant superstition to sophisticated moral teaching and the use (or misuse) of psychic powers.

Marion Zimmer Bradley's forthcoming Arthurian fantasy, Mistress of Magic, features a conflict between Christianity and the old religion of the Goddess. Much of the action takes place in the pagan religious community and school on the isle of Avalon, and focuses on the spiritual development of the protagonist.



Shading into this category of fantasy are those works in which there is little organized religion, but gods and demi-gods have personal relationships with the characters. In Evangeline Walton's Mabinogion stories, the characters are gods.

Poul Anderson's The Broken Sword is an excellent example, as the mortal hero becomes fatally embroiled in the eternal struggles of the gods. In Joy Chant's The Grey Mane of Morning, the tribal god is the hero's protector and guide.

Perhaps the largest number of fantasy novels feature religious systems which are parts of the background but which do not actively intrude on the characters' lives. Although we now have the Silmarillion to explicate the theology of Middle Earth, in The Lord of the Rings it appears mostly in the form of legendary references. Only in a few places is there a sense that the protagonists are being assisted by higher powers.

In LeGuin's Earthsea trilogy, the background religion owes more to Taoism or Buddhism than the more personal religions of the West. The spiritual links between men and the rest of creation are more appa-

rent than in most fantasies, and human choices can have a cosmic effect.

Many of the sword and sorcery-type fantasies also have elaborate pantheons with a variety of terrifying or capricious gods. When humans attract their attention they are usually sorry.

Finally, we have the class of stories in which there are no apparent religious systems, and the heroes act on the basis of abstract convictions of right or wrong, or more often, from love and loyalty to others. In some of these, the land itself may acquire an almost religious importance.

This is true in Steven Donaldson's Covenant Chronicles, in which there is the equivalent of the Devil, but no god, and the hero's primary struggle is to determine his own responsibility. In these books, the inhabitants of "The Land" consider its survival more important than their own.

In Patricia McKillip's Starbearer trilogy, the closest thing to a god proves to be a more powerful form of mortal, and the hero eventually develops such powers that he is hardly human anymore. In McKillip's world, the land-rulers are psychically attuned to their kingdoms, and it is the hero's love for his land and people that enable him to survive.

It is important to establish that the form of religion portrayed in a book is not to be taken as an indication of the author's personal opinions on the subject. C.S. Lewis, who was even more famous as a Christian than as a writer of fantasy, has used both a standard Christian background (That Hideous Strength) a pagan religious background (Till We Have Faces), and invented religious backgrounds, with or without Christian associations. In the Narnia stories, Lewis was trying not so much to create an allegory of the Christian story, as to write a story which would affect the reader in the way he felt the Christian mythos would if we were not so used to it. He would seem to have succeeded in that people who cannot immediately identify Christian parallels appear to enjoy the stories more than those who can.

But whether or not one can identify Lewis' theology by reading his works, his values are made quite clear. I think it can be safely said that some kind of system of values is essential to fantasy. Some-

times the values may be superficial or simplistic, but generally Good and Evil are defined somehow, and the protagonist has to choose between them.

In addition, certain works (usually labeled 'high' fantasy) succeed in evoking reactions which are similar to those produced by religious experiences, at least for some readers. Given these caveats, let me try to summarize what some of these reactions are...

- . a heightened sense of potential-- through identifying with a protagonist who develops psychic or spiritual powers, even through trial and self-sacrifice;

- . visions-- scenes of overwhelming beauty and clarity, in which each thing seen possesses more than ordinary meaning;

- . catharsis through participation in the interaction of archetypal figures-- as the reader becomes involved in the story, characters with symbolic associations relate directly to the unconscious;

- . "otherness"--a sense of having lived for a little while, in a different world, sometimes of great horror, but more often of supernatural wonder and beauty;

- . inspiration-- an impulse to emulate the heroic virtues displayed by the characters;



- . escape from the pedestrian or discouraging circumstances of our daily lives;

- . Joy.

To the believer, the evocation of such experiences by a work of fiction may be appreciated as a way of awakening the reader to the existence of a world other than this one, and a Power beyond ourselves. The non-believer may value them because they help us to

recognize the holiness in both the world around us and in ourselves.

But whether one believes that the function of such experiences in fantasy is 'religious' or the perfecting of the human spirit, for many readers the need for them is as definite and powerful as the craving for some vitamin long denied.

Many varieties of religious experience are offered by fantasy, but all answer the need to experience transcendence which is native to our souls.

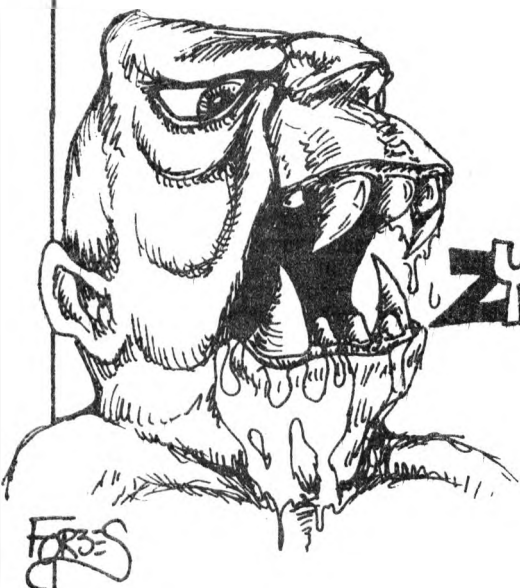


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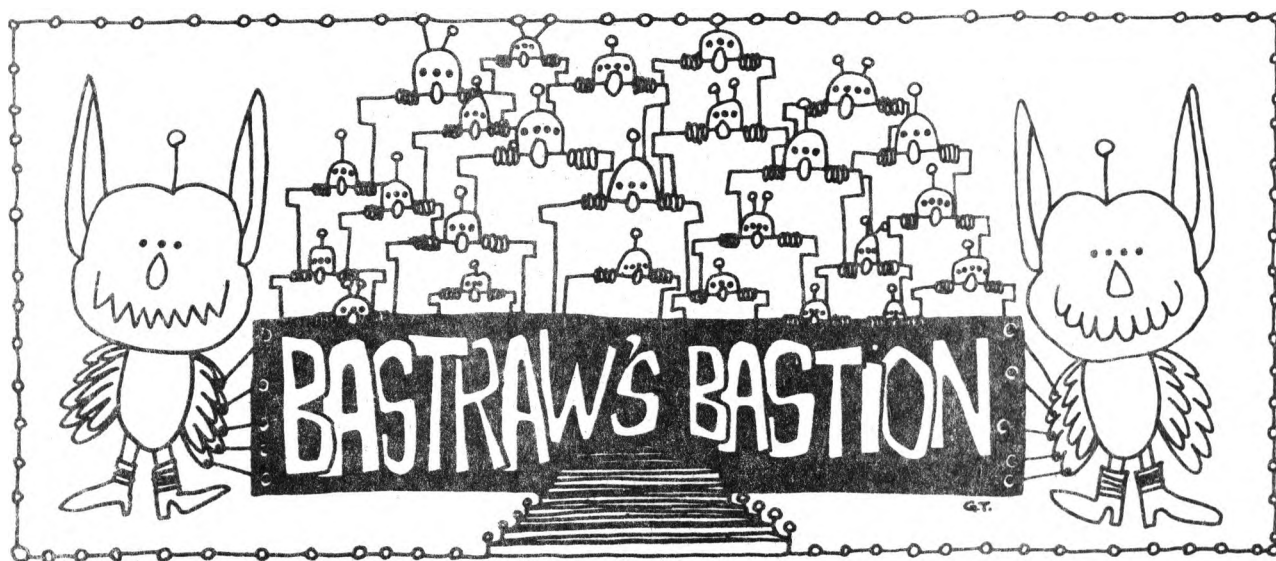
by Anne Braude

I think that I shall never see
NIEKAS wholly typo-free--
I'd like to fry in oil that's piping
Whoever does the copy typing;
The way he breaks the laws of grammar
Deserves a long stretch in the slammer.
My perfect prose, despite my pleas,
Comes out in pidgin Pekingese.
The fiend who claims to read the proof
Cannot from guilt remain aloof.
(Or is it true, as some have said,
That all proofreading's done by Ed?
In that case, by Magog and Gog!
I'm sure they'll blame it on the dog!)
I think the blame deserves to be
Heaped on the head of one mb:
Has someone cursed that Bastraw feller?
Or is he himself the Evil Speller?

((This is ABSOLUTELY my Very Last Word on the subject . . .
until next time))
((Writing well is the best revenge!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!))



WUTZGROMXTHETCBA



NIEKAS 24 was subtitled "The Bedouin Fanzine". (Yes, Anne, I know that bedouin was malspelled but I had to type it while driving my car at the same time. There are limits to even MY virtuosity.) This was due to the fact that NIEKAS does not have a permanent base of operations; every issue is printed at a different location.

About a month before this issue was due we found that the press would not function properly in my folks' cellar. Never mind that fact that the last issue ran OK; there has been quite a change in the environment down there.

Mainly it's now colder than a traffic cop's heart (I'm thinking of a certain sheriff's deputy named Crockett but don't tell him). We have had one of the worst stretches of cold weather since sometime in the 1800's; subzero temperatures for days on end--all day long. John Bancroft explained that the press won't run properly in the cold for two reasons: the ink won't flow correctly (it just sort of sits there) and the pores of the paper won't open up so the ink can be absorbed (it just sort of sits there).

Also, I don't think that the icicles that keep dropping into the works are doing any good.

So we move again to...

Gram's House; my base of operations on Webster St. in Laconia. Gram is off globetrotting so she will never know that her dining room table was used to support That Hideous Press. With any luck, NIEKAS 25 will be a fait accompli before she gets back.

Otherwise it's the High Jump for me.

B B B

I had originally planned to do a rather dispassionate review of Carl Sagan's COSMOS for the Magic Lantern section of this NIEKAS. I found that my feelings run pretty much parallel to those of Anne Braude's (don't tell her) in regard to the quality of the show as chronicled in NIEKAS 24. The only additional thought I have is that they might have saved a little money from the special FX budget to allow them to continue the series for another episode or two. This would have allowed them to delve more deeply into certain areas that were glossed over in the existing episodes (maybe more on cetacean intelligence, Anne?).

I now find that this series has uncapped some rather impassioned feelings in this writer.

The last chapter of COSMOS dealt with Man's future; in particular, will Man have a future or will he simply be another of earth's animals doomed to eventual extinction? You may think that "extinction" is an inappropriate term to use when discussing the destiny of a race which enjoys the level of intelligence and environment-altering abilities we have.

But: extinction I say, and, extinction I mean.

What makes YOU so sure that we have any more control over our fate than did T. Rex or his saurian kin? Maybe, at one time--but that was long ago.

Sagan cites the destruction of the Great Library at Alexandria (circa 370 A.D.) as the end of a Noble Experiment: the intellectualization

of Man. However, at that time, secular forces deemed that the fledgling sciences bordered too closely on the sacrilegious. (Once again religious frenzy masks a political power struggle.) Anyway, you know what happens to heretics.

Hypatia deserved a better fate.

We now stand at a similar crossroads according to Sagan. The two major nuclear powers--Us and Them--hold the maces of global destruction over the head of the entire human species (not to mention thousands of innocently-bystanding life forms who share our world). These weapons poise, barely held in check. Ever see DR. STRANGELOVE or FAIL SAFE? Just because they're movies doesn't mean they can't come true.

I have done a certain amount of research into the problems of survival after a full scale (the only kind we will see) nuclear war. It's all pretty depressing stuff but the bottom line is that there is no real problem. Assuming personal survival, the chances of racial survival are tres, tres slim. You, my friend, may live to a ripe old age before being bumped off by a Ravening Hoard or by tearing aside your own mortal coil. But, as sure as bread falls butter-side down, your kids will have real problems.

So let's assume that nuclear war means the end of the human race. Sagan does and who am I to disagree with the man (who is certainly correct in this instance).

During the last hour of COSMOS, Sagan does throw in a couple examples of Man overcoming anti-human activities. He explains that slavery is at an end in today's world. I

assume he refers to this institution in the traditional whips-and-chains sense as there are surely forms of legalized/financial bondage still going strong. Secondly he offers the elevation of women in world societies as another example of Man's mental evolution upwards. Again we have a source of much lively discussion. If women have come a long way--who can deny it?--they still have a long way to go; it's still very much a Man's world. Actually it is probably more accurate to say that the male population are the ones who are making the great strides by restructuring their thinking.

The question remains, are these valid examples of grassroots movements towards heightened species conscience? I would like to think so --it would certainly make me feel better as Sagan next alludes to a similar movement towards the abolition of warfare.

I WANT to believe and I can't.

You see, the business of war is far too profitable; it is, after all, one of the largest "fields" in this country. Every year billions and billions of dollars are spent on protecting We from They. They being other members of that loathsome breed--homo sapien. What idiocy!

But, it is a profitable insanity and for that reason I do not hold out much hope for Man coming to his senses in time, i.e. before the red glare of the rockets.

Certain technological developments made slavery unprofitable in this country. THAT abolished slavery, not some newfound moral sense within the nation. Women's rights? Again, no major loss to the pockets of Bigbusiness. Therefore: why not?

But let's not place all the blame on the doormat of corporate America. "What's good for Chrysler is good for the country"? As long as we think this way, there is not much hope. A war economy thrives, as does society on the whole. (See: World War I & II, Korean War, Viet Nam War)

Carl Sagan is still correct in his original belief--any significant change in this balanced terror must certainly come by a mandate from the people of the various world powers; this as opposed to their representatives. History shows this. How long have we lived under the threat of The Bomb? We seem to have a high tolerance.

I really would like to believe that we have time. Time to find the divine spark which hopefully exists within all of us which supposedly

separates us from the rest of the animals on this Silent Planet.

How much sand is left in our hourglass?

I'm counting every grain.

B B B

It's public service time again.

We receive several other fmz's in trade every month--some more notorious than others. Allow me to call your attention to a couple of them.

One of the newer entries in the Great Experiment of fannish publishing is a digest-size zine entitled PELLENOTRATH. Published by Rod Walker, P deals with the geographies of F&SF stories.

The premier issue (penned entirely by Walker) contains essays such as: "Hype Hyperborea: Close to Home", "A Semblance of Zembla", "Oh, Oh Oriab", and "Far from the Crowding Madben". Besides having a propensity for puns, Walker offer maps of the areas being discussed.

Does such a specialized publication stand a chance of making a go of it? It's up to you. Walker is certainly no stranger to amateur publishing; he has been putting out fmz's on wargaming since 1966 and also publishes a semi-pro poertyzine titled EREHWON. The success of his latest venture will depend a lot on the response of other writers to his need for material on other lands.

Send any submissions and/or subs (\$1/issue, 5/\$4) to Rod at "Alcala", 1273 Crest Dr., Encinitas, CA 92024.

NO SEX.

Now that I have your attention, NS is the name of an artzine put out by one David Heath, Jr. If you can imagine a fannish HEAVY METAL in digest-size, that's the nature of this beast.

Dave runs panel art, visual one-liners, and full-page art 'folios. Reproduction is pro-quality offset. No color yet though he does manage to have a different colored stock for each cover. Short fiction is merely acceptable in most cases but the artwork ranges from superb to good.

David Heath, or rather, Captain Heath is in the Army and stationed at Fort Knox. It's very reassuring to find that today's military is not devoid of its creative thinkers.

Send off \$1.50 to Dave at CSC 4-37 Armor, Ft. Knox, KY 40121 for a copy and I'm sure you'll be hooked.

B B B



As I type this, publication date for NIEKAS 25 looms in the too-close-distance. I find myself forced to pull out an emergency feghoot.

I'm sorry.

A funny thing happened with Napoleon's army on the way to Russia. They had eaten so much roughage as part of their diet that they found that they were too loose to trek.

For want of a bowl of jello...

And, again, my sorrow.

B B B

As Ed has already mentioned in Bumbejimas, the cover of this issue was supplied by Tad Jordan and John Geisel of R.J.&D. Screenprinting.

Silkscreening is an interesting process and no less so because it is so widespread and no one realizes it.

First, the image to be printed is melded to a close-mesh screen which is stretched across a frame. This joining is accomplished by the use of certain chemicals and an arc light source. When this is done, the holes in the screen are blocked off everywhere except where the image is.

By squeegeeing ink across the screen which is place onto the surface, the image is transferred to that surface through the screen.

By use of ingenious framing and holding devices screenprinting is possible on almost any surface no matter how irregular it is. The nature of the process also allows for some interesting special effects.

Like our cover.

Several different colored inks are placed in the screen at one time. When the squeegee is drawn, a unique blending effect takes place. Each cover is slightly different as the ink doesn't always mix the same way.

The result: a one-of-a-kind custom design type NIEKAS.

For anyone with access to a UV source, the back cover is done in DayGlo ink which is quite something when viewed under black light.

Hallucinogens are optional, but not recommended. You should be able to get off on the contents, alone.

B B B

One of the more cliched plots used in SF movies (and to a much lesser extent in written SF) is the one where a scientist is forced into performing some sort of experiment --usually on himself--before he is ready. This pressure can be caused

by a wide range of things but more often than not it is financial.

The movie that first comes to mind is an English production titled THE PROJECTED MAN. A scientist is working on the wirelss teleportation of matter pace THE FLY. When the agency who is financing his project advises that they will be cutting off his funds he tries "projecting" himself to his supervisor's house. He preprograms the sequence but as it commences, his secretary (whose aid he has enlisted to start the process) screws up at the last minute. He doesn't make it: he only goes about halfway, is disfigured, and becomes charged with lethal electricity.

There is a lesson to be learned here. From what Harry Andrushak says in Laiskai and what I hear on the news, nobody at NASA ever saw a flic like this.

When one of the networks ran a special on the status of the Space Shuttle, another myth I had held near and dear to my heart exploded. I had always pictured NASA as one of the few government agencies which put goals ahead of all else; men and women striving for a common purpose under the leadership of dedicated idealists on whose shoulders we would stand to reach the stars.

Instead I see buck-passing and recriminations, pettiness and G.D. beaurocratic pettifogging.

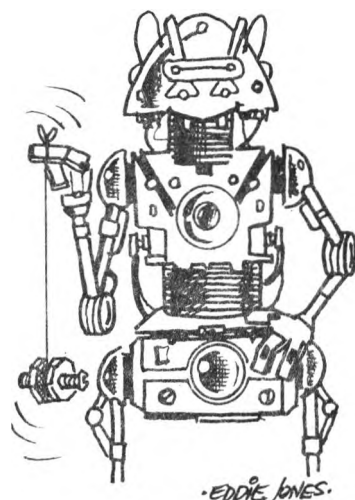
"I cannot tell a lie. He did it." seemed to be NASA's unwritten moto. Rockwell blames NASA, NASA blames Rockwell and what we get is "a third-rate" spaceship that Andrushak wouldn't take a ride in.

I heard the news today that there will be yet another delay on the launch of the shuttle which had been scheduled for March. It's not the engine this time. It's not the heat shield tiles. It's something new and has to be improved.

Evidently a problem with the insulation on one of the fuel tanks will set the launch back to April 5th. I don't know what the pilots think about all this but I know that I would feel a little uneasy. Sure they're fixing all this stuff but how much more is there just waiting to go wrong.

As much as I hate seeing these delays, it is still preferable to seeing the shuttle explode in a cascade of flaming metal because of heat shield failure or some other disaster. That would be all the ammunition that this administration would need to pull the plug on manned space exploration and exploitation.

Hopefully the brass at NASA will find the gumption to dig their heels in and say, "No, let's make some



more tests."

It's a tough enough battle as it is; you would think that NASA could get out of its own way and help itself.

Keep your fingers crossed.

B B B

Our regular contributors (those who submit material on a steady basis-- I certainly can't vouchsafe anything else) pretty much know the score as far as due-dates go for submissions.

We are trying to push these dates back as far as possible for several reasons.

By getting material far enough in advance this gives us time to arrange for special artwork and layout, lets us go over the material and correspond with the writer and/or artist, and gives us more leeway as far as production goes. Half the hassle with putting out each issue is the fact that most of the material has been arriving at virtually the Last Minute.

During this Last Min. it has to be edited, copy-typed, layed-out, photographed, stripped in, and printed. I intentionally left out "proofreading" as this is a luxury we have not been able to indulge in as it should be. By getting material in sooner, we can send it off to those best qualified (Braude and Lerner, bless their unfeeling typospotting hearts) to proof it.

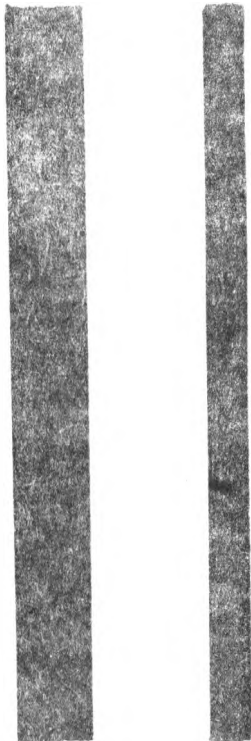
NIEKAS 26 will be published on May 15, 1981. We need articles 2 months before that date, reviews 1.5 months before that date, and LoC's 1 month before then.

Thank you very much and take five.



MATHOMS

ANNE BRAUDE



NEW REALMS OF GOLD--II

Patricia A. McKillip's books are another example of what I call the Norton phenomenon: they were published in hardcover by Atheneum as juvenile/adult books and in paperback as straight adult fantasy. I am never quite sure on what basis publishers and librarians make such distinctions--sometimes I suspect that it is as trifling as the presence or absence of sex--when the protagonists are not themselves

children and the stories are as complex morally and psychologically as these.

In a scene near the climax of Out of the Silent Planet, the earthling hero, Professor Ransom, spends the night in a guest house patronized by members of all three varieties of Malacandrian hnau. Lewis comments that seeing the interplay between the different rational species made Ransom understand for the first time what need we humans were trying to fulfill by keeping pets--which explains why I am a sucker for intelligent beasts in fantasy and science fiction. My personal list is headed or course by Anne McCaffrey's magnificent dragons, but I am also partial to Madeleine L'Engle's stellar creatures and the Mother Thing in Heinlein's Have Space Suit, Will Travel.

The beasts in McKillip's The Forgotten Beasts of Eld, though only supporting characters in the story, are worthy additions to this company. They have been collected by generations of wizards and are in the care of the last of the line, the enchantress Sybel, who is herself set on summoning a magnificent white bird, the Liralen. But her task is interrupted when she is induced to adopt an orphaned newborn baby, the son of the Queen by an adulterous affair. She raises Tam and learns to love him--the first of her line to experience that emotion--but has to surrender him when it is learned that he is actually King Drede's legitimate heir. Against her will, Sybel is drawn into the politics of the kingdom by her love for Tam, the love of the king's enemy Coren for her, and Drede's desire to possess her, which drives him to a terrible act and Sybel to an even more terrible revenge. The beasts play important roles in the action, especially the horrifying Blammor, a dark and shapeless monster which comes when it is not called. Eventually Sybel finds freedom, happiness, and the Liralen--where it is least expected; but the ending is entirely satisfying.

The story has something of the opalescent richness of Dunsany's fantasy without his ornate prose style; I was reminded of some splendid medieval tapestry come to life.

The trilogy about Morgon of Hed has at once more magic and more "reality"--if we take the latter term to refer to such issues as justice, duty, and similar moral values that loom large in the Primary World, and to the depiction of the behavior and feelings of ordinary people like ourselves who are not wizards or

heroes (at least to start with). The books have been published in a one-volume book club edition under the collective title Riddle of Stars; the boxed set of paperbacks is called Quest of the Riddle-Master. I prefer Riddle of Stars, which is both more imaginative and more accurate.

The Riddle-Master of Hed is Morgon, Prince of Hed, one of six kingdoms in a land now settled by humans but once the domain of the Earth-Masters, powerful magicians who destroyed themselves in internecine warfare. The source of all order in the realm now is the High One, a mysterious figure who dwells beneath Erlenstar Mountain in the remote north. It is he who instituted land-law, a psychic unity with all that exists in a kingdom, possessed by the ruler and passing at his death in the mind of his heir.

Hed is a small, unimportant isle of farmers, noted primarily for the invincible stubbornness of its inhabitants. So what is Morgon doing with a king's jewelled crown hidden under his bed where his sister Tristan has to sweep around it every time she cleans?

Morgon reluctantly confesses that he won it in a riddle-game with the ghost of Peven, Lord of Aum--and that, as far as he is concerned, is all there is to that. Having graduated with honors from the College of the Riddle-Masters on the mainland, he felt bound to follow up the stricture of the only riddle to originate in Hed, namely, "Answer the unanswered riddle." But more riddles await him, and manifold dangers. He discovers that Mathom, King of An, has vowed that the winner of Peven's crown shall wed his daughter Raederle, the second most beautiful woman in the three portions of An and the sister of Morgon's best friend Rood. And there is a riddle to which even the Masters do not know the answer: Why is there a birthmark in the shape of three stars on Morgon's forehead?



Morgon, Prince of Hed...



Morgon, whose outlook is profoundly provincial, simply does not want to get involved. But he finds himself reluctantly pursuing an unwanted destiny, guided by Deth, the High One's harpist. He discovers the same three stars on an ancient harp that no one but he can play and on the hilt of a sword in the keeping of the dead children of the Earth-Masters in the depths of Isig Mountain. He also comes under attack from mysterious shape-changers who live in the sea. The motives of these beings are obscure, but they are just as interested as Morgon is in the destiny of the Star-Bearer; and they seem to know a great deal more about it. He travels toward Erlenstar Mountain with Deth, in the process gaining the harp and the sword, becoming initiated into wizardry by Har, the wolf-king of Osterland, and beginning to glimpse the dimensions of a sorcerer's plot with roots deep in the past. At the end of his journey he finds not the High One but the sorcerer, into whose hands he is betrayed by the harpist.

Heir of Sea and Fire recounts the adventures of Raederle, who is not your basic stay-at-home heroine. The entire realm is concerned about the disappearance of one of its land-rulers; and when word is brought to Mathom of An that the land-rule of Hed has passed to Morgon's brother Eliard, Raederle in turn sets off to question the High One. (Her father does not approve, but since he has turned himself into a crow and flown off to Erlenstar Mountain himself, she feels free to flout him.) At Caithnard, she visits the College of the Riddle-Masters, where she joins forces with Lyra, daughter and land-heir to the Morgol of Herun and a friend of Morgon. Together they hijack the royal ship that has brought Raederle to Caithnard and force its not-entirely-unwilling master to take them north. Though hindered by the well-meaning king of Ymrís, who tries to send them home, and disconcerted by the discovery of

a stowaway who turns out to be Morgon's kid sister Tristan, they manage to get as far as Isig, where King Danan informs them that Morgon is still alive. He has escaped from the wizard Ghisteslwchlohm, who wrested the land-law of Hed from his mind in the dungeons of Erlenstar Mountain, and is pursuing the treacherous harpist to exact vengeance. At Isig, Raederle has a confrontation with one of the shape-changers, who tells her that their blood is mingled with that of the royal house of An and reveals that Raederle too has the power to shape fire and to change her form. Horrified to discover that she is close kin to Morgon's mortal enemies, she flees Isig. Returning to An, she finds that the aroused dead of the Three Portions are once again warring among themselves. She makes a terrifying bargain with the wraiths for the protection of Morgon; but when she reaches her home she finds that it is Deth, not Morgon, who has benefited. When Morgon arrives, he tries to kill the enigmatic harpist but is prevailed upon by a riddle to spare him instead.

This book is the least satisfying of the three because it raises more questions than it answers. It is noteworthy for the depiction of the friendship among three very different heroines: Raederle; Lyra, with her stern and simple warrior's code of values; and Tristan of Hed, who is basically a stubbornly loyal brat. (Who else would have the nerve to ask Raederle who the most beautiful woman in An is?) The central mystery of the books is the harpist Deth, to whom, despite his treachery, Morgon and Raederle are both bound by an affection which he seems genuinely to return.

The final volume, Harpist in the Wind, is in my opinion the best of the three, though some readers may still prefer Riddle-Master. A rebellion in the kingdom of Ymrís, in which the shape-changers are involved, threatens all the High One's realm, but the High One himself is still mysteriously missing. Morgon, pursued by both Ghisteslwchlohm and the shape-changers, travels with Raederle to the ancient wizards in a sorcerous battle against the shape-changers. With the blind wizard Yrth, who made the starred harp and sword, they visit the other land-rulers, seeking assistance and information about the shape-changers, now known to be surviving Earth-Masters trying to destroy the High One and the constraints he has placed upon their power. In Wind Tower, citadel of a ruined city of the Earth-Masters, the Star-Bearer at last

stands face to face with the harpist and the last riddles are answered: the truth about the High One, why Deth was both friend and traitor to Morgon, and the reason behind all the ordeals he has had to undergo. After a final cataclysmic confrontation with his enemies, Morgon, with Raederle, enters upon his true destiny.

McKillip's writing is extremely good, though not without faults; occasionally matters become somewhat cryptic and their significance obscure. The plot structure--a riddle made up of riddles--is very successful; and the characterization excellent. We do not see only the heroic side of the protagonists; they wrangle with each other, make jokes, and reveal their confusions and uncertainties. Both Morgon's and Raederle's relations with their families and friends, a dimension often neglected in fantasy, are well portrayed, revealing the deep affection underlying surface



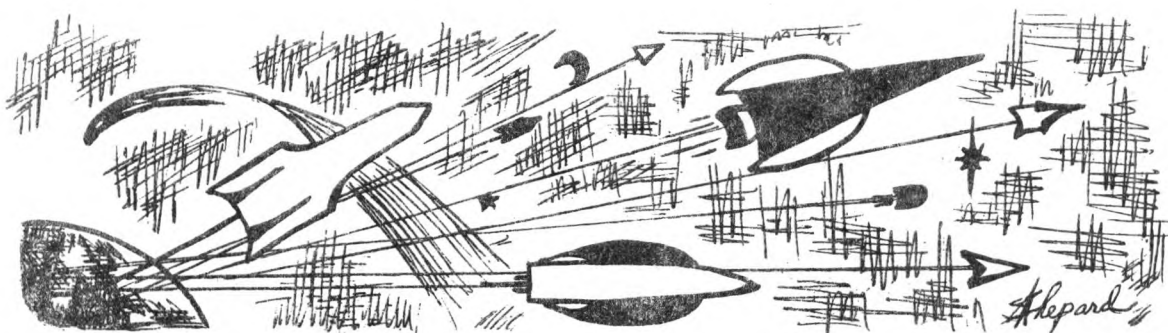
bickering that characterizes the behavior of people who care about each other trying to cope with stressful situations. The thematic use of riddles and the solving of them is a very successful device for maintaining unity in a work of this length and diversity. Riddling and land-law are the most original of McKillip's inventions here, and both are used brilliantly. I found the Riddle of Stars trilogy satisfying emotionally, artistically, and imaginatively; and I consider it the best adult fantasy since Tolkien.

The Forgotten Beasts of Eld (1974; Avon, \$1.50)

The Riddle-Master of Hed (1976; Ballantine, \$1.95)

Heir of Sea and Fire (1977; Ballantine, \$2.25)

Harpist in the Wind (1979; Ballantine, \$2.25)



SHERWOOD FRAZIER SCIENCE FACT

The Voyager flyby of Saturn has been called everything from very interesting to the greatest hour NASA has had since Apollo 11. No matter how you look at it, Voyager has given us more data about Saturn than all the studies of the previous 2000 years put together. Voyager has raised more questions than it can begin to answer: more fun for the scientists.

Voyager 1's detailed scientific examination of Saturn, its rings and moons, is the NASA spacecraft's final planetary encounter before it leaves the solar system in 1990. We have one more chance to see, close-up, the wonder of Saturn. That will be in August of this year when Voyager 2 passes the ringed planet.

I have tried to summarize the most important scientific discoveries along with a few observations and theories. I will start with the planet itself and the rings and moons.

THE PLANET

The basic appearance of Saturn's atmosphere is similar to that of Jupiter: alternating dark and light cloud markings. The features in the Saturnian atmosphere, however, are muted by the presence of a much thicker haze layer above the visible clouds. The belt/zone structure of Saturn also extends to much higher latitudes than on Jupiter. The wind speeds in the atmosphere are not closely tied to the belt/zone boundaries as is apparent in the case of Jupiter. However, they are 4-5 times stronger than Jupiter: 1600

kph (1000 mph) at the equator. As was expected, the temperatures near the cloud tops are colder than on Jupiter: -305° F. as compared to -230° F. for Jupiter, with the coldest temperature near the center of the equatorial zone.

The apparent mechanism that drives the winds and controls the temperature in the clouds of Saturn are massive, extremely cold clouds of ammonia. These clouds rise and fall in a cyclic motion and are expected to be the main constituent of Saturn's atmosphere.

The atmosphere of Saturn does not appear to be as active as that of Jupiter. However, this outward appearance may be the result of the thick haze layer. No lightning bolts have been observed in the images of Saturn's dark face, but radio emissions typical of lightning discharges have been noted. These discharges are believed to emanate from the rings rather than from the atmosphere. The strongest radio emissions, primarily from the north polar region and near 90° longitude, indicate that the body of Saturn and its magnetosphere rotate with a period of 10 hours, 39 minutes, and 26 seconds.

THE RINGS

Until recently, Saturn was believed to be the only planet with rings. But now both Jupiter and Uranus are known to have rings. Thin and barely visible, they in no way can be compared to the grandeur of Saturn's. The rings of Saturn have been causing wonder and amazement for

some 200 years and now, after 12 or 13 thousand images of the rings and the planet, we are still staring in wonder and amazement. What grand scheme could have included an oddity such as Saturn?

The classically known A, B, and C rings were observed by Voyager 1 to consist of hundreds, perhaps thousands of ringlets; some of them appear to be elliptical as well as circular. What form has gravity taken to cause this striking phenomena? It has been suggested that it is not gravity alone, but the electrostatic forces of the ring material and/or the magnetic properties of the moons and the planet. In one particular instance it seems to be the moons that are causing the odd behavior. The F ring, discovered by Pioneer 11, is now known to be three rings that are braided and appear to be held in check by the newly discovered moons, S-13 on the outside and S-14 on the inside of the ring.

Considering the tremendous size of Saturn, gravity must play an important role in the control of the rings and debris. For instance, the Voyager data that has been returned indicates that the rings consist of a very large population of particles that vary in size from 1/10,000 of an inch to about 1 meter (3 ft.) in diameter. Now, given the right material (still considered to be rock and/or ice), and knowing the width and thickness, the rings take on the mass of a small planet. This I find most amazing. Could Saturn have been a

double planet: one small, one very large? At this point I would say no, the mechanics do not seem to be right. But will Voyager 2 add to this mystery?

There is one more point of interest to consider before we move on to the moons; that is the dark, mysterious fingers of material that stretch across the brightest part of the B ring. These long radial spoke-like features appear to be the result of electrostatic forces lifting the finer particles above the face of the optically thick B ring. These fingers were dark in the approach pictures and bright in forward-scattered light in post-closest approach photos. The idea that they are the result of electrostatic forces seems to be reinforced when one considers that they appear to co-rotate with Saturn's magnetic field.

THE MOONS

Again the triumphant success of Voyager 1 is evident in the discovery of 6 new moons orbiting Saturn. All were seen in photos, but only two had large enough angular diameters to determine their shapes. S-10 and S-11 are co-orbital and are shaped somewhat like an Idaho potato with the long axes pointed toward the center of the planet. S-11, the trailing satellite of this pair is about 135 km (80 Mi.) long by 70 km (40 mi.) wide and S-10 is somewhat larger with an average diameter of about 200 km (120 mi.). They are composed of water ice and orbit

Saturn at a distance of 91,000 km (57,000 mi.) above the cloud tops, this is a mere 1000 miles beyond the newest and most distant of Saturn's rings.

Very little information is available on the remaining 4 new moons (S-12 - S-13) other than their orbits. S-12 has been discovered to be co-orbital with Dione and oscillates at a point about 60° ahead of this satellite. S-13 and S-14 as I have mentioned above, orbit just outside and inside the F ring respectively, and S-15 just outside the A ring.

Each of the five inner moons known before Voyager were photographed and are approximately spherical in shape. Their densities and surface brightness indicate that they are composed mainly of water ice with the exception of Dione which is thought to contain as much as 70% rock. Tethys seems to be pure ice.

These five moons: Mimas, Enceladus, Tethys, Dione, and Rhea range in size from Mimas at 390 km (240 mi.) in diameter to Rhea at 1530 km (950 mi.). This size range puts them between Mars' two moons (Phobos and Deimos) and the Galilean satellites of Jupiter, which is previously an unexplored area of moon sizes.

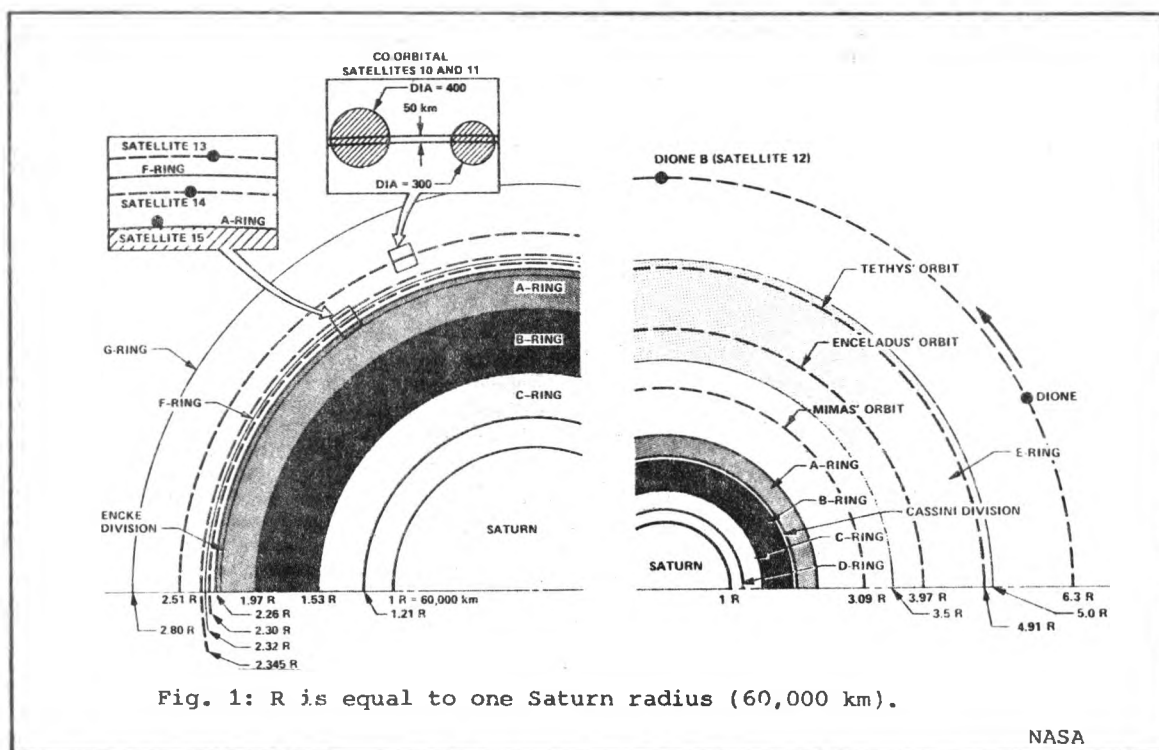
Of the Saturnian system, I was most interested in Titan, the largest of Saturn's moons and the only moon to possess any substantial atmosphere. Before Voyager, Titan was thought to be the largest of the solar system's moons. Its precise diameter is still

unknown but it is known to be less than 5120 km (3180 mi.), which is somewhat smaller than the diameter of Ganymede at 5270 km (3275 mi.), Jupiter's largest moon. The implication here requires a density about twice that of water or about the same as Ganymede, which in turn requires that its composition be of equal amounts of rock and ice as is the case with the Galilean satellite.

Perhaps the most eagerly awaited information about Titan concerned the atmosphere: what is its density, what does it consist of, and does it resemble that of primitive Earth? We can answer these questions to a point but there is not enough data to consider the answers final by any means.

Let us first take a look at the constituents of the atmosphere of this unique moon. It is now known to contain methane, ethane, acetylene, and hydrogen cyanide. But the bulk of the atmosphere is believed to be composed of nitrogen which is the main gas in Earth's atmosphere. Before Voyager, most scientists opted for a methane-rich atmosphere which depended on a warmer surface temperature than the now accepted -300° F. This is only slightly warmer than the boiling point of liquid nitrogen, so lakes of this substance may well exist near the poles of this extraordinary world.

One of the biggest questions before Voyager concerned the pressure of Titan's atmosphere; estimates



ranged from 20-2000 millibars at the surface to somewhat lower in the upper atmosphere. It has been found to be about 50% greater than that of Earth which would put it in the area of 1500 millibars. This makes Titan's atmosphere one of the densest in the solar system.

Unfortunately, a thick haze obscures all surface features and still leaves us guessing about what it looks like. But given the atmospheric makeup and the surface pressure that we have been able to deduce from Voyager data, it is probably safe to assume that it is very much like primitive Earth, at least atmospherically.

As Voyager swings up through the rings on its journey outbound from the planet Saturn, one can't help but wonder what surprises await ahead in the blackness beyond our own solar system. We can only guess at what Voyager's eyes will see.

Oh, how I wish they were mine.

* * *

WHAT STUFF?

On a cold sunny November day in 1965 I left Great Lakes Naval Training Center bound for aircraft familiarization school. I was convinced I had "the right stuff". I had no idea what it was let alone understanding it--but I had it. For the next 4 years I raced all over

the United States, Europe, and Viet Nam proving that I had it. Every time I saw the "gray slab" of the carrier flight deck racing up towards me or fading away behind me I was convinced I had it. It took a plane crash, ten years as a civilian, and a book by Tom Wolfe to make me understand what I thought I had.

Tom Wolfe's The Right Stuff is every bit of what is cracked up to be and much more. He is a passionate writer, I've no doubt that he is very much in love with "the right stuff". Any red-blooded American male in his right syndrome couldn't help but be. It's the bottom line; it's beyond macho, guts, and balls. Having "the right stuff" is akin to being God of locomotion. From Chuck Yeager's down home control of any situation to Gus Grissom's fear when his capsule sank. The Right Stuff is man over machine, machine over man, and the media over all.

Tom Wolfe has hit a chord that is near and dear to all of us that were weaned on hot rods, booze, and war stories. He has found that certain something that every young jock thinks he has; that something that allows him to turn his face to the morning sun and draw the energy straight into his bloodstream.

There were many mornings when I was up before the sun, dragging my

injured liver down to the flight line to make an early sortie. It hurt but the hurt is gone once you mount that screaming she-thing called a jet and hurtle headlong down a runway and burst into sunlight before countless thousands of comatose souls down below even know it's morning; to take off in an F4 Phantom, cut in the afterburners, and scream 30,000 feet up into the sky like a missile gone crazy, to ride herd over six tons of thrust--that's "the right stuff". I had it or so I thought.

The Right Stuff is more than a flyguy's ego trip. It is a truthful account of America's first astronauts. It is the story of men like Pete Conrad, Chuck Yeager, and Alan Shepard who had "the right stuff" to put America in space. But more than anything else, it's the story of America at the height of the cold war and how we had our heroes packaged and sold to us.

The Right Stuff is a brilliant eulogy to the era of America's single-combat warriors, to the men who faced the Russians--one on one--200 miles straight up in space. There will never be another astronaut who will feel the public outpouring that these 7 men did. It is an era gone by in American history. I weep its passing and hold Tom Wolfe's The Right Stuff very close to my heart.

NASA News

NASA has officially approved the continuation of Voyager 2 on a trajectory which would take it to Uranus in 1986 after flying past Saturn this summer.

Under the approved plan, the spacecraft will encounter Uranus at a distance of 107,000 kilometers Jan. 24, 1986, making measurements and taking pictures as it speeds past and heads for a possible encounter with Neptune.

The Uranus encounter will provide the world with its first close-up look at that planet. Uranus is the seventh planet outward from the Sun, twice as far from the Sun as Saturn; it rotates on its axis at a tilt of 98 degrees. It is a grim, frozen world.

The decision to fly past Uranus is, in effect, a decision to retain the present trajectory. If agency officials had decided against a Uranus encounter, then a retargeting

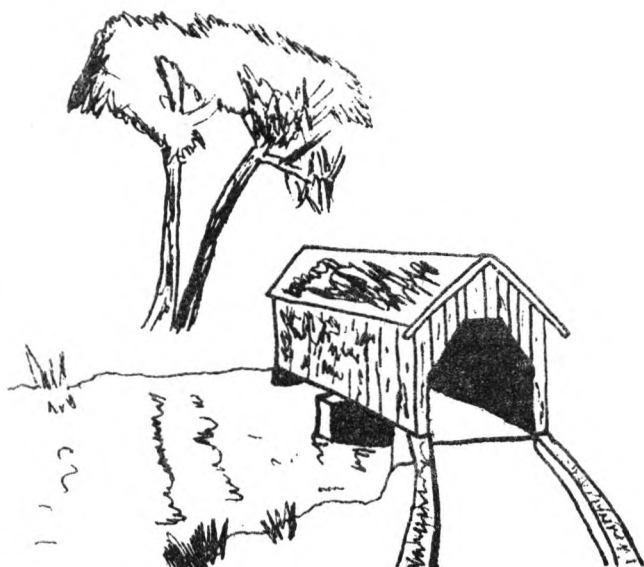
of the Voyager 2 would have been required.

Voyager 2, launched Aug. 20, 1977 is a sister ship to Voyager 1, which recently provided a historical close-up encounter with the ringed planet Saturn. Voyager 2 flew by Jupiter in July 1979 and will encounter Saturn Aug. 25, 1981.

Voyager 1's trajectory through the solar system was selected to optimize the scientific objectives at Jupiter, Saturn, and Titan. The path of Voyager 2 was chosen to provide a course to Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and perhaps Neptune. This path does not provide a close-up approach to Titan or a Saturn ring occultation which were among the goals of the Voyager 1 mission. The final decision to remain on this trajectory had to await the successful outcome of Voyager 1's close encounter with Saturn and Titan in November 1980.

Voyager 1 has achieved all of the prescribed Saturn/Titan scientific objectives. The assessment of the health of the Voyager 2 spacecraft and instruments indicates that there is a reasonable probability that the five-year journey to Uranus can be endured and a scientifically productive flyby can be achieved.

"On this basis, therefore, the decision has been made to retain the present Uranus trajectory for Voyager 2," said Andrew J. Stofan, Acting Associate Administrator for Space Science. He pointed out that retargeting of the spacecraft to provide another close Titan flyby could have been made as late as early 1981.



ACROSS THE RIVER

FRED LERNER

THE DEATH OF THE MEGALOPOLIS

Last week my wife and I went into New York City. We'd been spending the week with her parents, who live near New Haven, and we decided to see a play, visit the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and do a bit of research at the Fashion Institute of Technology. Since my folks live across the Hudson River in Hackensack, we had a place to stay, with easy access to New York by bus: a forty-minute trip with service every half hour.

We came away from our three days in the city with a renewed appreciation for the North Country and a fervent sense of relief at not having to live anywhere near New York, or any other large city. Nothing terrible happened to us: we weren't mugged (or even pan-handled or propositioned), we weren't caught in a traffic jam, and we found a cab whenever we wanted one. But the sum of minor unpleasantnesses which we experienced was enough to revive our distaste for New York, and to renew my conviction that the city is doomed.

Let me review a few of those minor annoyances. Upon arriving at Grand Central Terminal, we stopped in the waiting-room to use restrooms and telephones. The restrooms were smelly and filthy, and the waiting-room benches were crowded with inebriated alcoholics and unwashed derelicts. On our way back to Connecticut, we attempted to find a coin-operated locker in which to stow our luggage while we visited a museum. After fifteen minutes of searching for a vacant locker, we were told by the stationmaster that

all the lockers had been closed; but no signs to that effect had been posted on the banks of lockers throughout the station.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, as one might expect during a holiday week, was seriously overcrowded. This was exacerbated in several of the most popular exhibits by the Museum's decision to close off the normal exits, forcing visitors to work their way backwards through the crowded galleries. Long lines forced the early closing of the Museum's restaurant, and even the use of a public telephone entailed twenty minutes' wait.

At the Fashion Institute of Technology, we had the library practically to ourselves. Our project put little burden on the staff, yet the reference librarian on duty went out of his way to be unhelpful to us. I wondered if he were not making us the scapegoats for whatever accumulation of resentments was currently poisoning his life. And I saw in his attitude and his behaviour the decline and fall of American urban civilisation.

Several years ago I read a remarkable book called *The Coming Dark Age*, by the Italian writer Roberto Vacca. He predicted the collapse of Western technology and the interdependent urbanised lifestyle which it makes possible. It would not be war or natural disaster that would cripple the industrial societies, but the failure of the infrastructures which support those societies. We have not got the

sociological and managerial ability to keep those life-support systems running except under very favourable conditions. But our increasing dependence upon such favourable conditions is contributing to the instability which will destroy them.

Consider the situation of New York City. Most of the city is built upon islands, linked to the mainland by a handful of bridges and tunnels. Meditate, for a moment or two, on the ease with which a bridge can be blown up or a tunnel flooded. Then devote thirty seconds or so to counting the persons or groups who might find some reason to disable those passageways.

Or calculate the proportion of the city's food supply which arrives by truck. Consider the control exerted by a thoroughly corrupt labour union over most of the trucking industry in the United States.

Or picture in your mind the effects of a combined blizzard and blackout--during a nationwide rail strike.

I don't mean to explore these possibilities in any great detail--if I did, I'd go and write a bestselling novel. I just want to make the point that New York City--or any other large city--is a very vulnerable place. And it wouldn't take more than a single person at the end of his tether to set in motion the *coup de grace*. Consider Mrs O'Leary's cow, and the impression she made upon Chicago.

Let's get back to my friend at the Fashion Institute of Technology. I don't know what put him in a foul humour; perhaps he's congenitally bloody-minded. But I used to work in midtown Manhattan, commuting in each day on the bus from New Jersey. It was an easy trip, as such things go: the bus picked me up in front of my apartment, and my office was but one block from the Port Authority Bus Terminal. Still, I hated it, and more often than not I had managed to work up some sort of grudge against the world by mid-morning. It didn't take me too long to realise that none of this was lengthening my life expectancy.

New Yorkers pride themselves on being

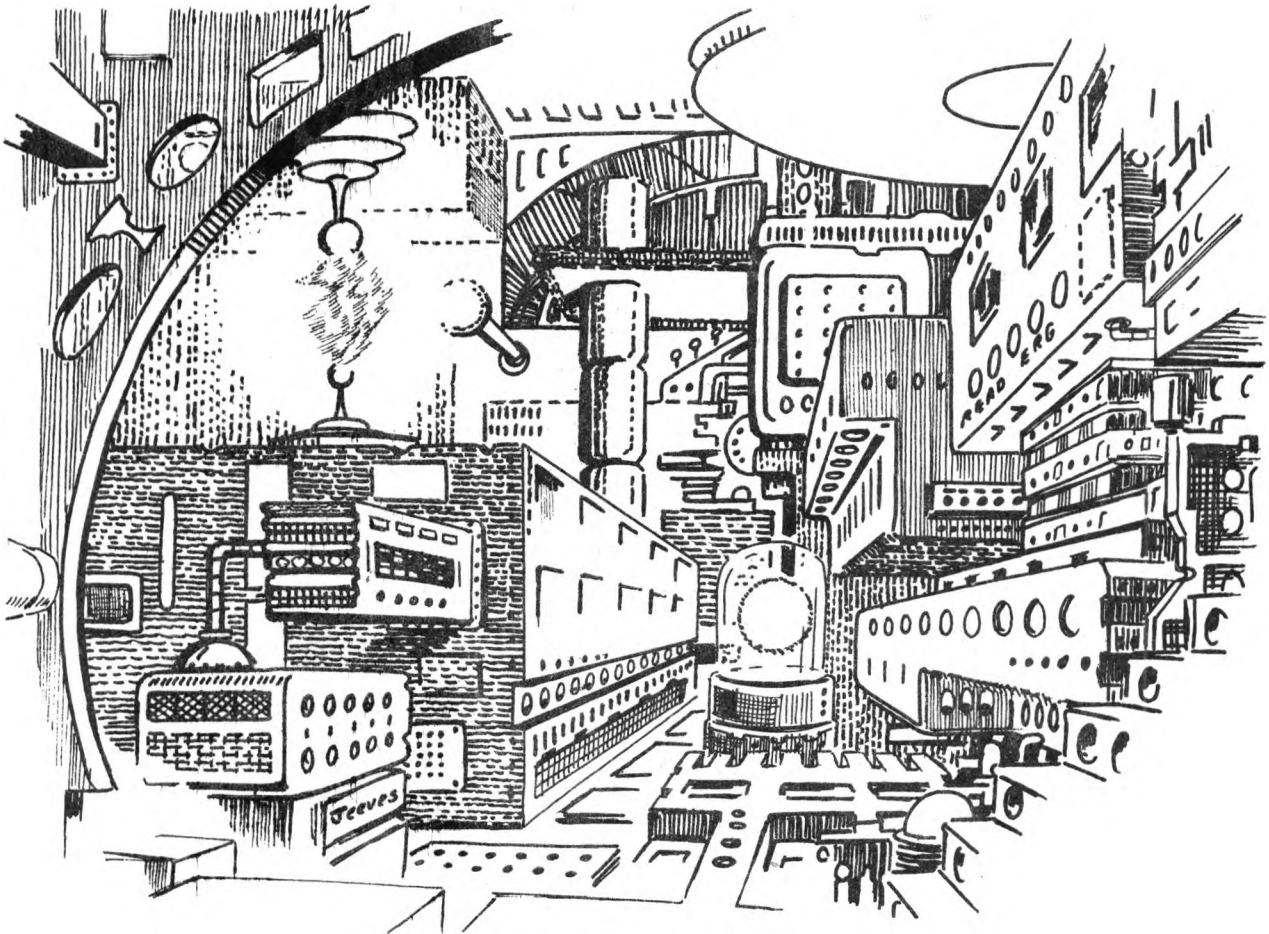
a hardy breed; and unless one has a very thick layer of financial insulation to protect oneself, that hardiness is a necessity for survival. But even a strong swimmer, who can keep afloat in an undertow and make a miles-distant shore, can be maddened by the incessant drip of water into a basin. As the minor annoyances of city life push a single person to his particular breaking-point, his reactions may well help push someone else over the edge. Who knows what indignities may have caused the FIT librarian's surliness? And who knows what annoyances may have bedeviled his other visitors that day? I could shrug off the situation, for I knew that I'd be far away from the city a week later; but what if, an hour or two later, another visitor

found such treatment to be the final straw?

I don't expect that New York City will come to a gory end because of one civil servant's uncivil behaviour. But civility is the only thing that can permit large numbers of people to coexist in close proximity. And the urban environment, not only in America but throughout the world, is not one that encourages civility.

What is the answer to this problem? Damned if I know. But until I find one, I'll stay in Vermont.

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Raphael Folch-Pi

L-5 Hurrah! Part, the second

The time has come, gentle reader to introduce one of the major players in our story. Carolyn Henson. Another complete sentence. This is one lady with many facets to her character.

First, a little history. In 1975 at the NASA Ames Research Center in Cupertino, California, a summer study group was convened. Among the participants were Carolyn Henson, a specialist in agricultural methods, and her husband Keith Henson, a technocrat whose background is not clear to me. Keith has been running a microcomputer peripherals manufacturing operation in Tucson, Arizona called Analog Precision.

Another participant was Prof. Gerard O'Neill, a physicist on the faculty of Princeton University. In the late 1960's and early '70's in an effort to get away from the more traditional physics problem in mechanics, which usually starts with, "An artillery shell is fired with an initial velocity of...", arriving at the concept of civilian colonies in geostable libration orbits within the earth/moon system.

As the idea developed, new problems had to be addressed. The propulsion system finally settled on was mandated by the extreme difference between the respective gravity wells of the earth and the moon. The moon's is, by far, the weaker. The bare bones of the economics are-bootstrap from earth until your colony arrives at the "construction shake stage", then start using rocks and other stuff already up there.

It's up, and once you're up, its "dirt cheap" to get rocks from here to there. This is especially true at orbital altitudes and more above the surface of the earth.

It cost \$15-30 billion to bring a few hundred pounds of moon rocks back to earth. Even if we can generate silicon, aluminum etc. from "moon slag", how in space, are we going to move the thousands of tons needed to build a colony. (There's probably a good joke with space craft, bags of moon rocks, and smuggling past border guards, but I digress.)

The answer, in part, is the O'Neill Mass Driver. If you pass a wire through a magnetic field, you get electricity passing through the wire. Reverse the process and you can generate an electro-magnetic field. If you build a series of large coils and place them in a line like doughnuts in a box, you have the basics of a mass driver. In addition, if you build a "bucket" for the load to sit in with its own set of magnets, with proper "switching" the power from one large

external coil to the next, you achieve a "wave front" effect. The magnetic bucket will be propelled along like a surfer riding on the creating breakers at Malibu.

Once the technological problems of fast switching, super conductivity, engineering and design have all been addressed, the whole thing will fly, right? Well, maybe. This was one of many that was being discussed at Cupertino in the summer of '75.

More details can be found in O'Neill's book, The High Frontier. Incidentally that nice little summery of "simple" ideas has been costed at \$100 to \$500 billion, depending on whose figures you use.

Along with K. Eric Drexler, and a lot of other people, the team was made up of most of those who are now the "pioneers" in the ever newer Space Movement.

The colony under design consideration was planned for placement at either Earth/Moon Libration point four or five. These are two gravitic dimples racing about 60 degrees ahead and behind the moon and correspond, I would imagine, to the Trojan points" in this system.

The study commenced. The activity and research, the classes and sharing of ideas, everything, was humming. The results were published in a NASA

report, which is no longer in print. There is another study report from a later session, still available from the U.S. Government Printing Office.

In any case, the message was more work and it just might be feasible. However, remember the political climate in 1975. Nixon was forced out of office by Watergate. America was or soon to be out of Viet Nam. Jerry Ford, America's first unelected Pre ident was in Office. It did not look good for the U.S. Space effort. In 1969, there began the Post Apollo Depression.

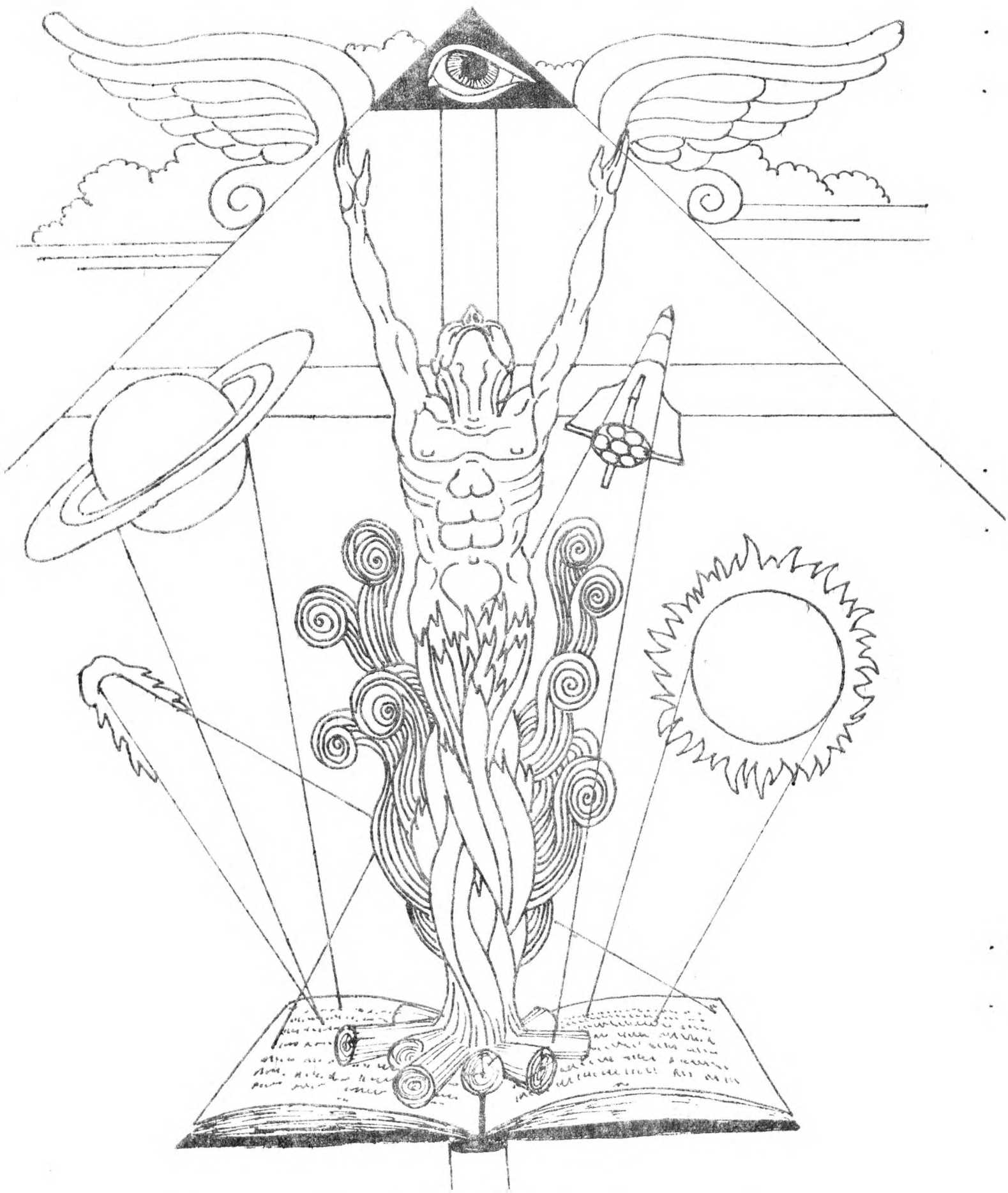
The number of missions was set to terminate with Apollo 17. In NASA and Defence, layoffs were the rule. The "Great Drought" went into high gear. So with that outlook were really going to put up \$30 billion to do on site research in orbit? RIGHT.

BREAK! BREAK! BREAK!

Due to the Bangkok flu and other problems, this is as far as we've been able to get with this installment of L-5 Hurrah! Also there is the ongoing discussion/computer portion of the column. All I can say is: more next time.

With apologies,
Rafe Folch-Pi

See you at Boskone



Science

Fiction &

Religion

One of the chief pastimes of mankind since the species evolved into rationality, has been an interest in and concern about our creator. We have, for the most part, refused to believe that we are a mere evolutionary accident; a smarter ecinoderm or club moss. Rather, our kind does, in the great majority, believe that we are the creation of a divine being. As such, our relationship to that being is, on the one hand, one of supplication and offering, and on the other, one of worship. So it has been that we have offered to God, our creator, in all names and at all times, both prayers and the fruits of our labors whether it be the ram of Abraham or the Pieta of Michelangelo. Within the scope of such offering, certain talents come closer than all others to being very much akin to those of the creator himself. The painter, the sculptor, the author, and all who might properly be classified as artists are themselves "creators" and mirror that divine being, providing it one's offering

and example. No one can doubt the effect of this subcreation since a Frodo the Hobbit or an Ebenezer the Scrooge are more alive to many people than those who walk abroad on the earth with them.

In illustrating a discourse on science fiction and religion, I have utilized the theme of offering. The open book and those symbols which rise from it (i.e. star, planet, rocket, and comet) represent both the art form and subject. Rising from stylized flames which depict the theme of offering is the author with arms stretched in supplication toward the enclosed "eye of God". This is a very ancient symbol and in early Christianity, presented the triangle enclosure as symbolic of the doctrine of the Trinity--the three persons of God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The descending legs of the triangle mark off an area of celestial calm depicted by angelic wings and clouds which is symbolic of the dwelling place of the creator

who is beyond all earthly strife. Originating beneath the book, and meaning therefore that its origins are in the reality of the world rather than in the author's work, and extending upward to the eye and across to both celestial borders, is a cross whose meaning here is one of earthly burdens which the artist must bear but which are powerless in that paradise which is promised to believers.

In this drawing the author is both ego-suppliant and, through his work, offering.

It is truly said that from those whom much is given, much will be required. The gift of artistic talent, in whatever field it is given, is a great trust and one that should not be frivolously exercised but rather, persued to the limit of excellence.

Valerie Protopapas



SCIENCE & FICTION & RELIGION

WILLIS E. McNELLY

Science Fiction and religion walking--or jetting--hand in hand? Shades of the Scopes trial or Bishop Wilberforce and T.H. Huxley!

At first glance the two terms seem almost antithetical, yet a close examination of much of the best science fiction of the last decade reveals just the opposite: religion or religious themes have provided contemporary speculative literature with some of its most cogent extrapolations, and, perhaps not coincidentally, with some of science fiction's very best novels and short stories.

Both religion and science fiction are, in a sense, undefinable, admitting of extreme diversity in approach. Religion in the hands of the creators of speculative fiction may be intransigent religiosity, dominant institutionalism, a simple frame of reference, or serious examination of the role of a new--or old--religion either on Earth or some far distant planet in the future. The range of the religious themes as a result of the imaginative projections created by the authors is amazingly extensive. They range from a serious examination of a pre-Vatican II but renaissance Catholicism some hundreds of years into the future in Walter Miller Jr.'s *A Canticle for Leibowitz* to an extrapolative messianism based upon the Islamic mystique in Frank Herbert's *Dune*.

Such cooperation between these two apparently divergent philosophies has not always been the case, of course. For decades after Hugo Gernsback reinvented science fiction as a ghetto genre in 1926, its writers reflected the traditional antipathy of science towards religion. The pages of the old *AMAZING STORIES* and *ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION* in the 1930's and 1940's were cluttered with fiction which depicted the church, any church, as narrow, intellectually

debilitating and corrosive to independent thought. The writers, perhaps echoing H.G. Wells, depicted scientists as the new saviors of humanity. There was no god but math or science, and Einstein--or his fictional counterpart--was its prophet.

Typical of the novels of this era was Fritz Leiber's *Gather, Darkness* (1940). Here a rigid, stratified, hierarchial monasticism utilizes the effects of science, which the monks, as sole custodians, maintain as secrets under the threats of excommunication and use to enforce their privileged position at the expense of the believing but unlettered masses. In this view, religion becomes superstitious hokum prostituting science to nefarious ends.

That the traditional antagonism between science and religion should surface in science fiction was probably inevitable, considering the personalities of the two editors who were responsible for the growth of the modern American genre, Hugo Gernsback and John W. Campbell. Both scientifically trained, they emphasized hard core science in the stories they selected for publication. These stories, in turn, deified scientific achievement or an angry humanism extended either into space or the future, and both positions excluded almost any aspect of traditional religion. In this approach writers and editors merely reflected the views that had been started earlier by such mainstream writers as H.G. Wells, Sinclair Lewis, G.B. Shaw, J.B. Priestly, and Samuel Butler.

To be sure, many notable science fiction authors such as Isaac Asimov (who holds a Ph.D. in biochemistry, Jack Williamson, Robert A. Heinlein, or Arthur C. Clarke--all of whom were developed in the 1940's under the tutelage of either Gernsback or Campbell--rarely

betrayed a specific antireligious bias. Instead they constructed probability worlds or potential futures where science or its offshoots reigned supreme. Religion was ignored, but in its absence, science of the scientists became the hero.

A few "mainstream" science fiction novels of this era also substituted an evangelistic science for more traditional beliefs. Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* carried science so far with its extrauterine typology and soma as a soporific communion substitute that it seems almost a parallel answer to the excesses of religiosity. If religion is an opiate, so also is science when it becomes a surrogate religion. Scientific determinism, Huxley seems to say, is as evil and perhaps inevitable as religious determinism. So also with George Orwell's 1984 where scientific statism substitutes Big Brother for God.

To be sure, some science fiction writers during this period utilized specific religious myths, such as the Genesis story or the flood myth, as constructs for their fiction. God may appear as Yawa Eloem, Jesus as an astronaut, or Ezekiel's fiery wheel as a space vehicle. However, such a utilization of thematic material often appears merely as accidental rather than integral to the story itself.

Integration of the themes of science and religion finds major expression in the works of the late C.S. Lewis. Lewis was a brilliant polymath: theologian, fantasist, Milton scholar, linguist, and science fiction buff. Out of the *Silent Planet*, the first novel of his famous trilogy, begins with a rocket trip to Mars, or Malacandra and ends with a similar return to earth after the hero, significantly named Ransom, has been transformed in his quest for knowledge and freedom. Ransom, although a famed

philologist on earth, is a child in the widely different Malacandrian environment. He gradually discovers that Earth is a "bent" planet, cut off from celestial communication by the default of its guardian angel. Ransom's spiritual insights, coupled with some rather obvious rites of passage, provide much of the subtle character development that entrances readers. In the next two works, Perelandra and That Hideous Strength, Ransom gradually comes to appreciate the significant meaning of his own name as he confronts the Evil One who has brought about the fall of Earth, the silent planet. Much more could be said about this trilogy, of course, but what is most important to realize is that without the solid substructure provided by the religious motifs the novels would be little better than action-adventure or pure fairy stories. Lewis, then, early showed how religious themes, transmuted myths, and theological insights can be integral to what he called the "spacetime" story.

Integration of these themes with those of conventional science fiction gadgetry might not have been suprising coming from Lewis whose lifelong addiction to the "spacetime" story he chronicled in Of Other Worlds. However, when a similar integration appeared in a brilliant sequence of novels by James Blish, the science fiction world stakes out a major new lode of subject matter. Blish, another ostensibly hard core writer discovered by Campbell, began first with A Case of Conscience (1950). Here a small investigative team of space explorers must assess the planet Lithia to determine if it should be asked to join the league of worlds. One of the scientist-explorers, a Jesuit named Ruiz-Sanchez, is trapped by his scientific knowledge into the heresy of Manicheanism. Blish's novel, unfortunately for him, came a decade and a half before interest in the Devil created many less well-written best sellers.

The religious constructs of A Case of Conscience are clear, as is its rigid scientific determinism. The very structure of the novel itself, which includes a satanic avatar or incarnation, is dependent upon the theological-scientific tension. Ruiz-Sanchez, in fact, sets forth the metaphysical or ethical premises of Lithia, all of which he feels are diabolically inspired: reason is always a sufficient guide; the self-evident is always the real; good works are an end in themselves; faith is irrelevant to right action;

right action can exist without love; peace need not pass understanding; ethics can exist without evil alternatives; morals can exist without conscience; goodness can exist without God.

How the problem is resolved is deliberately made ambiguous by Blish who also combines an analogous problem from James Joyce's Finnegans Wake with that of Lithia. In addition he includes the eternal question of evolution, for the Lithians, reptilian in origin but highly intelligent, have complete extraterrestrial recapitulation.

Blish's preoccupation with theological themes found further outlet in three other significant novels, Dr. Mirabilis, a study of Roger Bacon; Black Easter, a novel of the diabolical circumstances leading to Armageddon; and The Day After Judgement, a brilliant theological tour de force. Throughout these books Blish is careful not to reveal an identifiable personal position. Rather he utilizes his themes and chiliastic vision almost as if he were trying to disassociate himself, and hence his readers, from identification with either position so that they may distance themselves to gain objectivity.

This ability has become a prime characteristic of contemporary science fiction. In Robert Scholas's words, "Speculative fiction offers us worlds clearly and radically discontinuous from the one we know, yet [it] returns to confront that world in a highly cognitive and stimulating way."

The religious worlds offered by science fiction are often radically discontinuous from the ones we know, yet sufficiently similar to cause us to pause and question our own. If science fiction or speculative literature is extrapolative, then the apparently disparate conjunction of science and religion should come as no surprise. Both religion and science, after all, deal with the substance of a value beyond rational comprehension. They engage one another constantly, and to find them providing the substance of qualitative novels and short stories in the hitherto much-maligned genre of science fiction should appear inevitable, not jarring. The discoveries of science raise endless theological speculations: Darwin questions the theory of special creation; the awareness of billions of stars and millions of galaxies posits a theory about the nonuniqueness of Jesus' Incarnation on this minor planet of a third class sun at the

edge of a relatively small nebula; has Christ, the writers ask, incarnated himself more than once, perhaps even billions of times?

Science fiction provides no answers, of course, but it does and can indicate possibilities or at least speculative hypotheses or alternatives. Frank Herbert's Dune is a case in point. Set on the desert planet Arrakis some ten thousand years in the future, Dune is concerned with the appearance of a genuine avatar who, because of the incredibly inhospitable conditions which rack the planet, must choose as his methods of redemption not the traditional ones of mercy, love, and charity, but violence. The savior's recognition of the tragic necessity of his mission provides cogent commentary upon the crucial tensions of love-hate, mercy-violence, mission-futility. Dune is in many ways a science fiction epic, not only in size and scope, but in mythic corollaries as well. Jungian archetypes dominate the action, ranging from the great mother, virtually a goddess mother, to communion rituals through consciousness-arousing drugs. In sum, it's a rattling good story whose religious constructs provide depth to a distinguished ecology-based science novel. It is a major achievement.

So also is John Boyd's The Last Starship from Earth. Boyd's targets are Skinnerian psychology



and analogous intransigent religiosity--all those "who came to us with persuasive smiles and irreproachable logic in the name of mental hygiene, social duty, come with their flags, their Bibles, their money credits, to steal our immortality." Boyd sets his story, one rich with Miltonic overtones, on an alternate universe, a probability world, where the Pope is a computer, Henry VIII a leading sociologist, Abraham Lincoln has delivered a "Johannesburg Address", and miscegenation between rigidly stratified Skinnerian classes of society is punishable by exile to a peculiarly dismal prison planet named Hell. The hero is forced to commit deicide by assuming the identity of Judas and thus to derail history in an attempt to break the power of the Department of Sociology and "set free the human spirit on earth."

Boyd's novel is social commentary, of course, but its acerbic statement of contemporary problems is both heightened and distanced by his use of the science fiction genre. It is a story, in other words, that could not have been told except by enabling us to confront our world both discontinuously and cognitively.

Robert A. Heinlein, too, transmuted religious myth in Stranger in a Strange Land. As one of the first genuine best sellers in the science fiction field, at least in its paperback version, Stranger embodies such religious notions as a genuine miracle-producing avatar, ritual cannibalism, a sacrament of water-sharing, and an energetic deism illustrated by the greeting: "Share Water. Thou Art God." While the novel as a novel has its structural flaws--it breaks apart in the middle, and after some 200 pages of fast-paced action, witty dialogue, and passable character development, Heinlein mounts the pulpit for the next 200 pages to extol the religion he has invented in the first half of the novel--it nonetheless once more demonstrates the viability of religion as a serious science fiction theme.

Roger Zelazny has also transformed the religious myths of varying cultures into fictional form. One of his books is based on Egyptian religious cults; another on Nordic myths, and Lord of Light, one of his very best, written long before he lost himself in the sword and sorcery of the Amber series, is based upon Hinduism with a hero named Sam Atman, to indicate only one of many correspondences.

Many other authors and works could be cited, ranging from Michael Moorcock's Behold the Man! to Robert

Sheekley's Dimension of Miracles. In fact, so rich are the offerings of religiously orientated science fiction works that they are impossible to list. However, Mayo Mohs's excellent anthology of science fiction short stories, Other Worlds, Other Gods, a 1971 Avon paperback still in print, includes such fine stories as Tony Boucher's "The Quest for St. Aquin," Arthur C. Clarke's "The Nine Billion Names of God," as well as Ray Bradbury's fine poem, "Christus Apollo."

Walter Miller's A Canticle for Leibowitz is also rich in theological speculation. Indeed, the boldness of his conception at the end of the novel is remarkable. Two points particularly require some attention. The theologically rigorous moralism of the various abbots, particularly Abbot Zerchi in the last section, is countered, not by a diabolical villain, but by the best in secular humanism in the person of Dr. Cors. Science vs. religion. Miller clashes his fictional reality against the hard rock of the imagination in this section, but never becomes sermonistic. And finally, his creation of a new unfallen race of humans who are freed from the effects of original sin and strengthened by the preternatural gifts of the first parents in Eden as personified by Rachel is integral to the many themes he has been utilizing in the novel. In the end, the meek inherit the earth.

Several short story writers not included in the Mohs' anthology also deserve to be mentioned. Harlan Ellison's special genius seems to be his ability to revivify old myths, to make them germane for the modern audience, and by shock and terror, to effect the surprises of compression and condensation. One of his most anthologized stories, "'Repent, Harlequin,' Said the Ticktockman," combines the sacrificial jongleur with the theme of joking or jesting Jesus in a savage attack on a time-serving, mechanistic civilization. Ellison's Harlequin is a salvific figure, dying that man might live, but resurrected, even in the body of the Ticktockman. We find a similar theme in "I Have No Mouth and I Must Scream" where the machine god, significantly named AM (derived from Allied Mastercomputer) is frustrated by the sacrificial act of the flawed hero. "The Deathbird" echoes the Gilgamesh legend, and finally, his most lauded story, "A Boy and His Dog," even includes ritual cannibalism, although the religious overtones in the story are muted rather than explicit.

Many authors who rank among the very best that science fiction has yet produced also use religious concepts in a muted, almost distorted fashion, using them not as directly as do either Miller or Blish. Two such are Ursula Le Guin and Philip K. Dick. Most science fiction readers would agree that Le Guin's The Left Hand of Darkness and Dick's The Man in the High Castle are two of the finest works yet produced in science fiction. However, integral to the Jungian concept of reconciliation of opposites both explicit and implicit in The Left Hand of Darkness is Le Guin's utilization of the Tao and her descriptions of Meshe, the Avatar of her ice-age planet. The religious construct is not that of Christianity or Islam or Judaism, but of the Tao. "Meshe is the Center of Time...One center, one seeing, one law, one light. Look now into the Eye of Meshe."

Le Guin extends the Taoist principle even further in The Dispossessed. While this recent book is ostensibly a political novel--an ambiguous utopia, she terms it--what is most important to realize is that the ethical anarchy that Le Guin creates on the "moon" Anarres is solidly based upon Taoism. Le Guin permutes Taoism subtly, yet cogently, to permit us not only to view both an ethical, quasi-religious anarchy and/or capitalism, extrapolated, with some modicum of objectivity, but to examine our own inchoate unexpressed utopian dreams. If some new and better worlds posit the concept of God, as Miller implies in A Canticle for Leibowitz for example, others can be equally utopian without the consideration of the existence of God, and Taoism permits Le Guin such theological speculation.

Finally, I would like to turn to Philip K. Dick's The Man in the High Castle as the last example of religion's playing a major role in science fiction. To those who have read this novel, it may come as somewhat of a surprise to hear it spoken of in religious terms. After all, the book is apparently a straightforward probability-world novel in which Japan and Germany have won World War II. Yet a careful examination of the text will reveal that Dick based the book upon the ancient Chinese book of wisdom, the I Ching, which hardly requires defending as a book of great religious wisdom and insight. What we should realize about The Man in the High Castle, however, is that Dick wrote it by consulting the Book of Changes. Everytime Dick had one of his characters in the novel consult the

I Ching, he actually cast the coins himself, looked up the appropriate hexagram, incorporated it into the text, and then proceeded with the action indicated by the answer. If other hexagrams had presented themselves, the novel naturally would have taken a different turn. Dick gives his secret away on the last pages of the book as Hawthorne Abendsen, the man in the castle who had written a novel called The Grasshopper Lies Heavy in which Japan and Germany won World War II, tells Juliana Frink that the Oracle had dictated the book to him as he cast the coins. Dick was actually

describing his own method of composition.

Here then we have religion become something more than mere artistic material. Religion--specifically, the I Ching--provides not only the surface structure of the book, but the substructure as well. It is the very rock upon which the book is based.

What of the future of religion and science fiction? I would like to venture one quiet, modest prediction, very quietly and very modestly. As science fiction and the mainstream increasingly merge--and we see this

happening in such writers as Nabokov, Lessing, Pynchon, Durrell, Barth, and many others--the artificial dichotomy between science and religion, indeed, between science fiction and "Literature," with a capital "L" will fade, or to use a scientific term that I find particularly applicable here, deliquesce.

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UPON A THEME BY THOMAS TRAHERNE —JOE R. CHRISTOPHER—

The earth does whirl about the sun,
Spinning like a top has done.

In ages past the folk had thought
the earth was flat and the sun was caught

In sailing above and then below
This coin-like land to light bestow.

But now the truth is unconcealed--
The globe has spun when light's revealed.

Alas! for ancient symbols praised
For all the truths their semblance raised:

Was Heaven above this earth so flat?
Was Hell beneath?--in depths, at that?

Did all the golden Sun above
Show unto men God sending love?

So be it! all that truth is shent,
As leaves from boughs by winds are rent.

But symbols come and symbols go--
Truths remain which the symbols show.

This earth spins through the Heavens now,
So God is all about, we vow;

The Sun does center our yearly way
As God should center our lives for aye.

And are there other worlds beyond
In solar systems of their own?

God's plentitude is thus shown fair--
Across the skies He spreads His share.

How came this universe to be?
Did it explode at God's decree?

And when at last the heat has gone--
The suns have flickered out anon--

Why then the time has come at last
For that New Truth which was forecast:

Then God will call to a lasting birth
A New Heaven and a New Earth.

So Christian folk, both one and all,
Nor fear to see the symbols fall,

Nor fear to see man's knowledge change--
God's truths so but increase in range.



A Patron Saint for Science Fiction

Saint Brendan

Saint Brendan the Navigator has excellent qualifications to be the patron saint of science fiction: he left the known world and discovered a new one; he encountered many alien beings in the course of his voyage; and his story became a best-seller. It is true that he did not actually leave the surface of this planet, but in his time America was harder to reach from Ireland than the moon is from the earth today.

Brendan's adventures may be fabulous, but he himself was a real person, a sixth-century abbot who founded the monastic community at Clonfert and is known to have made several voyages here and there in the British Isles. Irish monks in his day made sea pilgrimages in their skin-covered boats for quite remarkable distances; and it is probable that these associations led to Brendan's name being attached to the *Navigatio Sancti Brendani*. The legend was actually composed several centuries after his death: written versions, dating from the ninth and tenth centuries, exist in French, English, German, Norse, Dutch, Flemish, Italian, and Provençal--quite a noteworthy circulation, for the time, for what is essentially a work of science fiction.

There are differences among the versions, but basically the story is this: the saint, with several companions, set out from Ireland in a curragh to sail westward to the Land of Promise. After a voyage of many years, in which they were fated to retrace their path several times, they eventually reached their destination. In the course of their travels they visited many strange islands, some with even stranger inhabitants. Some of the most notable were the Paradise of Birds; the Isle of Strong Men, whose singing inhabitants presented them with baskets of huge purple fruit:

an island of crystal, roofed with silver, with a passage in the middle through which they sailed; and an island reeking with noxious fumes, where giants pelted them with hot coals. Eventually they reached a bank of deep fog, which lifted to reveal the Earthly Paradise, a rich and beautiful land which they explored for forty days. At that point an angel appeared and forbade them to remain any longer, whereupon they returned to Ireland.

No account of Brendan's travels would be complete without mention of Jasconius, a friendly whale tamed by the saint early in the proceedings. Throughout the years of their peregrinations, Jasconius would appear every Easter Sunday, no matter where they were, so that Brendan could land on his back to celebrate Mass.

According to Geoffrey Ashe, a scholar who has studied the Brendan legend extensively, although the *Navigatio* belongs to the Irish literary tradition of the *immram* or marvelous voyage, it has enough specific, verifiable geographic detail to be regarded as fact-based. It is not, of course, the account of anyone's actual voyage, but he believes that it draws on descriptions of real places found in Viking sagas, Irish sea-pilgrims' tales, and classical sources. He identifies the Paradise of Birds with Vagar in the Faeroe Islands, the isle of giants with an area of volcanic activity on the coast of Iceland, and the Isle of Strong Men with the Bahamas. The crystal island is surely an iceberm: and the fog bank shrouding the Land of Promise resembles that found off the Newfoundland Banks. He does not regard the poem as evidence for an Irish discovery of America, however, even though a few adventurous souls did sail a curragh from Ireland to America in 1977. In his view, the Earthly Paradise of the poem is described with the least realistic

detail of any of the places Brendan supposedly visited and is in fact simply another variant of the myth of a paradise in the Western Sea found through European literature, from the classical Isles of the Hesperides to the Celtic Tir nan Og.

Since science fiction likes to boast that it is often just one step ahead of science itself, it is appropriate that the persisting legends of the discovery of the Blessed Isles by St. Brendan were, hundreds of years later, to provide inspiration to Columbus, who himself visited Ireland and Iceland while working out plans for his own transatlantic voyage.

Anne Braude

Saint Nicholas

I do not mean to be deliberately facetious but perhaps you will take it as such.

Thomas Moore, a century or so ago, wrote that poem "A Visit from Saint Nicholas". From that came a figure who is inexplicably called Santa Claus. I am not sure how a male saint would be given the name "Santa" which is really feminine. I imagine it might have been the result of the Spanish occupation of the lowlands including the Netherlands, Belgium, and Flanders.

But: do remember that Santa Claus (or Sant Claus as it should be) had, in the 19th Century, the first space vehicle. He had a uniform of a sort which is not too awfully far from what the Cosmonauts wear when they are on the ground. Also that a mysterious blinking light is in the blacker version of the legend--namely Rudolph.

There are are so many other things in the legend of Santa Claus that are appropriate to the field so that he could well be the patron saint of science fiction.

Donna Core

Donna is certainly on the right track when she choses St. Nick for the SF Pat. St. She has covered some of the more obvious features which classify him as such. By boggling my small-but-succulent mind I have collated several additional pointers to help place Santa right where he belongs.

Firstly, I believe that Santa Claus is an extraterrestrial.

Certainly this should come as no surprise when you examine the facts of the case. Evidently a technology of the highest order--well above Man's present capabilities--is being manipulated by this corpulent creature every year around December 25th. (And is it a coincidence that this date falls within days of the winter solstice?) To function as the prime gift-giver for the entire world certainly indicates the wielding of prodigious paraphernalia.

Consider the mere logisitics of delivering a gift to every sentient on this planet. A data processing system of extreme sophistication (even greater than a TRS-80) would be necessary to insure that everyone on earth was included in the final tally. This machine would also have to have an infinitely senistive EM

receiver operating on the level of pure thought to monitor the activities of all the boys and girls throughout the year. How else would he know for sure who was naughty or nice?

Haven't you ever wondered how Santa (I'll continue refering to him by this name; for all I know, he might be called 2MM658 by his friends) could deliver all those presents in a single night? I had, but it wasn't until after I had read the works of Herb Wells and others, that I realized how he did it. Donna suggests that he uses a sleigh-shaped spaceship; I believe it is a sleigh-shaped time machine. With such a device, nothing could be easier than artificially "stretching" the hours to the point where he would have time to pass out all the goodies. (This could also explain his immortality, but he might have a tonic for that.)

2MM658...uh, excuse me; Santa also must surely have a matter compressor of marvelous effectiveness to allow him and his swag to descend even the most confining of chimneys. This would also explain how he gets into homes that don't have a chimney. Ziiip: he's under the door. A

similar device, I would imagine, keeps his gifts down to a manageable size so that they can all fit into the one bag.

Or does he make several trips? With a working time machine it could be either way.

Another question about Santa's modus operandi might be cleared up if we view him in the terms of SF: where does he get all those gifts? A hammerlock on Master Charge's main computer might be one way. However, I believe that once again he relies on distinctly alien mechanisms to accomplish this--probably some sort of Infinitely Repeating Three Dimensional Pantograph, pat. pend. This, coupled the ability to transmute elements, would make it child's play for him to churn out seemingly earth-manufactured presents.

But of course he has help. Elf-size androids.

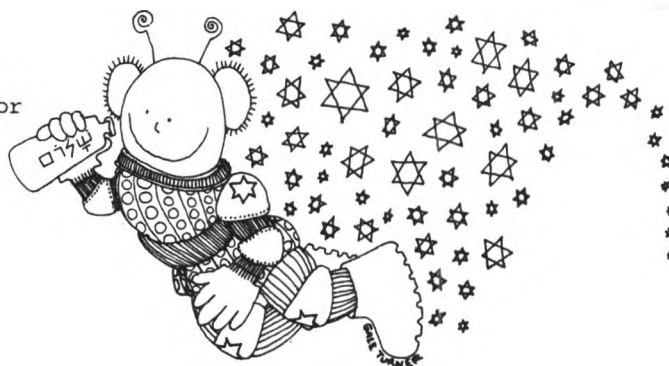
As sure as SF is time machines and super-computers, ET's and spacecraft, St. Nicholas (Santa Claus, Kris Kringle, 2MM658, etc.) is the personification of a Patron Saint for Science Fiction.

Mike Bastraw

☆ SPACE PASSOVER

BY RUTH BERMAN ☆

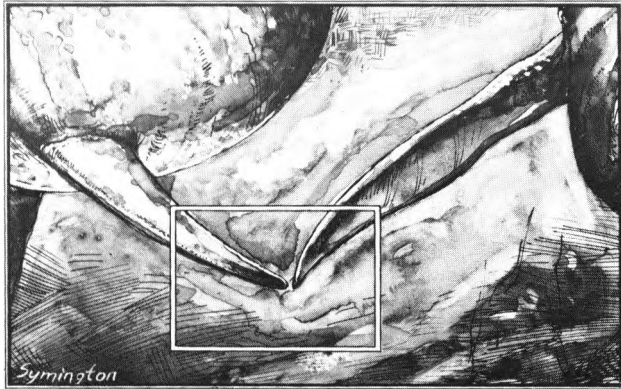
In free fall you always recline at the table.
Short of bolting yourself at the joints
To be self-chippendaled
There's no way to sit up.
If all personnel are present and accounted for
But an old man with a white beard
Drops in when you open the airlock,
That's Elijah.



Open the inner door
And give him the squéezetube of wine
From the magnet in the middle of the board.
We celebrate all holidays in space.
It helps to pass the time between the planets.

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Drawing Forth **LEVIATHAN'**

Anne Braude

How far do we have to go to make contact with intelligent nonhuman life? To the moon? To Mars, with H.G. Wells and C.S. Lewis? to Jupiter and Beyond, with Stanley Kubrick and Arthur C. Clarke? How far?

Would you believe San Diego?

Or Marineland, Florida, or anywhere else we may find captive dolphins--or better yet, out in the seas where they range free, along with their cousins the great whales.

There is a great deal of evidence to suggest, if not to prove absolutely, that members of the order Cetacea possess intelligence comparable to our own. Unlike any other animal except man, they have a large neocortex; and they have had it for about 30 million years longer than we have. Their brain weight/body weight ratio is similar to ours. Let us assume, for the sake of

argument, that cetaceans think. What, then, do they think about?

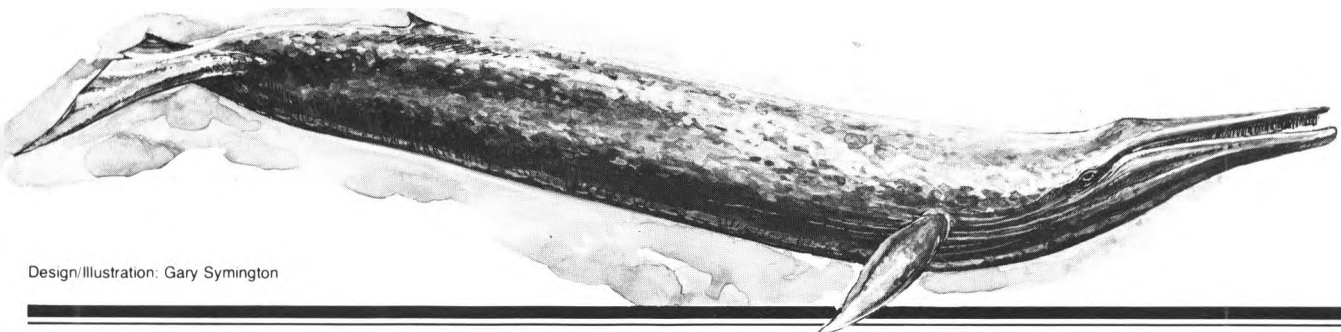
Consider for a moment what humans think about. It is, much of the time, the manipulation of the environment. Significantly, the word "manipulation" is derived from the Latin manus, hand. Because we have hands, we are tool-using creatures. We do things to the environment with our hands and tools in order to make it serve our needs. We clear the land to grow our crops and cut wood to build our houses. We breed animals selectively to produce in them the traits that we value. We dig mines and drill for oil. And if any of us looks at the world from a strictly theoretical viewpoint, simply to understand and describe its nature and properties, some schnook in the third row is sure to stand up and ask, "But what use is it?" There are a few purely contemplative souls among us--

artists, philosophers, poets, theologians and the like--but by and large, what we think about is how to affect the world we live in so that we may remould it closer to our heart's desire.

Consider now the dolphin. Eons ago, his ancestors, like ours, emerged from the sea; but for some reason they chose to return to it. So for the million or so years that we have been out here with our big brains using our hands to manipulate our world, they have been back there with their big brains in a non-manipulative environment, thinking about--what?

Could it be that they have been thinking about God?

One of the few things about them that we know for certain is that they have evolved an extremely complex and sophisticated means of communication--a sonar language



Design/Illustration: Gary Symington

that is used for both communication and perception. Some dolphins have learned to speak English (if only a few words), and at least one has attempted to teach dolphinese to a human. The songs of the hump-backed whale have an elaborate and replicable structure; and before man brought noise pollution to the ocean, such singers could be heard by an auditor ten thousand miles away. Surely no species would develop the art of communication to such an extent without having something to say. Some have speculated that the songs of the whales could be epics.

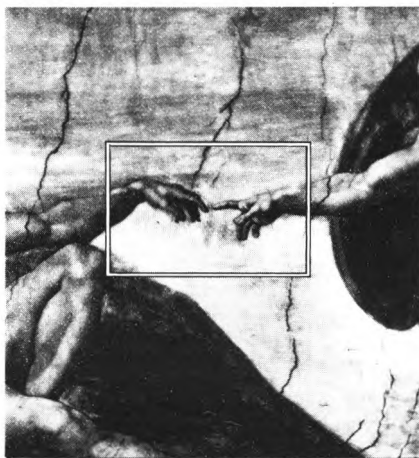
Might they perhaps be psalms?

The language of religion is the language of analogy: in no other way can we express the ineffable. We describe the attributes of God in terms of human images of love and power: father, shepherd, king, bridegroom. We speak of harps and wings, gold and gems: mortal symbols of immortal glory. We envision spiritual security in terms of the dry land--the city set on a hill, the green pastures, the mount of Zion--and use the sea as an image of danger, a place where we are not in control and may lose our way and perish utterly. In many myths the sea represents death. As the experience of cetaceans is utterly different from ours, their language of myth and symbol must also differ greatly.

But of course it is not utterly different. Cetaceans are mammals; they must like us know the forms of physical experience that express love: sexual union and the nursing of infants. As they also are social animals, it is probable that these acts do indeed communicate love for them as for us. Since their first knowledge of love comes from a nurturing mother, and since their only experience of physical creation is procreation, perhaps they believe in a Creator who is female--God the Mother. (It is worth noting that in human mythology and psychological symbolism the sea is a feminine principle.) Their social groups have leaders, but there does not seem to be the great difference between leader and follower that there is between king and subject or shepherd sheep; they may

substitute for our picture of a kingly Ancient of Days the image of the greatest creature of their kind: the blue whale. The God of the cetaceans could be the greatest of the whales, dwelling in the depths beneath the depths of the sea. By the breath of Her spouting She created the universe, and, as the ground and depth of all being, She upholds it upon Her everlasting flukes.

The existence of a cetacean Christ, God as Redeemer, is far more problematical. As C.S. Lewis has suggested, before we concern ourselves with the possible redemption of a nonhuman intelligent species (*hnau*), we ought first to determine if it is, in fact, fallen. Whales and dolphins may be in a



state of prelapsarian innocence, though we are entitled to have our doubts about the orcas, which kill and eat dolphins and even members of their own species--behavior not usually esteemed among *hnau*. We can but speculate: Did God once swim among Her children in cetacean form? Do the whales sing of One who taught them new songs and was harpooned for their sins? Are there legends of a Holy Dolphin, leaping to miraculous heights, who was forsaken by her followers and torn by the teeth of sharks, only to leap again upon the third day. We do not know what form the cetacean Christ might take, but it is only too plausible that the part of Pontius Pilate would be played by a member of our species.

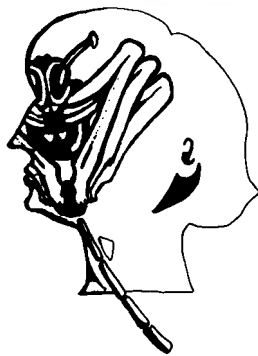
One of the most intriguing facts I have discovered about whales is that because of their vast bulk, most of which is lighter than water (semisolid blubber and oil-filled, hollow bones), they are actually physically aware of the tidal pull of the moon. Since the visual acuity of all cetaceans is very poor--that is why they have developed their sonar so elaborately in compensation--it is extremely unlikely that they can see the moon, let alone devise theories about its gravitational attraction. What, then, do they make of this strange experience? Might they think of it in religious terms? Could it be the basis of a theology of the Holy Spirit, a theology incomprehensible to us, as matter of faith to the dolphins, and an expression of concrete reality for the whales?

My speculations in this essay have implied that cetacean religion is Trinitarian: is, in fact, Christianity expressed in terms of an alternate perception of reality. If we thus assume that we and they share the same faith, the most startling speculation of all follows naturally: what do they know that we don't? Man has been speculating about God--when he wasn't busy inventing technology or otherwise thinking about what he could manipulate next--for a million years or so. Dolphins and whales may have been thinking about the same subject, with far fewer distractions, for some thirty times that long. It is not impossible that the most ordinary dolphin is more spiritually advanced than the greatest of human theologians and mystics. And that is just on the basis of what reason can accomplish. I conclude this essay full of questions with one to which I would most like to have an answer: Are we indeed the only species on this planet to which God has vouchsafed a divine revelation?

Thy way is in the sea, and
thy path in the great
waters, and thy footsteps
are not known.

Psalm lxxvii. 19

Random Thoughts



As for the followers of the off-brand religions like the followers of the Cayse Theosophy and so on, it is hard to think of them as having something to say on fantasy and science fiction because these religions themselves are a form of fantasy or unscientific fiction. The archtypical example of this would be Scientology which started out as science fiction and has become a religion.

I strongly urge you not to say Word One about Scientology. It is too dangerous. Those people, if you criticize them, are ready to take measures up to and including assassination against their critics. I don't suppose if you, as a non-disciple, had something unfavorable to say about them, would be in line for liquidation. The people they most hate are ex-Scientologists who "tell all" from the inside.

But they are very sinister.

There was a segment on 60 MINUTES a while ago which reported that they had settled in Clearwater, Florida, and a local paper had started writing critical articles on them. The woman reporter who was writing these articles found that they had written her name and telephone number in phone booths where the

prostitutes write theirs.

It is too much trouble to deal with them at all so I wouldn't attract their attention in any way.

Anonymous

* * *

I can't find a copy of the TRIUMPH magazine with my piece on the 'Religious Implications of Tolkien' in it, and it's probably just as well. The only reaction I got from it was several letters of sheer hatred. People don't mind very much when their cherished truths are attacked, but when their cherished falsehoods are attacked they react violently; and Tolkien is a cherished falsehood of very many people. The point of my piece, of course, was that there were not any religious implications in Tolkien, nor any religious elements at all, because he cut out even the naturally religious elements ruthlessly. TRIUMPH was in error in asking for such a piece.

And you [NIEKAS] are probably in error in asking for pieces on the theme of 'The Religious Experience in SF', for the religious experience is excluded rigorously from SF in one of the tightest censorships in the world. It is

probably because SF, being a surrogate religion with all the intolerance that attaches much more to surrogate religions than to real religion, recognizes its enemy in religion.

An SF person, usually rather an intelligent person, once wrote that both SF and Fantasy are only "Life with a magic element added". This is the exact opposite of the truth, of course. Fantasy is only life with every element of magic removed, leaving a gaping hole in it. SF is only life with every element of magic removed and with a false magic substituted to gloss over the gaping hole. The most extreme examples of this gaping-hole-fantasy are probably the "Darkover" stories of MZBB and the "Dragon" stories of Anne McCaffrey. How unmagical can you get! The best examples of this SF are the stories of old H.G. Wells, Van Vogt, and Alfred Bester. At least their false magic is well-done false magic.

Whenever 'Religion in SF' is mentioned, the mention usually begins and ends with Miller's A Canticale for Leibowitz. There is not any religious element in this either, but there is a very strong

pseudo-religious element.

Religion is magic, both in etymology and in fact. And religion is very difficult to smuggle into SF.

R.A. Lafferty

About fifteen years ago, Roger Zelazny and Samuel R. Delany burst upon the science fiction world in a simultaneous dazzle of narrative brilliance. It became customary to think of them as a pair, for they shared many things: a new level of skill in the use of words, a literary rather than scientific background, and fascination with the implications of myth.

In their stories, they speculated on the extent to which the realities of our present might be transmuted into the mythology of the future--and, by implication, the relationship of our own heritage of myth to historical truth. I've found the insights I gained from reading The Einstein Intersection (Delany) and Lord of Light (Zelazny) very helpful in understanding the hold

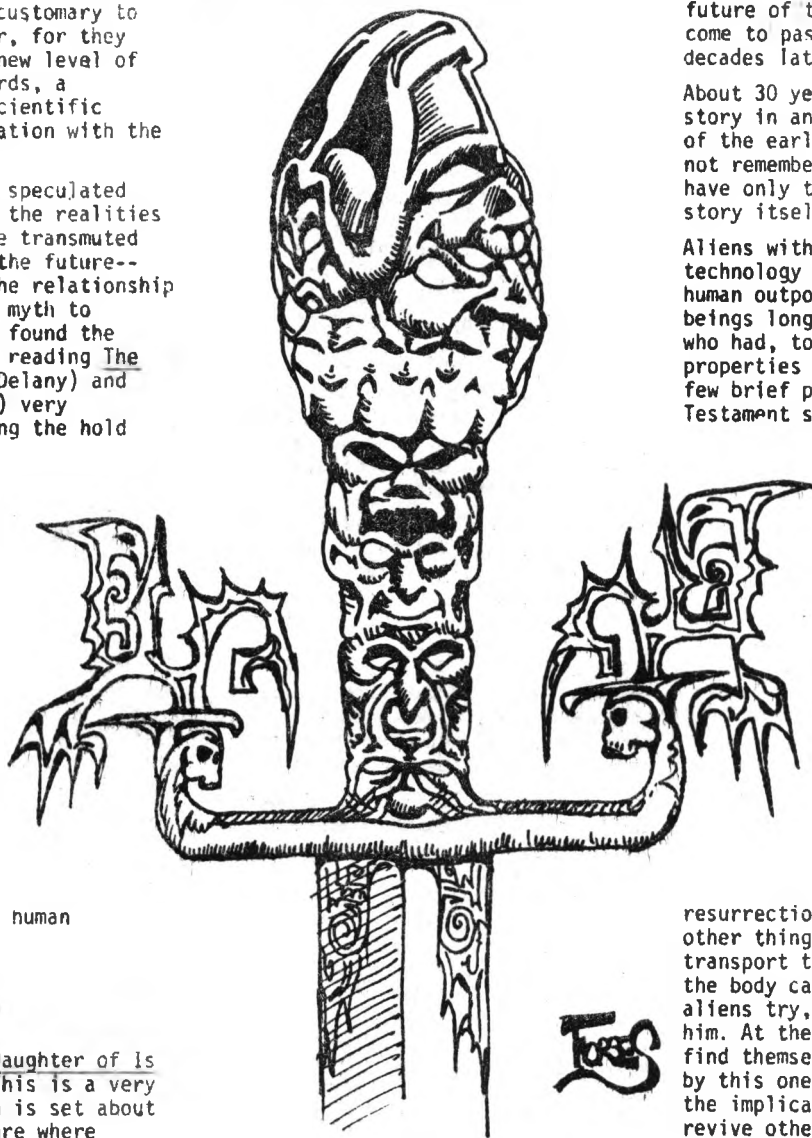
billions of years they control evolution, have false starts that must be destroyed, etc., until they achieve their goal. Then some crew members rebel saying that the created society is too timid, and breed a violent race on the same planet which harrasses the first creation. In the end the numenous intervenes. This book had received a rave review in AMERICA about two years ago which

Conscience has not been recorded.

Both were written before Vatican II and the major changes in the Roman Catholic Church. I remember reading Canticle and thinking, "yeah, that's the way its is." Will my reaction survive a rereading of it in the light of the new church? On the other hand, while I was reading Conscience, I was thinking that this book could not have been written by someone who really understood the church. His specualtions about the future of the church could never come to pass. Now, two or three decades later, I wonder.

About 30 years ago I read a short story in an anthology; probably one of the early Conklin volumes. I do not remember title and author and have only the vaguest memory of the story itself.

Aliens with a very advanced technology arrive on earth or a human outpost planet with all human beings long dead. They revive one who had, to their surprise, the properties of a "glorified" body. A few brief passages in the New Testament suggests that after the



that myth has upon the human imagination.

Fred Lerner

Nobody has mentioned Daughter of Is by Michael Davidson. This is a very interesting book which is set about 1000 years in the future where religion is just about extinct on earth. Society is officially atheistic tho eastern type liturgy (Taoist?) is celebrated on special occasions as psychological markers for the participants. A dynamic man feels that earth is a mess and he will create his own new earth, control evolution on it, and make a better mankind--a pacifistic mankind. They can use a form of stasis to leap into the future, millenia at a time, stopping occasionally to intervene in the development of the earth. Over

prompted me to buy it and have it recorded by RFB. It is available on tape from them.

I read A Case of Conscience and Canticle for Leibowitz when they first appeared and wish to reread them as soon as the opportunity occurs. Canticle was recorded by Library of Congress a decade ago and I have the records but have been awaiting an opportunity to reread them. As far as I know,

resurrection, the body will, among other things, have the ability to transport themselves instantly. Also the body cannot die again. The aliens try, unsuccessfully, to kill him. At the end of the story they find themselves completely defeated by this one individual, and there is the implication that he intends to revive other human beings and with them, persue the aliens back to their home world. It is 30 years since I've read the story but the main story points show the changes in human attitudes. Whenever this story was written (30-40 yrs. ago) Christian belief and surrounding mythology were parts of society and could form integral parts of our culture. I would like to see what would happen to such a story were it to be written today.

Ed Meskys

A Cosmic Vision

Fritz Stock

This is a paraphrased concept from a mortal of the realm who is a member of the violet race of the life experiment 606, the planet of Urantia, the system of Satanía, in the Universe of Nebadon, part of the Super Universe of Orvonton.

What are we here for and where are we going? As mortals we wonder if our salvation is in science, religion, or in the mind religions. Maybe the dreams of science's potential; thus, Science Fiction can give us an answer to our timeless quest. For some, Science Fiction is the answer. To these mortal beings, magic is justified by science without any religious, spiritual, dogmatic overtones. Their dreams of advanced science are more real every moment causing their dream worlds to expand and expand and become more real than one can imagine.

What road to take? What type of vehicle is going there? First off, decide if you want to go to any other place. How do you want to get there? In the following I will sketch one course to take. Note this is my interpretation.

The seven psychic circles of mortal potentiality represents the sum total of the personality attainment on a material world. To conquer each circle gives the personality the realization of the circle. The sequence begins from the seventh circle and proceeds towards the first with circle attainment representing the relative maturity of the mortal being. The mortal being, having realized that this journey is with the god Fragment (i.e. Thought Adjuster), must not confuse circle attainment with attainment of Adjuster fusion. Circle attainment is only the preliminary step to the realization of one's link to eternity.

In striving for the higher circles, the mortal must remember that one must desire to obtain a perfectly

poised condition: a body of clean habits, stabilized neutral energies, and balanced chemical functions.

This striving will develop the mortal's physical, mental, and spiritual powers, becoming a triune of harmony and development. Then and only then can the maximum of light and truth begin to transcend without temporal danger or risk to the being. This balanced growth is the key to the mortal beings ascension of the circles of planetary progression.

Another goal of the mortal is to be able to hear and listen to the Adjuster. To start, only picturization can be one's guide for the Adjuster to communicate with it's human counterpart. It is difficult to precisely define the seven levels of human progression because these are variable for each individual and correspond to the growth capacity of each mortal.

The seventh circle is entered when the mortal develops the powers of personal choice, individual decision, moral responsibility, and the capacity for the attainment of spiritual individuality. Entering this circle--the seventh and benign circle--initiates the mortal as a true potential citizen of the local universe. As the progression through the circles of human achievements continues, the frequent and persistent repetitions of the number of decisions are very important for the consideration of advancement to higher levels of planetary progression. Three ways of reflection are used as one's guide to conquest the levels of cosmic evolution:

1. To become more aware of the god Fragment Adjuster (the part of greater spirit within the mortal being)
2. The realization of trust to the innerself's power of emergence of the spirit soul

3. The reality of the selfhood to determine eternity (the realization that expanding knowledge of the being is definitely not in vain)

As we ascend to our quest to the third cosmic achievement, we are assigned a personal seraphic attendant protecting us from the physical realm of death; yet, at this time we realize that death is not possible within this height of mortal progression.

At the first and final circle we can talk to our Adjuster directly. Here the doors of the universe are unlocked and the mortal has it's first turn to communicate with eternity. Few mortals have done this.

The next highest attainment of the mortal is the fusion with cosmic reality or the Adjuster. With the will of fusion in mind, only the motivation of faith can activate the coordination of the self-will choice experience. The experience of fusion with the Adjuster is not impossible. Fusion during physical life instantly consumes the material body. The human being who might witness such a spectacle would observe the translating mortal disappear "in chariots of fire".

Remember the impossibility of the metamorphosis of the butterfly and consider our metamorphosis into the universe. Might you call this Science Fiction or Religion; but to a few mortals--Truth?

* * *

This is a paraphrased mortal presentation of Paper 110 "Relation of Adjusters to Individual Mortals" in the second section: "The History of Urantia" Part 6. The Seven Psychic Circles from The Urantia Book. Copies of which can be obtained from the Urantia Foundation, 533 Diversey Parkway, Chicago, Illinois 60614.

A lot has been said (much of it in this issue of NIEKAS) about science fiction writers' portrayals of religion. This concern has been reciprocated; and in this article we shall be looking at what religious writers have had to say about science fiction. This is not meant to be a comprehensive survey. My reading in this field leaves off at the end of the 1960s, since by that time science fiction had begun to achieve respectability among American scholars and critics. And I've concentrated on popular rather than specialist publications. Looking at the literature, we find that theologians and others concerned with religious matters have been looking at science fiction since the early 1950s.

Until recently, it was unusual to find a serious review of a science fiction book outside of the SF magazines and the fan press. During the early 1950s, The New York Times and other leading newspapers and magazines carried SF review columns. But reviews of science fiction books averaged one-third to one-half the length of general fiction reviews. Book review editors viewed science fiction as a category of ephemeral writing of little significance to the general reading public. And by the end of the 1950s, American newspapers and magazines had lost most of their interest in publishing reviews of science fiction books.

But in the few reviews that were published, an increasing number contained evidence of concern with the scientific, political, and religious ideas embodied in the stories. Especially in library journals reviewing titles for teen-age readers, reviewers often seemed more interested with the moral and ideological content of the literature than with its intrinsic merits.

BEST SELLERS, published at a Jesuit university, evaluated from a Catholic point of view "the moral value, as well as the literary quality" of books. It condemned Heinlein's THE MOON IS A HARSH MISTRESS for "a casually modern attitude toward sex and a rather hazy acceptance of God...which seem to render the book suitable only for adult readers." And readers were cautioned that "occasional profanity and a bit of erotica somewhat spoil what is, otherwise, a fine collection"--THE MACHINERIES OF JOY by Ray Bradbury. But BEST SELLERS was not uniformly negative: Isaac Asimov's novelisation of FANTASTIC VOYAGE was described as "free of offensive incidents or language...A jolly tale which, fortunately, nobody will take seriously."

Other Catholic periodicals shared this concern for the morals of science fiction. COMMONWEAL said of Raymond F Jones's THE YEAR WHEN STARDUST FELL

RELIGION LOOKS AT SCIENCE FICTION

FRED LERNER

that "the moral choices involved are brought exceptionally well." And it was not confined to Catholic magazines. Frederick H Guidry warned readers of the CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR that Ray Bradbury's A MEDICINE FOR MELANCHOLY contained an "unorthodoxy, particularly in earthbound episodes, [which] leads occasionally to distasteful and morbid conclusions," while TIME observed that "an unexpected religiosity mars several of these tales and suggests that science fiction may be catering to a new brand of heresy."

This concern was not shared by science fiction writers themselves when acting as reviewers. Anthony Boucher, whose Roman Catholicism may be seen in several of his most successful stories, did not concern himself with the theological soundness of the stories he reviewed for the TIMES and the HERALD TRIBUNE. And Theodore Sturgeon, writing in the Catholic-oriented NATIONAL REVIEW, had little to say about religion in his quarterly SF column.

More substantial discussions of science fiction's moral and theological values appeared in magazines. Since the 1930s, popular magazines had published articles about SF; but it was not until the 1950s that the genre was taken seriously enough for its ideological content to be considered by critics.

"The Myth of Science Fiction" by Siegfried Mandel and Peter Fingesten ap-

peared in the 27 August 1955 issue of SATURDAY REVIEW, sparking a controversy which flourished in that magazine's pages for the better part of a year. To Mandel and Fingesten, modern science fiction was "a quest for a key to the universe," for escape from the confining realities of political and social conditions and personal limitations. It had become a substitute for religion, replacing concern for insignificant earthly problems with "the dangers and incalculable vistas lurking in the vast stretches of an unknown universe." And they did not approve:

If science fiction has become a successful literature of escape, it has not become a literature of force and emotion.... [It] does not correspond to the normal aspirations of the human spirit. The science-fiction future is not one which strikes the average man as an age of promise; it is not...a world where most of us would care to abide...Is not science fiction only one more vain attempt--with new vocabulary and grandiose new symbolism--to loose the fetters of life, rather than understand them?

Writers in Catholic magazines were equally unsympathetic to the direction taken by modern American science fiction. In a lengthy review of Reginald Bretnor's MODERN SCIENCE FICTION: ITS MEANING AND ITS FUTURE (in COMMONWEAL, 12 June 1953), Seymour Krim distinguished between science fiction and "legitimate literature," and expressed the hope that "our serious authors will soon begin using this extension of the real and hence the imaginatively meaningful world which the Science Fiction writers, at two cents a word, have pioneered for them." He predicted that very few modern SF stories would endure, because they did not "reach the level of literature on literature's own terms."

Poet Thomas P McDonnell attacked "The Cult of Science Fiction" in the CATHOLIC WORLD (October 1953). While sympathetic to science fiction's emphasis on ideas rather than on plot or character, he objected to the "deification of science" in SF stories, and to the editorials in SF magazines which propagated the philosophy of scientism. He called upon science fiction to reject "the image of the Robot" for "the image of God." Four months later, reader Jane Wimer maintained in a spirited reply that science fiction stories expressing or implying Christian philosophies had been welcomed by the magazines, and that if scientism dominated the field, it was by default rather than by design.

In the Jesuit weekly *AMERICA* (24 July 1954), Louis de Wohl condemned as "both bad theology and bad science fiction" what he felt to be the standard portrayal of alien beings as malignant. He cited as authority for his censure the Biblical account of creation ("When God had made the universe, He saw that it was good, not malignant") and accused SF writers of projecting their own fears upon the worlds they fashioned. De Wohl was also disappointed at the scarcity of stories about aliens' relations to God, but found C S Lewis a welcome exception to that pattern of indifference. "The difference between reading him and reading the average science-fiction story is that between an inspiration and a nightmare." He encouraged Christians to write science fiction, so that the field would not be left to purely secular writers. "For they will not always content themselves with describing their own peculiar nightmares. There are signs that they will also describe their own peculiar heresies."

Irish journalist Liam Brophy, writing in *THE CATHOLIC WORLD* (April 1954), compared SF and utopian fiction. He maintained that in science fiction science had replaced "the pseudo-science of Sociology" as the instrument by which human society will be perfected. Brophy denied that science fiction could truly be regarded as literature, agreeing with Arthur Koestler that its heroes were too alien to ordinary human experience. Despite the original intent of its authors, the chief accomplishment of utopian SF, he suggested, might well lie "in making us reconciled with our time and place, so crammed with follies and imperfections, and crowded with human beings."

Claire Hutchet Bishop maintained in *COMMONWEAL* (18 November 1955) that Jules Verne's continuing popularity could be ascribed to "his deliberate choice of essential human problems for his heroes to cope with, gripping problems fit for generous men keenly alive to mankind's needs." Modern science fiction should provide a similar inspiration for young readers. Escapism and galactic adventure for its own sake, without inspiring the reader to work for the solution of human problems and the betterment of mankind, was "downright treason" to youth.

The language in which Catholic writers discussed science fiction made it clear that they regarded it as a literature of ideas, and that they held the genre responsible for the consequences of those ideas. The Catholic attitude toward science fiction during the early 1950s, as displayed in the

most widely-read Catholic magazines, could be summed up by the closing paragraph of de Wohl's article in *AMERICA*:

Science fiction, in the widest sense, is a very serious matter, far transcending the purely imaginative and speculative, let alone the more or less brilliant showing-off of technical pseudo-knowledge. In the wrong hands it can and will create new heresies and revive old ones. In the right hands it can be one more instrument to glorify God.

With the launching of Sputnik, the journalistic interest in science fiction was redirected toward its scientific speculations. But during the 1960s, psychologists and theologians rediscovered the genre.

SATURDAY REVIEW published (14 September 1963) "The Evolution of Monsters," a diatribe against science fiction by Marshall Fishwick. In addition to its "generally mediocre writing" and "essentially sub-literary verbiage," he found fault with its audience: "The pseudo-scientific tale of horror or wonder probably appeals to the same kind of personality that endorsed diabolism or witchcraft in ages past." Stories cited by Fishwick included Bradbury's *FAHRENHEIT 451*, Huxley's *BRAVE NEW WORLD*, Orwell's *NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR*, and two little known outside the field, "The Country of the Kind" by Damon Knight, and "Legacy of Terror" by Henry Slesar.

Catholic writers had a higher opinion of science fiction. By the mid-1960s, the Catholic press had become less concerned with the ideological implications of SF than with its literary quality. But Catholic critics still had a keen eye for the moral and social viewpoints expressed in the genre.

Reviewing an anthology of Russian SF in *COMMONWEAL* (26 March 1965), Martin Green called its picture of the future naively optimistic in comparison to British and American views, such as the satires of Pohl and Kornbluth. But he noted that the omission of several important writers rendered the book at hand (Magidoff's *RUSSIAN SCIENCE FICTION*) unrepresentative of the state of Soviet SF.

John M Phelan, writing on "Men and Morals in Space" for *AMERICA* (9 October 1965), praised the Space Trilogy of C S Lewis, which "some libraries have lamentably labeled science fiction." He dismissed most of science fiction as mere adventure stories, but exempted from that category the work of such writers as Bradbury and Heinlein.

Neil P Hurley, a Jesuit priest, observed in *COMMONWEAL* (5 December 1969) that "science fiction has proven in the last 50 years to have a greater accuracy of prediction than, as a rule, demographers, economists, and political forecasters." He went on to examine some of the moral ramifications of the development of androids, using Isaac Asimov's Three Laws of Robotics and other examples from the science fiction literature as illustrations. He concluded that "ethicists, philosophers, moral theologians and behavioral scientists would do well to take science fiction more seriously" so that the mechanization process could be better understood and controlled for society's benefit.

Outside the Catholic press, writers concerned with religion also had kind words for science fiction. In the Summer 1969 issue of *RELIGION IN LIFE*, Erminie Huntress Latero's article "What Is Man? Theological Aspects of Contemporary Science Fiction" examined SF's preoccupation with ethical and social problems and found, despite some theological errors, a generally favourable portrayal of human character and human values. She found her examples in stories by Poul Anderson, James Blish, David Lindsay, and Robert Sheckley.

TIME's "Religion" column in its 5 September 1969 issue discussed "Pop Theology: Those Gods from Outer Space," comparing Erich von Däniken's *CHARIOTS OF THE GODS?* with the religious speculations of such SF writers as Ray Bradbury, Nelson Bond, Lester del Rey, Philip Jose Farmer, and C S Lewis. *TIME* was skeptical of von Däniken, but regarded the science fiction books favourably.

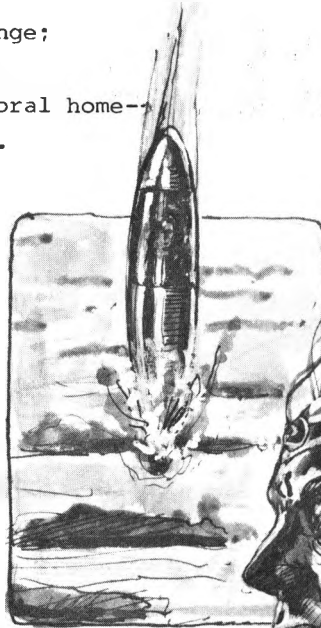
My survey of religious commentary on science fiction in the popular press seems heavily weighted toward Catholic opinion. This reflects no bias on my part, but rather the fact that Roman Catholics have shown greater concern for the ideological and moral content of science fiction (and, I suspect, other fiction as well) than have Jewish or Protestant critics. Certainly most of the "religion in science fiction"—at least the overt religious content—is Catholic in essence or inspiration. In the 1970s we saw an increase in Protestant writing about SF, and even an anthology of Jewish science fiction (*THE WANDERING STARS*, ed. Jack Dann). But the pioneers in the evaluation of science fiction as a literature with religious implications were Catholic critics and reviewers; and looking back at their work, today's readers will find much to respect even where judgements differ.



THE DEEP SPACE TRILOGY OF C.S. LEWIS

Out of the Silent Planet to richness strange;
Perelandra, a world where islands range;
That Hideous Strength, which brings the moral home--
Ourselves are Ransomed in this Lewis tome.

--Joe R. Christopher



*The Capsule to
Perelandra*



The "Head"

This epigram was printed in Egladil, No. 4
(Trinity Term, 1976), 13. Copyright 1976
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to the author.

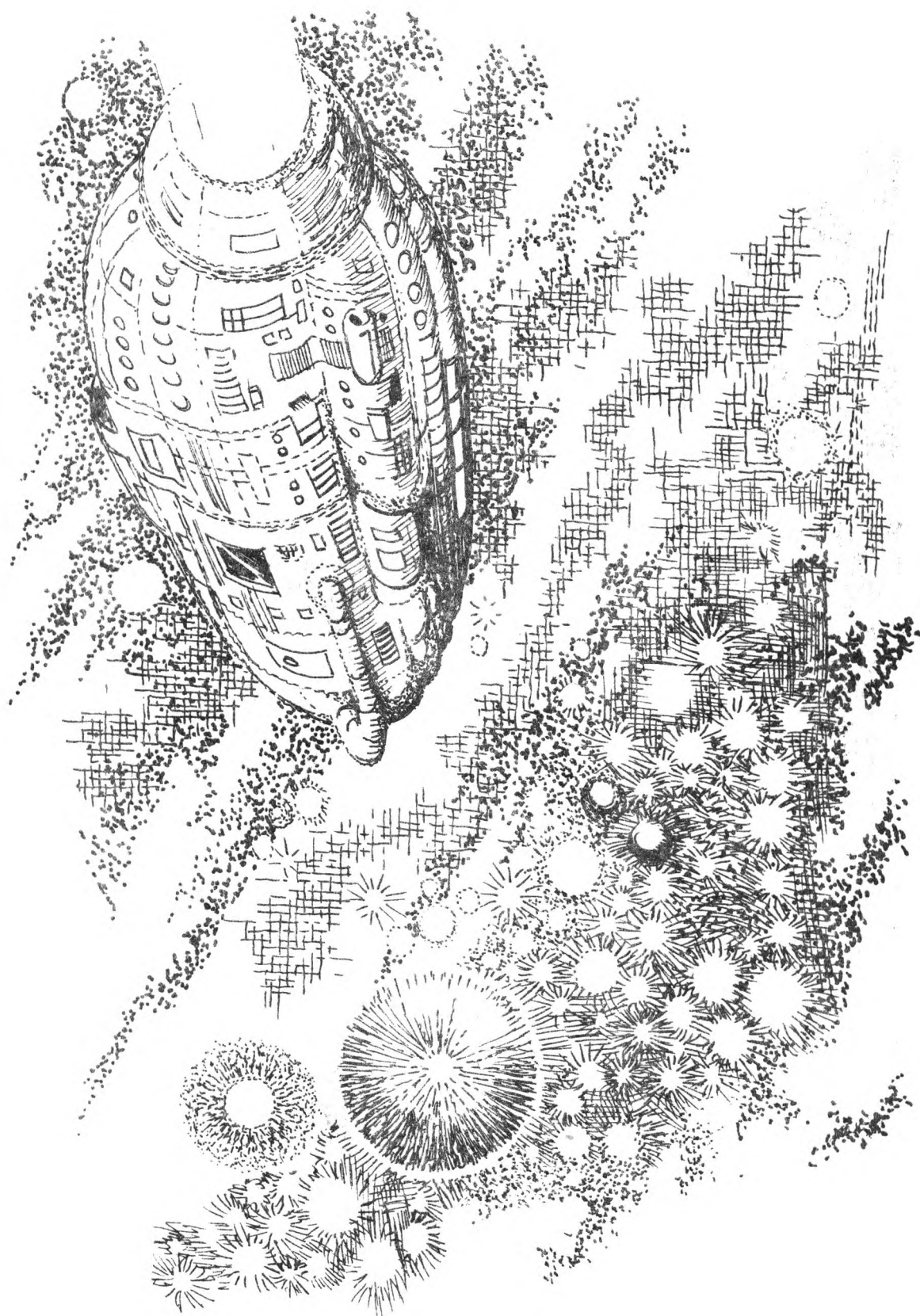
Lifegiver over us, there is blessing in the word that means you.
We pray that in time we will live here under your rule as others
now live with you there; but in the meantime feed our bodies,
for we need that here and now. We are in debt to you for every-
thing, but your love will not hold us accountable for this debt;
and so we too should deal with others, holding no man to strict
balances of account. Do not let us meet temptations stronger than
we can bear; but let us prevail and be free of evil.

Pholio 80

Elaine Kuketz
Jerry Collins/David Heath, Jr.
Terry Jeeves
Damian Garner
Lloyd Alexander
Jack Gaughan
Mike Bastraw
Augustine Gauba
Eddie Jones
Kurt Reichel
David Forbes
Terry Jeeves
Tad Jordan
John Geisel



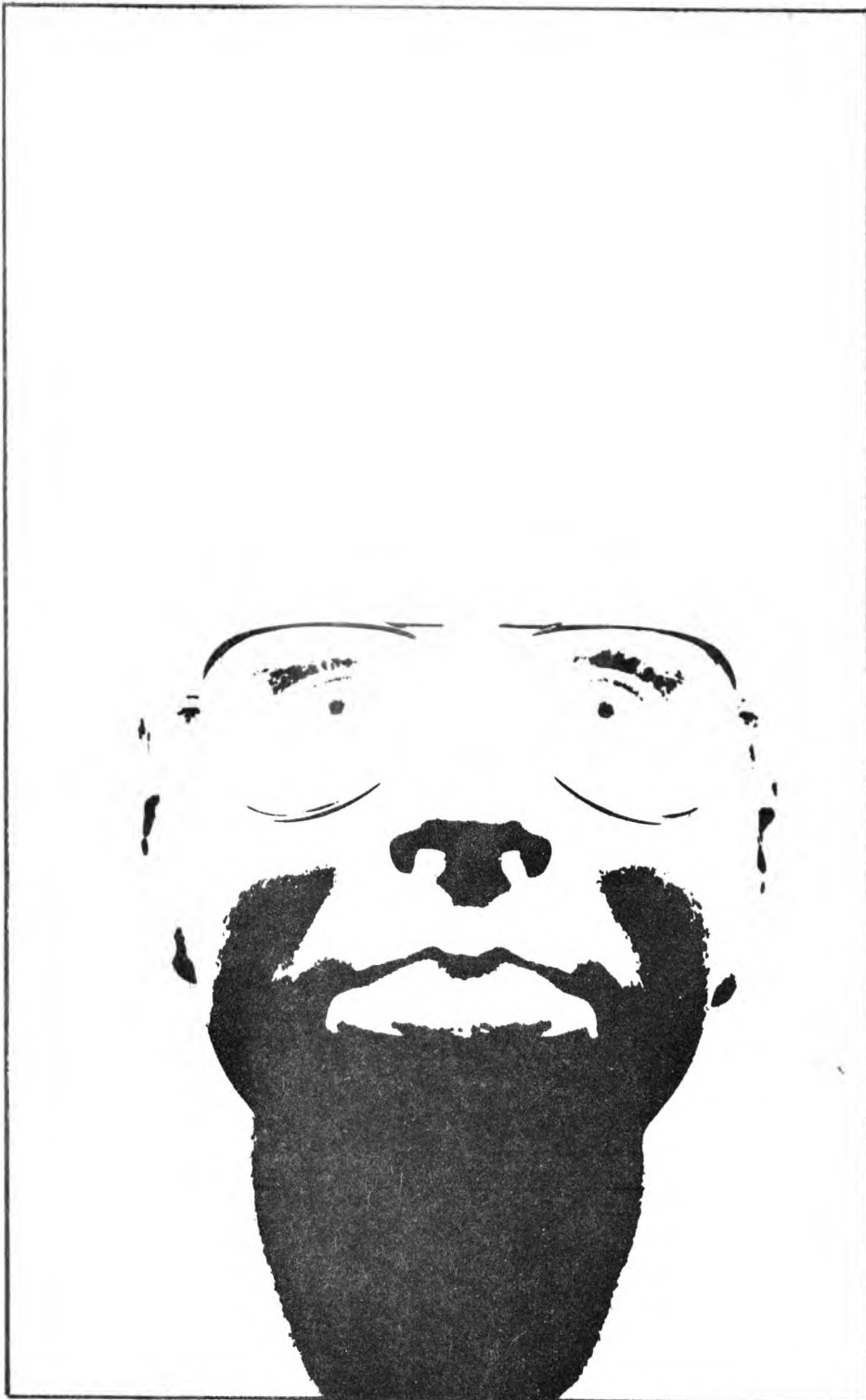


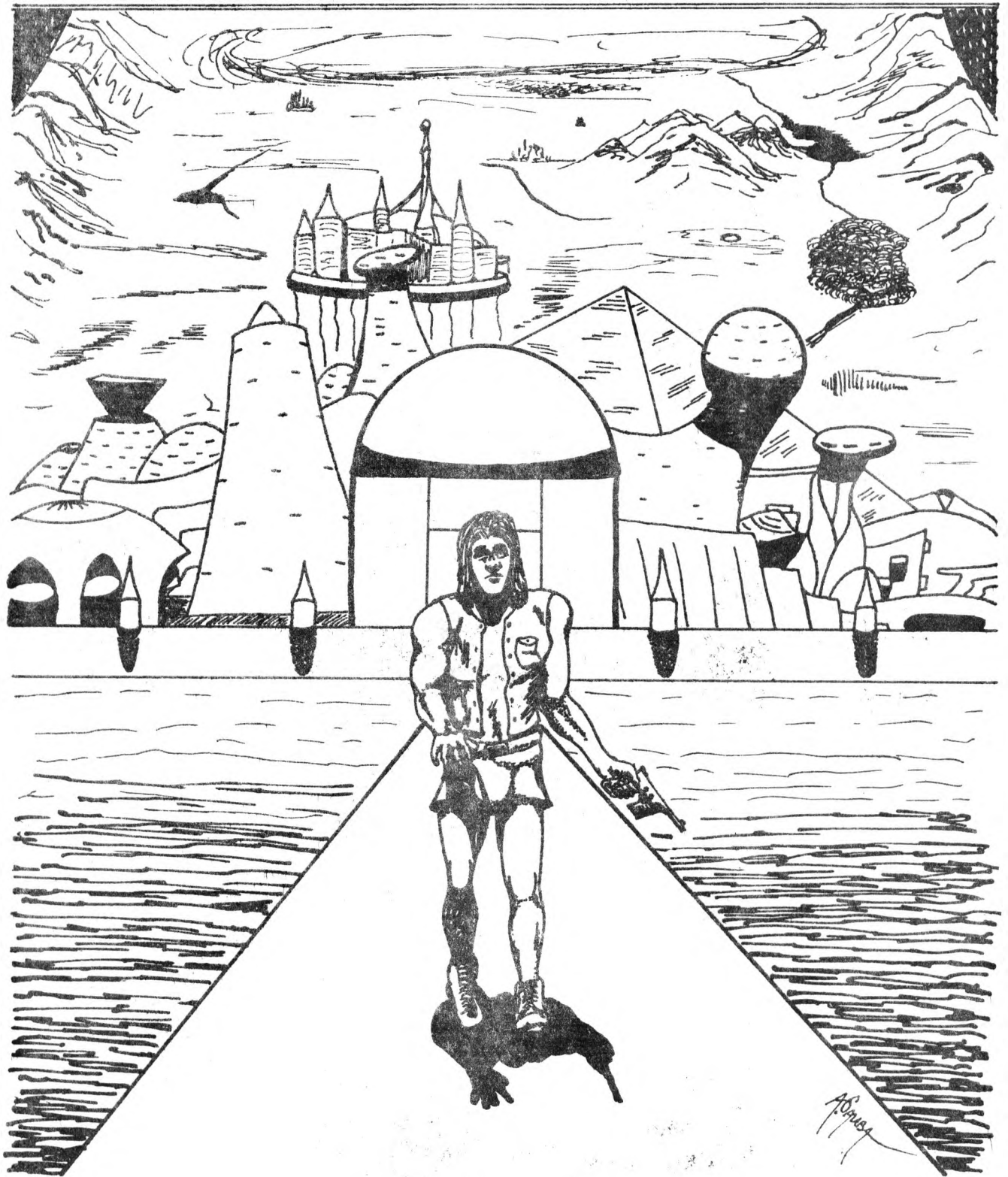


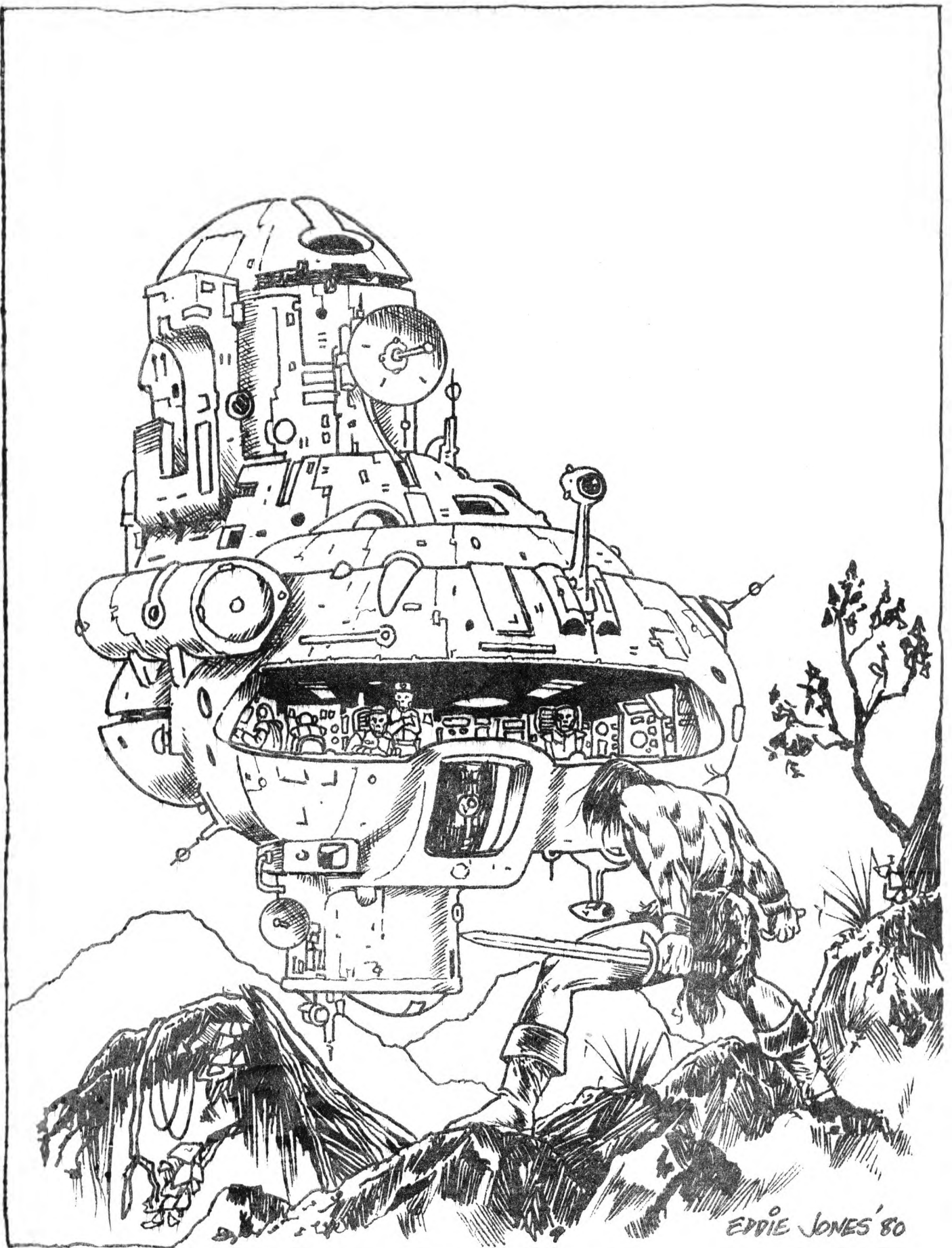








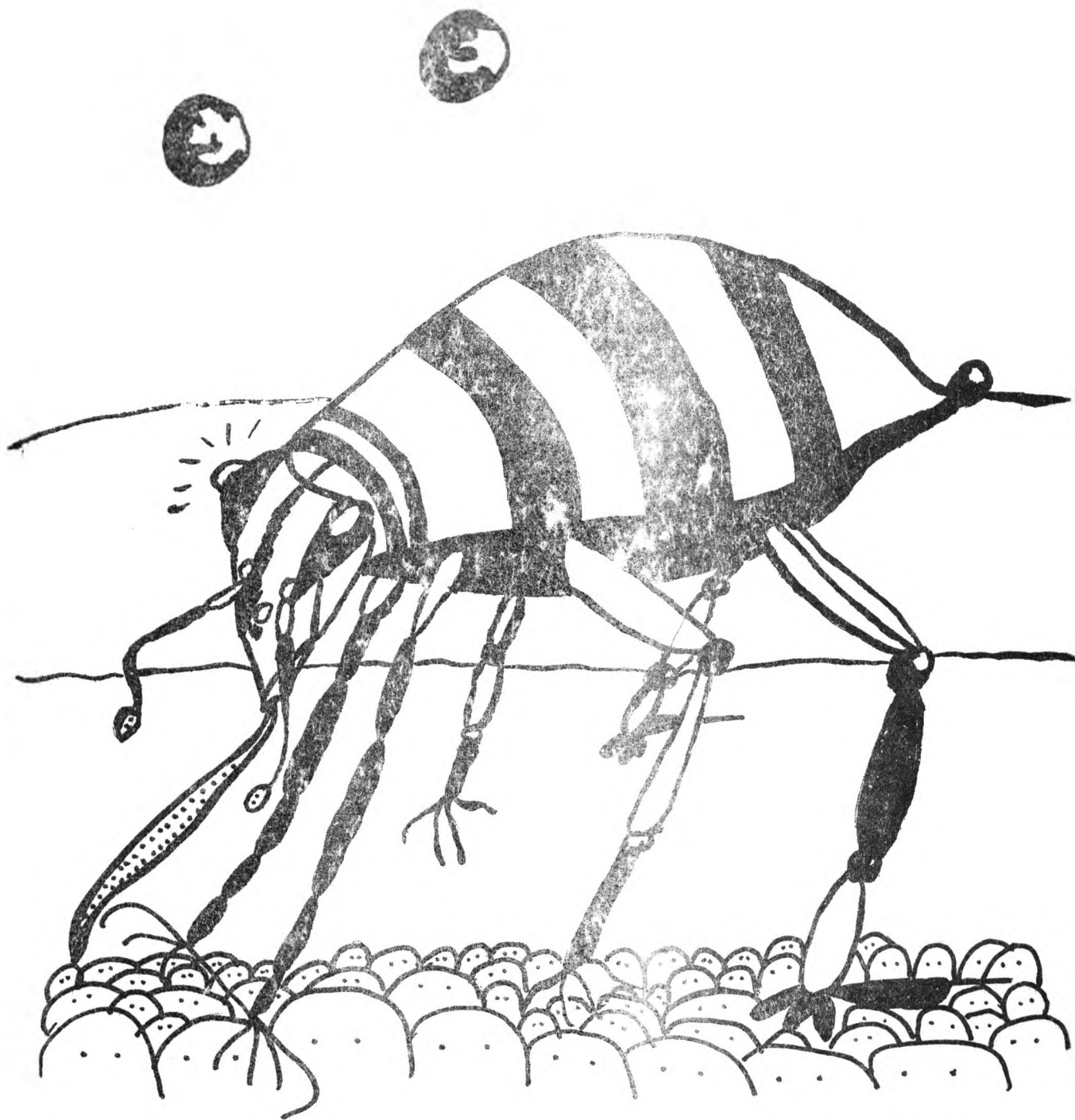


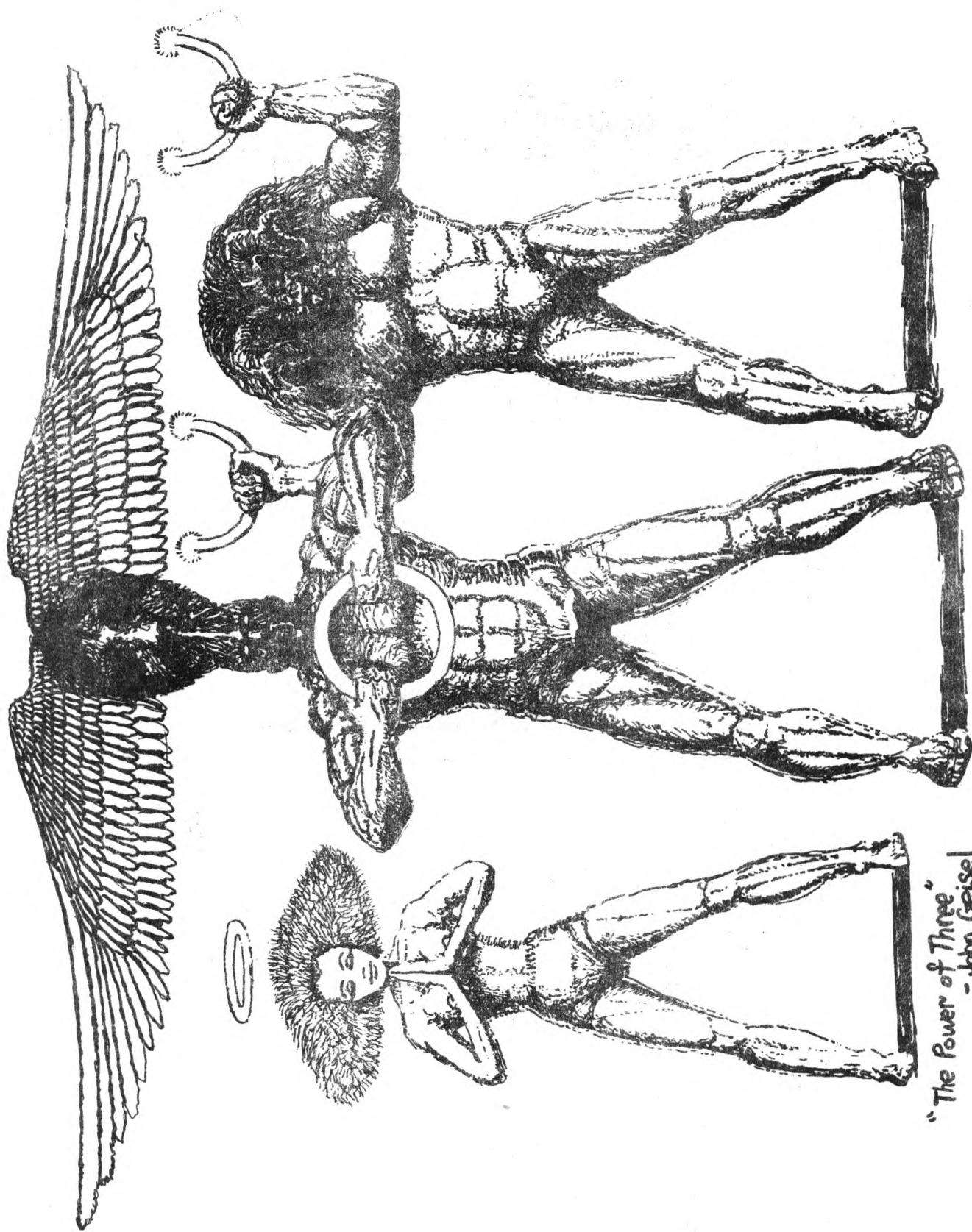




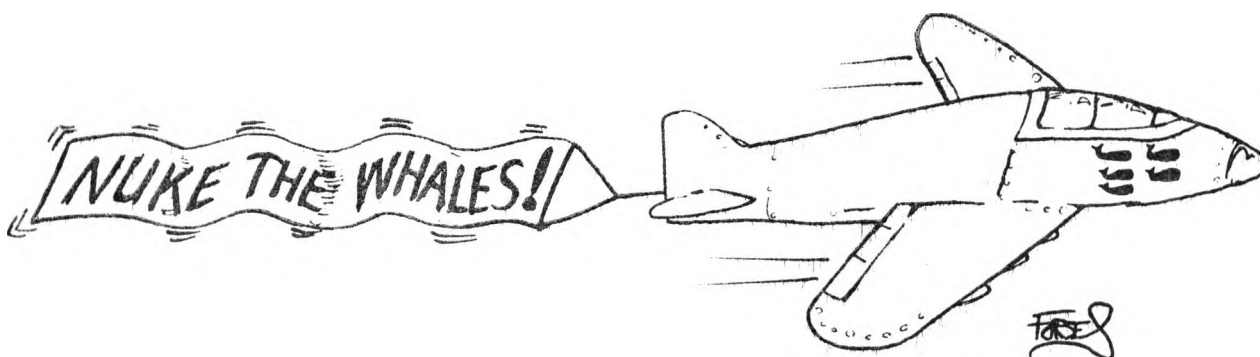








"The Power of Three"
- John Geisel



This parody, based on a currently popular sloop, is to the tune of Tom Lehrer's "Be Prepared!". The first two verses are by Robert Lipton, and appeared in his SOMETHING OF NOTE #6 in APA-Filk's 6th mailing. The third verse is by John Boardman, and appeared in his DAGON #7 in APA-Filk's 7th Mailing,

Nuke the whales!

Blast them right out

Nuke the Wahles

Nuke the whales!

Blast them right out of the sea.

Nuke the whales!

Destroy our ecology.

Let's destroy snail darters with a useless dam

And cause cancer with defoliants from Nam.

Fill the Love

Canal up with PCP,

Making a

Far worse world through chemistry.

You can strip-mine coal, let tailings flow, use gas-guzzlers with glee,

Making lovely lifeless pits for sightseers to see.

If they interfere with spilling oil from shales:

Nuke the whales!

Nuke the whales!

Wipe out all life on Earth.

Thalidomides

Can be used to louse up birth.

Dump nuclear wastes outside so they can bring

Leukemia and other lovely things.

Sulfer di-

Oxide wrecks the Parthenon.

Keep it up!

In ten years it will be gone.

Let pulp flow downstream for every ream of paper pure and white

So no oxygen is in the Arthur Kill. It's only right.

Everyone should do his part and if that fails:

Nuke the whales!

Nuke the whales!

Drop the bomb upon their tails!

Nuke the whales!

Throw the Seegers into jails!

Send the porpoises and dolphins to Japan.

Next time you see Flipper, he'll be in a can.

Nuke the whales!

Let them know just how it feels.

Nuke the Whales!

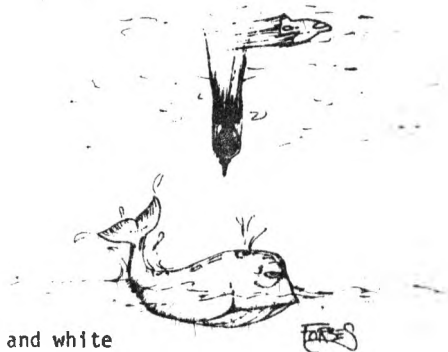
Oil the birds and skin the seals.

If you're looking for adventure of a new and different kind,

And you find a stretch of ocean that is not already mined,

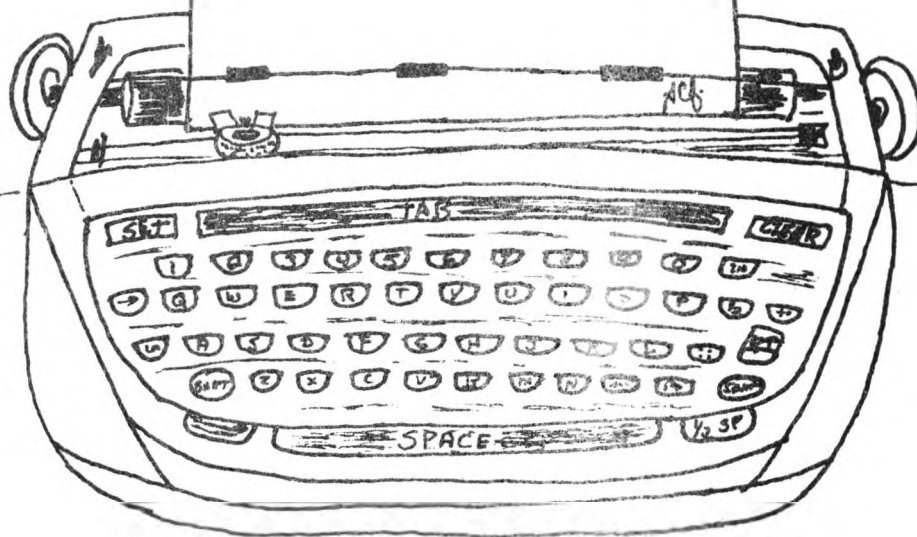
Just be careful that your bombsight never fails!

Nuke the whales!





Mike Bastraw
Ritchie Benedict
Anne Braude
John Geisel
Marsha Jones
Ed Meskys





Duncheon Wood, William Horwood,
McGraw-Hill, 1980, \$12.95, 585 pp.

I expect that most of you, like me, are sick and tired of all the second-rate fantasy novels being touted as the greatest thing since Tolkien. So I was not overly impressed by the following jacket blurb: "Not since Watership Down and The Lord of the Rings has a fictional world been so imaginatively crafted--a spellbinding, many-layered work. Duncheon Wood is a modern classic." But hallelujah! this time it's true.

William Horwood writes of the world of moles with the same expertise with which Richard Adams dealt with rabbits. But while the rabbits of WD, though somewhat humanized, are primarily concerned with aspects of lapine survival--food, shelter, raising families--the moles of Duncheon Wood have spiritual needs as well. The conflict between good and evil is waged in psychological terms as well as in action. The center of mole religion is the Stone, the source of all unity and life, which is worshiped in ceremonies at the sarsen stones found at the heart of the major molesystems. The greatest adventures of the principal moles of the book involve their coming to understand the Stone and their own relationship to it. Although Horwood refers to the book as an allegory, he is not strictly accurate: molehood reflects the human condition, but not as a set of one-to-one correspondences. DW joins the lovingly detailed portrait of the natural world that we get in WD to the moral dimension of LotR and a sense of the presence of grace that is characteristic of the best novels of Elizabeth Goudge.

Although this is primarily a story of spiritual questing, there is plenty of action, including battle, murder, and sudden death (moles are astonishingly violent creatures), fire and pestilence, several epic journeys, and a love story in the best tradition of high romance. The book is filled with wonderful characters. There are the

protagonists: Bracken, an Everymole who like Frodo has greatness thrust upon him; Rebecca, a heroine in her own right and one of the rare females in fantasy novels who is really worth all the grief the hero has to go through to win her; and Boswell, the scribemole from the Holy Burrows of Uffington, their friend and companion, whose quest for the lost Seventh Stillstone and the Seventh Book which will complete the sacred lore is at the heart of the story. (Moles scribe their books in molebraille and read them with their sensitive snouts: ERM take note.) There are memorable villains: Mandrake, father of Rebecca, a tragic and bloody tyrant who is eventually driven mad by his own cruelty; and Rune, the ambitious and devious henchmole who comes close to being an incarnation of pure evil. And there is a host of vividly realized supporting characters: Hulver, the ancient mole who is martyred for refusing to forsake the traditions of his faith; Rose the Healer; Mekkins, the tough and cheerful marshender; the diffident, loyal Comfrey, Bracken's son, who is adopted by Rebecca after Rune and Mandrake have murdered her own litter; and Medlar, a sort of mole Ben Kenobi who teaches Bracken the difference between a mere fighter and a warrior.

Anyone who has been following my reviews is aware that I don't usually give rave notices, but I would call Duncheon Wood a great book. I generally divide books into three categories: unreadable (self-explanatory); readable, which I get from the public library; and rereadable, which I usually go out and buy. The rare books in the last category which I consider great have for me an additional quality beyond excellence of style and story: they leave me feeling better for having read them. I do not mean by this what is usually intended when we speak of an "improving" book in the narrowly moralistic sense; I mean that I do not just read the book but live through it, and am left at the end with a sense that my horizons have been widened, my experience deepened, and my awareness enriched. Like The Lord of the Rings and Watership Down, Duncheon Wood is this kind of book.

ajb

Star Trek - The Motion Picture, Gene Rodenberry, Pocket Books, 1979, recorded by Kings Transcribers Library

I read the book about a year after seeing the movie and found it very interesting. I discovered many

details I had not found in the movie. I wanted to see the movie once again before writing this, but circumstances prevented it.

The book opens with Kirk on vacation at a museum in Egypt and many interesting details on human evolution and technical accomplishments are offered.

Gibraltar has been dammed long ago and the Mediterranean is virtually drained. The hydroelectric power supplies most of Europe and Africa even now. (This concept is outlined in Willy Ley's book Engineer's Dreams.)

Top echelons in Starfleet are implanted with mental communicators which are used when a situation is grave enough to warrant it. This system is kept secret from society in general because of fears remaining from an attempt to control human populations with an analogous device long ago.

In this future, most humans have formed large units with merged minds. Early attempts to use such advanced people in starships proved disastrous and now only stodgy conservatives like Kirk can operate the ships.

Kirk's ship was the only one to ever return safely from a 5 year exploration mission. He is therefore needed at headquarters to try and see to it that other missions are as successful. After being confined to earth because of this need, he cohabitated with a female officer for a year which helped him settle down. (She was one of the two people killed when the transporter malfunctioned, which is one reason he was so upset. And so it goes. The novel has far more depth than the motion picture.

The idea that spacemen are primitive throwbacks who are misfits in the advanced human society make it far easier to write stories set in starfleet. Society can have advanced beyond today's mores but the author does not have to try to show this. He can deal with people whose minds work in a familiar fashion. To try to convey successfully in written SF a drastically changed human society would be hard enough. To do so for an unsophisticated media audience would be virtually impossible. Still, if Paramount does make a series of TV movies, it would be interesting to have one set on earth while the crew is on leave and then to try to portray this society. It would be a tremendous challenge to Rodenberry and the rest. I will bet that a writer like Harlan Ellison could rise to the challenge and create a very interesting script. This would have to be well into the series

when it is safely established on the network, of course.

Even if you didn't like the movie, do read the book. It does have the aforementioned depth.

erm

Inferno, Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle, Pocket Books, 1976, \$1.75

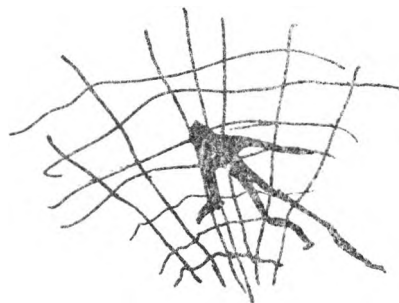
The traditional exemplar of the Yiddish word chutzpah is the man who murders his parents and then asks the court for mercy on the grounds that he is an orphan. This may be replaced by the notion of a couple of science fiction authors who set out to rewrite the greatest poet in Western literature.

Dante's Inferno recounted the adventures of a couple of tourist's: Dante, a living man, and his guide Vergil, who dwelt in the circle of the virtuous pagans outside Hell proper. Niven and Pournelle's protagonists are inhabitants: Allen Carpentier, an sf writer who fell out an eighth-story window while trying to chugalug a bottle of rum in order to impress a bunch of fans (they didn't even notice his fall because Asimov had just walked into the room), and his guide, who turns out to be Benito Mussolini. Carpentier at first tries to escape outward by various means, including building a glider to soar out on the hot winds in which the Carnal are tormented, but is finally convinced by Benito that the only way out is inward and downward. He finds that he is in Dante's Hell, though with a few modern additions and with some of the sins updated, but refuses to believe it, speculating instead that he has been frozen and revived in a lunatic asylum of the far future, or that he is in some weird king of Disneyland built by aliens. There is some good satire and humor and a lot of grisly action which would turn a stronger stomach than mine, as the two make their way down to the Ninth Circle, gaining and losing a few companions on the way. Carpentier, who easily convinces the reader that he belongs in Hell, though he refuses to believe it himself, eventually decides to remain and try to persuade other damned souls that escape is possible--as Benito has been doing--while Benito makes the climb to Purgatory.

This is certainly a good book, imaginative, provocative, and well constructed. I enjoyed it, even though much of the action was, appropriately enough, pretty revolting. The question remains, however, how sound is it theologically?

Judging by Dante's theology, the basic premise is unworkable. Niven and Pournelle depict damned souls as learning from their experiences, so that they are spiritually ready to leave Hell as well as physically able to do so. But Dante specifically states the orthodox Christian position that the damned "have lost the good of the intellect"--that is, their minds are fixed and incapable of change. The damned are no longer able to perceive the nature of salvation.

Carpentier comes to the conclusion that Hell is "the violent ward of a hospital for the theologically insane. Some could be cured." But this is a confusion of the functions of Hell and Purgatory. According to Christian doctrine, we "make our souls" by choosing to do either God's will or our own. When our will is opposed to God's, the choices lead progressively toward damnation. If we ultimately choose God, we are granted the reward of being with Him (the Beatific Vision), after



going through the Purgatoria? experience in order to fit ourselves to bear His Presence. Stripped of metaphor, Heaven is eternal existence in the presence of Perfect Love, while Hell is being trapped forever in the prison of our own worst selves. Dante's metaphors for the spiritual state induced by the sin (the Sullen are depicted as buried in a swamp, which is exactly what sullenness feels like), or they are a form of poetic justice (the Flatterers are sunk in shit). They represent in symbolic form what sin itself does to sinners. Niven and Pournelle never get past the literal level of the allegory and persist in seeing the pains of Hell as inflicted arbitrarily by a vengeful--or, they suggest, therapeutic--God.

For me, the test of an author's vision of Hell is whether or not one can imagine him producing a satisfactory vision of Heaven--in Lewis's words, whether he can make salvation more interesting than damnation. Most serious scholars

agree that Dante passes this test and Milton fails, though casual readers seldom get past the Inferno or Book II of Paradise Lost. Charles Williams passes with flying colors. William Blake cheats by making up his own rules. I would award C.S. Lewis himself a conditional pass: he does make salvation more interesting than damnation, but his Earthly Paradise (in Perelandra) is better than his Heavens or Hells. His vision of Hell as a place of utter dreariness in The Great Divorce is an imaginative and successful break with literary tradition. Niven and Pournelle, however, give the impression that they haven't the faintest notion what the Beatific Vision is all about. Vergil--or Mussolini--can show us Hell; but to see Heaven we need a guide like Beatrice, who represents human love mediating Divine Love. Niven and Pournelle offer no images of love of either kind.

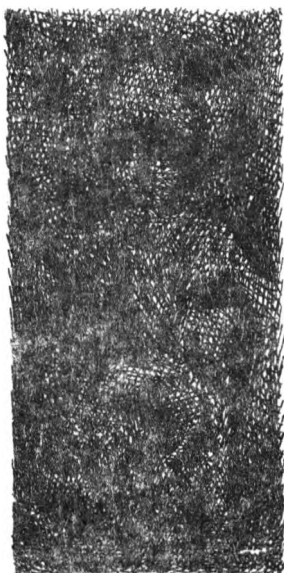
ajb

The Shroud of Turin, Ian Wilson, Doubleday and Co., 1978, Talking Book #RC14335

This is an appropriate issue of NIEKAS in which to review The Shroud of Turin. The book deals with the scientific study of a religious artifact, which also touches on matters of fantasy and folklore.

The shroud is controversial and its authenticity has been rejected by many religious scholars. A clear history only goes back a little over 600 years. Because of the controversy, the owner, the pretender to the Italian kingship, and the custodians of the shroud have been reluctant to display it to the public. Interest has slowly been increasing since the first successful photograph was taken in 1933 which revealed unexpected details. During the last decade it was subjected to very thorough scientific scrutiny. Half of the book details this and the results of the studies. The one major experiment which has not been done is the Carbon 14 Test. When first considered, it would have consumed a sizeable portion of the artifact. A major international conference was held in 1977 to study the results thus far and to propose new tests including an improved C-14 age determination which would consume a very small portion. The book was completed late in 1977 before the owners and custodians had made a decision on what else to permit.

The tests already performed are fascinating as any study in



archeology--independent of the possible religious significance of the artifact. Except for the very last chapter of the book, there is no religious speculation or discussion, merely a dispassionate study of its possible chain of custody. The study of the nature of the cloth--the impurities, the pollen, and the chemical properties and microscopic appearance--each reveals something in this remarkable detective story. Scientists from JPL in Pasadena have applied computer visual enhancement and three dimensional computer modeling techniques from the Viking program to a slide of the item with startling results. I has become a fascinating problem and numerous scientists with a great curiosity are anxious to apply their latest techniques to the artifact. The next decade should reveal much more about the shroud.

The author himself has largely researched the history of the artifact and half of the book deals with this. There is a clear record of the shroud's whereabouts only from about 1350. This is one reason many suspect it to be a fraud. However, the author has made a detailed study of documents which lead him to propose a fairly detailed history in 5 epochs up to 1350. He gives all the evidence he has accumulated and admits that much of it is circumstantial. As others work on his proposal, they will probably make some modifications.

Another artifact called The Mandilla was discovered in Odessa, Turkey, about the year 550 and vanished

during the sack of Constantinople by the Crusaders in 1208. This was reputed to be a portrait of the head of Christ on cloth mounted in a silver frame. The author gives reasonable argument for its travel to Odessa before the first Gospel was written and its subsequent hiding and loss when the Christian community there was snuffed out a very short time later. There is no written record of its discovery but it was suddenly present and became the object of pilgrimages by about 550. Its appearance at that time had a profound influence on religious imagery and played a major role in a dispute between two factions of Christians on whether it was proper to represent the Christ pictorially despite the second commandment. It was just about the only object to survive the Iconoclasts--both Christian and Muslim--of the next century.

The author, attempting to justify the hiding of the rest of the image on the artifact, frames it to only show the face. Thus he proposes that this Mandilla is the same as the shroud. Around 1100 AD there was a startling change in the artistic representation of the burial of Christ to suggest that the shroud was taken out of its frame and the remainder discovered.

Here is where the influence on fantasy comes in. The first person to write of narratives about the "Holy Grail" toured Constantinople around 1125 and probably saw the shroud displayed in such a fashion as to strongly influence the form his narrative took. This and other influences on the Grail legend are found in Chapter 18.

From 1200 to 1300 it was probably the secret artifact worshiped by the Knights Templar until they were destroyed. Then it showed up 50 years later in the hands of a minor knight probably distantly related to the second in command of the Knights at the time of their destruction. Other artifacts surviving from the secret society of Knights indicate to the author that the shroud was probably rolled up and mounted again to only reveal the face.

This book also revealed to me certain customs practiced in Palestine 2000



years ago. For instance, men wore their hair shoulder length bound into a pigtail which was often rolled up under a headcovering. Cheap coins were usually placed on the eyes of the dead so that they would not see what transpires. (Among Teutons, according to Mary Stewart, gold was used and its purpose was to pay the ferryman.)

As I said, I found this to be an enthralling story of scientific and historical detection which has taught me much about the history of the early church and the major controversies which had rocked it over the years.

erm

Beyond the Blue Event Horizon,
Frederik Pohl, Ballantine, 1980,
\$2.95

As a science fiction writer, Frederik Pohl reminds me of two television programs: TAXI and WKRP IN CINCINNATI. They are both popular, well acted; but somehow they never seem to reach the Top Ten except on rare occasions. This seems especially odd in Mr. Pohl's case as he has won a number of awards including the Hugo and the Nebula. Could we be in the position of taking him for granted simply because he has been around so long?

Certainly he is one of the few writers from the 1950's who stays in tune with the times. Every decade you can note a very definite change in his writing. I was somewhat surprised to note he has such a (umm) "salty" vocabulary in this novel which is a sequel to the award-winning Gateway.

Unfortunately I am at somewhat of a disadvantage as I have not read the first novel; I have had to feel my way around the edges of this one. Sequels have a reputation for being a lot less popular than the original; inventiveness tends to flag and a weariness with the characters set in. Mr. Pohl has the advantage in that his characters are more three-dimensional than those of some novelists who are concerned more with the hard science. I have the feeling that, as a sequel, BTBEH is about average and can stand on its own.

Briefly: in the first book Robinette Broadhead took a gamble at becoming fabulously wealthy by embarking on a voyage during which he could just as easily wind up dead as a doornail. As it is, he is suffering something of a guilt complex for having abandoned his first love noised on the edge of an "event horizon" of a black hole. The mysterious aliens--the Heechee--have left an

automated "food factory" (which is also a spaceship), somewhere out beyond the orbit of Pluto. Broadhead decides to send out an expedition of five to investigate further. These five include a senior citizen of Germanic descent, his daughter and son-in-law, his granddaughter, and a computer. The factory turns out to be occupied by an eighteen year old human named Wan who has been brought up by the "Dead Men"--which/who are computer programs--and has never been in contact with other living beings. Meanwhile, back on earth, Broadhead has to cope with the unexpected illness of his new wife, Essie, and the time-lag in communications which makes it so difficult to transmit and receive orders. He communes from time to time with a holographic representation of Albert Einstein for information and advice. Eventually, as the expedition runs into deep problems, he is forced to succumb to the old saying: "If you want something done right, you must do it yourself". First contact is made with the Heechee, who, of course, are not what everyone has imagined them to be.

There are still various loose ends left dangling which leads me to suspect that we may have one or more further sequels to look forward to. The question of what happens to Gelie-Klara Moynlin, Broadhead's lost lover, is not yet fully resolved for one thing.

I can really say little more without depriving any readers of the pleasures of discovery. It is an extremely well-crafted work of art and the emotional involvement is strong. A welcome antidote for all the spin-offs of EMPIRE and STAR WARS we have been getting lately.

w. ritchie benedict

The Art of The Empire Strikes Back, edited by Deborah Call, Ballantine, 1980, 176 pp. large format, \$15.95 paper/\$18.95 hardbound

If, as has been so often alleged, THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK is basically a comic strip/art-come-to-life, what better way to recall the essentials of the film than through this sumptuous 'folio?

TAOTESB (the acronym a title in its own right) presents preproduction sketches and paintings--predominantly by Ralph McQuarrie and Joe Johnston of STAR WARS fame, retouched photos from the film, and actual storyboard excerpts. The text for each section gives a brief plot synopsis and then goes on to explain the accompanying art direction.

If you found the old pursestrings a bit too tight when considering the Ballantine-issued TESB Portfolio by McQuarrie, some of the better paintings are included here. They only suffer slightly from reduction and being run across two pages.

The slick art direction by Vigin, Nahas, & Vigin really helps make the whole thing work. TAOTESB is a tribute to good design and marketing acumen.

mb

The Beginning Place, by Ursula K. Leguin, Harper and Row, 1980, Recorded by Jewish Guild for the Blind

At times, this reads like an adult version of C.S. Lewis' first two Narnia books. Two people, Hugh and Irene, independantly discover a gateway to another world where they are awaited with eagerness for they are destined to save the inhabitants of a village therein. However, there are no overt religious overtones and the protagonists, both about 20 years old, did not know each other before meeting there. Both have very unhappy homelives and found the gateway while fleeing from psychologically intolerable situations.

Irene found the gateway in a vacant area just outside of a city at the age of 13 when she was fleeing her stepfather who tried to rape her. As in Narnia, time flows differently there. For every 24 hours spent in Ain Country, as she calls it, an hour passes here. She calls the gateway region the Beginning Place. There is only one path from it which leads, after about an 18 hour walk, to a village called Mountain Town. The land is idyllic: mostly woodland with streams but no real signs of wildlife. There are vague hints that fauna must exist, but it is never actually seen. It is always twilight; no sun is ever seen. Once in a while, there is a vague suggestion of a star which is always in the same place. Compasses do not work. The natives all rise and retire at the same time and speak of day and night tho' it has no connection with light for darkness; merely waking and sleeping time.

Irene regards the land as her private preserve. She has often visited it and discovered the village soon after her first visit. She has been accepted by the villagers and slowly came to learn their language. Its basic structure is not Indo-European and she never really masters it.

While Irene's mother is abused by her second husband and saddled with many children at his insistence, Hugh's is crazy from insecurity as he is the only child. When he was in junior high school, his father abandoned them. This made his mother very possessive; she would never let him leave the house. Every six months she would change jobs and move to a new city. Now she is involved with a reincarnation cult. He is working as a checker in a local supermarket but wants to go to library school. After a particularly bad session of nagging on her part, he runs wildly and stumbles through the gate. He immediately falls in love with the peace of the new land and, because of the time difference, finds he can lead a double life; each day spending an additional day and night beyond the gateway.

When Irene finds him, she considers him an intruder and tries to drive him out. When he comes to Mountain Town, he is welcomed even more warmly than she. This makes Irene even more jealous.

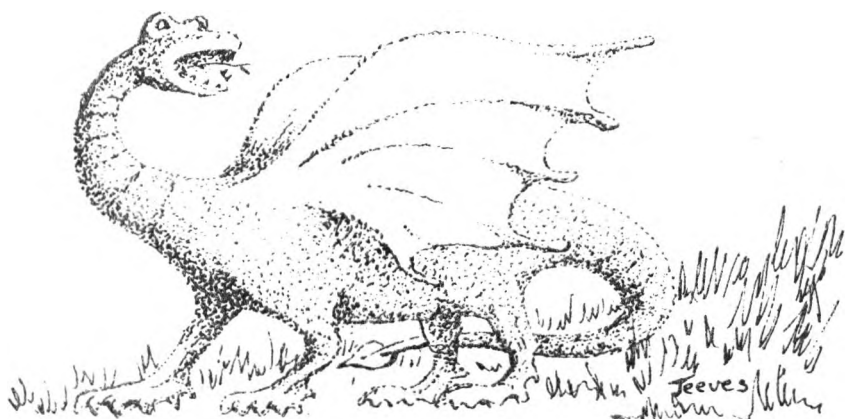
The natives cannot or will not explain to the Terrans what their problem is and how the couple can solve it.

Some of what has gone on before can be puzzled out by the reader: why the natives expected to be rescued by these otherworlders and what destiny drove the humans to come is left unstated. The fact that the gateway will not always admit Irene and will not always let Hugh leave, forces them into cooperation. Near the end they begin to rely on each other. After he slays the dragon she helps heal him.

Unlike the heroes of most gateway fantasies, there two are significantly changed by their experiences. They have come to terms with their problems and can now live in our world. They will never again have to flee to the Ain Country again.

The optimism of the protagonists is staggering. Both had messed-up home lives because of bad marriages by their mothers, and yet they do not





even consider this as they blissfully go off, hand in hand at the end.

It is interesting that both mothers are inherently weak characters whose problems were aggravated by wicked husbands. Irene's father had been good, but he died of leukemia shortly after she was born. Her step-father is a macho beast who keeps her weak-willed mother in a repressed state. Hugh's father had abandoned them, driving his mother over the edge.

These facts about the relationship between Hugh and Irene are especially interesting when you consider that the book was written by a woman. It is Hugh, not Irene, who slays the dragon. It is she who plays the role of nurse when she cleans and binds his wounds. This seems to be very stereotypical. On the other hand, when he is aroused but making no advances, she invites him by her actions. Their difficulty in putting their feelings into words and actions after that is very realistic. While he is in the hospital, she finds the apartment and makes the other arrangements. However, she does show considerable initiative.

I found the characterizations of Hugh and Irene very believable. I gained more insight with a second reading of this book and I am sure it is one I will return to again.

erm

The Mermaid's Three Wisdoms, by Jane Yolen, William Calling World Publishing, Recorded by National Library Service as Talking Book RC14525

In this fantasy for grades 5-8, a careless young mermaid endangers the safety of her people by allowing

herself to be seen by a human. She had always been careless and this was her worst offense. She is exiled from the sea and changed into almost-human form. She still has no tongue, must learn to use her new legs and how to function on the land. Fortunately she encounters two people who can help her with her problem. One is Jess, a 12 year old girl with impaired hearing and the other an 84 year old retired seaman.

The only other mermaid story I had ever read was de Camp's "Nothing in the Rules" about the women's swim team in New York. De Camp postulated that his mermaids were mammals like dolphins and as such, were warm blooded and mammalian. Yolen's mermaid is hatched from an egg, has gill slits, no tongue, and on the rare occasions when she cries, gives off a single crystal of jewel-like quality. Once the captain is convinced that this was a mermaid and the stories he has heard are true, he recounts how a mermaid was supposedly washed up on shore in Holland and never learned to speak. I am really curious about how many of these details are based on real folklore and how many were made up by the author. In this book the mermaids communicate by sign language and by an elaborate vocabulary made up of blown bubbles.

Jess is handicapped because her mother became ill while pregnant and her father had abandoned them because he couldn't cope with a handicapped child. She had originally gone to a deaf school where most of the other children were totally deaf. She is now mainstreamed in an ordinary school. She learned Amslan in the deaf school but could communicate now with a combination of lip reading and a hearing aid. She was bitter because her mother had subconsciously given her guilt feelings because she

disliked being pitied and children in the regular school made fun of the way she talked. Her aiding the mermaid, Melissina, helps her straighten out her own problems.

I found the background on the deaf world thorough and interesting. The author is familiar with finger spelling, Amslan, the problems of lip reading, etc. and has used this background in an interesting fashion. Melissina's immaturity, her problems on land and how they are solved and her return home are also very well done.

The Three Wisdoms are a sort of combination of ecological and mutual dependence principles. The king of the merfolk, Llyr, is subject to the will of the people and must carry out their wishes. He is a combination of wise old man and executive administrator. He is very reluctant to punish Melissina because, by cutting her off, they are also hurting themselves. The "old magic" he uses to change her into a human is a form of shape changing which had once been in common usage but has been unused for 400 years. Near the end of the book the Captain speculates that perhaps at one time the two races had been one.

One other thing bothered me. Not only can the merfolk talk to probably-intelligent creatures like dolphins and whales, but they can also have two-way communication with definitely unintelligent animals like turtles. This is like a merperson writing a story about Hypothetical human beings who carry on meaningful conversations with insects.

While the book was enjoyable, I found de Camp's approach to the nature of the merfolk more satisfying. I wish someone would record *The Merman's Children* by Poul Anderson. I would like to see how he handles the nature of merfolk.

erm

The Lost Princess of Oz, The Tin Woodman of Oz, The Magic of Oz, L. Frank Baum, Ballantine, 1980/81, \$2.25

I'm never going to let up, you know. Mrs. Bastrow's favorite/only son is going to keep on doing Oz reviews until I am sure that all of these stories are available to penny-poor readers such as myself in a form they can afford: paperback.

The plot of *The Lost Princess of Oz* was suggested to Baum by an eleven year old fan of his who remarked that things would be pretty much in an uproar if ever Princess Ozma, ruler of Oz, ever disappeared.

She does and they are.

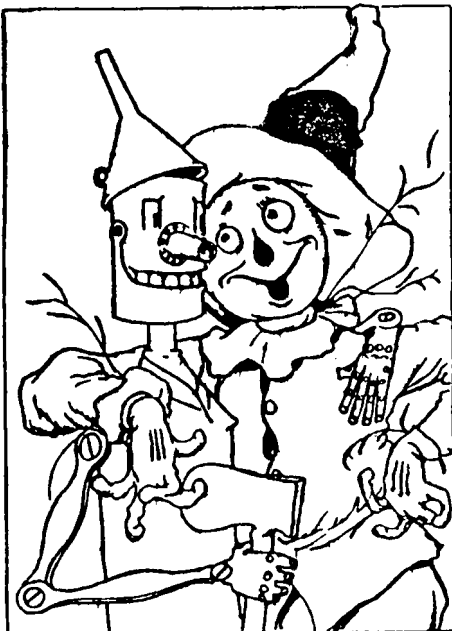
The Tin Woodman of Oz was one of the first Oz books I read. (I should say, "had read to me". My maternal grandmother used to go horse from reading and re-reading this and other classics to young Mike Bastraw with his ears of sponge.)

This is also one of my favorites; a prejudiced choice due to my early exposure and the fact that the robot-like Tin Woodman is the star.

Woot the Wanderer, late of the Gilliken Country of Oz, strolls into the castle of the Tin Woodman, Emperor of the Winkies. Here we learn that the Tin Woodman used to be a flesh and blood person named Nick Chopper. One day he fell in love with Nimmie Amee, a Munchin girl being kept as a servant/slave of the Wicked Witch of the East (before Dorothy and her house did a one-shot urban renewal bit). The Witch is so infuriated when Nick proposes to Nimmie that she casts a spell on his axe which turns aside and cuts his leg off. Chagrined, he hops over to the local tinsmith who fashions him a new one out of tin. As he continues to refuse to leave his love, the foul-tempered witch continues to bewitch his blade into dismembering him piece by piece.

Now, most people wouldn't stand for this sort of treatment for very long. But lovestruck Nick Chopper does. Soon he finds himself completely made of metal. (Proof that the soul doesn't reside in the body?)

But, alas, after his torso had been cut up into tiny little bits, he no



longer has the heart (literally) to return Nimmie Amee's love for him.

Talk about irony!

He leaves the heartbroken (sorry) lass in search of a heart which he does eventually find with the help of Dorothy and Co. But the heart that the Wizard gave him was only a "kindly" heart, not a "loving" one (his supply being low at the time).

Woot convinces the Tin Woodman that he should find Nimmie Amee and make her Empress out of simple kindness, if not actual love.

They take off, accompanied by the Scarecrow who happened to be visiting, and the rest is adventure involving a giantess, balloon people, an invisible country, and a Hippogryaf, among other things.

The ink is still wet on The Magic of Oz, the next to the last written by Baum himself. I offer Ballantine's blurb as a summary of the book:

"...in which the meddling of old Ruggedo--the ex-Nome King--and the magic of Kiki Aru, the Munchkin boy, bring mayhem to the Emerald City when its illustrious inhabitants are mysteriously transformed into strange beasts."

Again, Ballantine has made an effort to include as much of the original art by John R. Neill as they could fit in. His work is, as usual, simple and evocative.

Keep readin' 'em: only one more to go!

mb

Science Fiction Studies in Film,
Frederik Pohl & Frederik Pohl IV,
Ace, 1981, trade, 346 pp., \$6.95

Up until now, John Baxter's Science Fiction in the Cinema has been the definitive work on SF movies. Pohl & Pohl are now heir to that title; apparently.

Fred & Fred IV are ideally suited to such an endeavor: Frederik Pohl as a man with experience in editing, publishing, managing, and writing; Frederik Pohl IV as a student of film, in theory and in practice. I assume that the writing was divided up accordingly.

A work of this nature becomes dated as soon as it is in print. New movies in this genre sprout with regularity since STAR WARS created the equation, SF + SFX = \$\$\$,\$\$\$,\$\$\$\$. The Pohl's focus their attention on the more significant films as far as their contributions to the genre go.

The main thing I like about the critiques is that rarely is the opinion on any film uncompromising.

The Pohl's might not like a certain film but they are willing to concede the fact that somebody might like it. This coincides with my theory that there is something good in every movie--even if it's simply the fact that a bad movie is mercifully short.

Frederik Pohl IV has put together one of the better histories of the special effects industry. SFX are an integral part of SF films now so such a study is certainly appropriate in a book of this nature. From Melies to Trumbull, it's all there. His explanations of even the most intricate of operations are clear and to the point. I do wonder, however, why he didn't use diagrams to help illustrate these explanations.

This book is complete right up to THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK. Hopefully we will see a sequel in another few years or so as this is clearly a collaboartion that works.

Keep it in the family, Freds.

mb



RECEIVED BUT NOT REVIEWED

Ballantine

World Enough, and Time, James Kahn
\$2.25
Split Infinity, Piers Anthony, \$2.50
Close to Critical, Hal Clement,
\$1.95
The Venus Belt, L. Neil Smith,
\$2.25
Star Surgeon, James White, \$1.95
Stellar 6, Judy-Lynn del Rey, ed.,
\$2.25
The Best of C.L. Moore, Lester del
Rey, ed., \$2.25
The Grotto of the Formigans, Daniel
da Cruz, \$1.95
The Starman of Llyrdis, Leigh
Brackett, \$1.95
Dragon's Egg, Robert L. Forward,
\$2.25
Hands of Glory, Jaan Kangilaski,
\$2.25
The Square Root of Man, William
Tenn, \$2.25
The Breaking of Northwall, Paul O.
Williams, \$2.25
The Seeking Sword, Jaan Kangilaski,
\$2.25

ACHTUNG!!!!!! REVIEWERS!!!!!!!!!!!!

Material must be submitted 1.5 months before publication date of the issue it is to appear in.

(April 1, 1981 for NIEKAS 26)

MARSHA'S

MISCELLANY

MARSHA JONES

Continuing reviewing children's fantasy books where I left off some eight or ten years ago when NIEKAS went into hibernation, I'm pleased to say that there have been several Nicholas Stuart Gray books published since then. Of these, I currently have The Wardens of the Weir, The Garland of Filigree, and The Edge of Evening. The first two are novels, have been published in England by Dennis Dobson (check Books in Print to find out if there's been an American edition) and are still in print. The third is a collection of short stories published by Faber and is probably still in print.

The Garland of Filigree is charming though a bit on the light side. It concerns the adventures of five children (five still seems to be an optimum number in children's fantasy -- in this case two brothers, two sisters, and a cousin) and Filigree, a distressed miniature dragon. Filigree enlists the children's help to recover the Garland, a necklace of enchanted stones, the property of her mistress Ishtar, which had been stolen while Filigree was supposed to be guarding it. The stones fell out of the necklace when Filigree dropped it on her initial attempt to retrieve it (the necklace being larger than she was) and have to be retrieved piecemeal. Each retrieval operation results in another adventure for the children, all of whom have learned something by the end of the book. All in all, a fairly typical sort of children's fantasy but above average in entertainment value, as is true of all of Gray's books.

The Wardens of the Weir is a somewhat more serious story about a series of rescue missions involving creatures facing extinction in

various times and places (the creatures varying from sea otters, whales, and other modern sea-going mammals to unicorns and dinosaurs). The rescue missions are led by a mysterious being who answers to the name of Avatar and consists of various combinations of a group consisting of four children (mostly unrelated), a horse, a dog, and two cats. Gray is, as usual, expert at making the contrast between the group's ordinary daytime activities and their eerie midnight ones seem perfectly reasonable and even the discovery of Avatar's identity at the end of the missions seems perfectly in keeping with what has gone before. All in all, a very nice book.

The Edge of Evening reminds me somewhat of Gray's earlier collection, Mainly in Moonlight, although I would not rate it quite as highly, mostly because there isn't as much of it. There isn't a great deal to choose between them as far as quality goes. As in the earlier collection, the stories mostly concern themselves with some of the more unexpected aspects of magic or of those who become involved with magic. I was particularly charmed with the problems of the demon who was conjured up by two sorcerers simultaneously and with the King who had difficulties with a crossroads signpost with an invisible arm and with an empty but aggressive suit of armor. Highly recommended to those who liked Mainly in Moonlight or anyone who likes his fantasy offbeat.

There are at least three other books available by Gray that have been published in the last few years and that I've ordered copies of. The

Killer Cookbook, which isn't a juvenile and probably isn't a fantasy, is awaiting me at a local bookshop. The other two, A Wind from Nowhere and The Further Adventures of Puss in Boots are fantasies and should be arriving soon so hopefully I'll be able to review them next issue.

Largely because I was charmed by the cover, I bought a copy of Diana Wynne Jones' Charmed Life (published by Pocket Books) and was highly entertained by it. This is one of the increasing number of juvenile fantasies being published in paper as an adult novel but shouldn't be ignored on that account. It's the story of a talented though not terribly pleasant young witch named Gwendolyn and her younger, nicer, but untalented brother Cat, and their peculiar activities after the go to live at Chrestomanci's castle. Gwendolyn is particularly frustrated when no one at the castle will take her witchcraft seriously and furious when Chrestomanci refuses to allow her to continue studying advanced magic. The book will never make any list of great fantasy novels but it is quite good entertainment. After reading it I checked in the paperback section of one of the local bookstores and discovered that Puffin had published six fantasy novels by her including Charmed Life. Since buying British paperbacks is mostly cheaper than buying imported American ones, I picked up the two that the store had in stock--The Power of Three and Cart and Cwiddier.

The Power of Three is my favorite of her books so far. It concerns the three sorts of intelligent creatures living on the Moor--the Mound People,

the Giants, and the Dorigs--with the story being told from the point of view of the Mound People. It revolves around a golden collar which one of the Mound People murders a Dorig for. The collar is cursed by the dying Dorig and the curse eventually spreads out to affect all three of the peoples inhabiting the Moor. The bulk of the story is concerned with the interactions of various children of all three peoples which results in the discovery of the curse and an attempt to lift it. I was particularly charmed by the fact that I hadn't any idea of who the three types of people really were until nearly halfway through the book.

Cart and Cwiddier is totally different from the other two books but also well worth the reading. It concerns the children of a family of travelling musicians and the young man their father, Clennen, agrees to transport from the squabbling earldoms of the South to the more peaceful (and united) North. It also concerns the great cwiddier (a stringed musical instrument) which had belonged to the hero Osfameron who had been able to work magic with it and which now belonged to Moril's father, who could play it but not work magic with it. It is a more straightforward adventure story than the other two books but just as enjoyable.

John Bellairs, author of the excellent Face in the Frost, has also written a children's fantasy trilogy published in the Dell Yearling line--The House with a Clock in Its Walls, The Figure in the Shadows, and The Letter, the Witch, and the Ring. Although none of them are anywhere near the equal of Face in the Frost which ranks very high on my list of favorite fantasy novels, all three are good entertainment books. They concern the adventures of a boy named Lewis Barnvelt who goes to live with his Uncle Jonathan after being orphaned. After having led a fairly dull life, he's delighted to discover that Jonathan is a magician and that Mrs. Zimmerman from next door is a sorceress. He is a bit less delighted when his attempt to raise the dead for a sceptical friend who doesn't believe in magic goes incredibly wrong. Fortunately, his uncle and Mrs. Zimmerman manage to deal with the matter with a bit of help from Lewis. And Lewis' next friend, Rosa Rita Pottinger, turns out to be delighted with magic rather than scared by it, which is just as well considering the rather peculiar adventures in the second and third books.

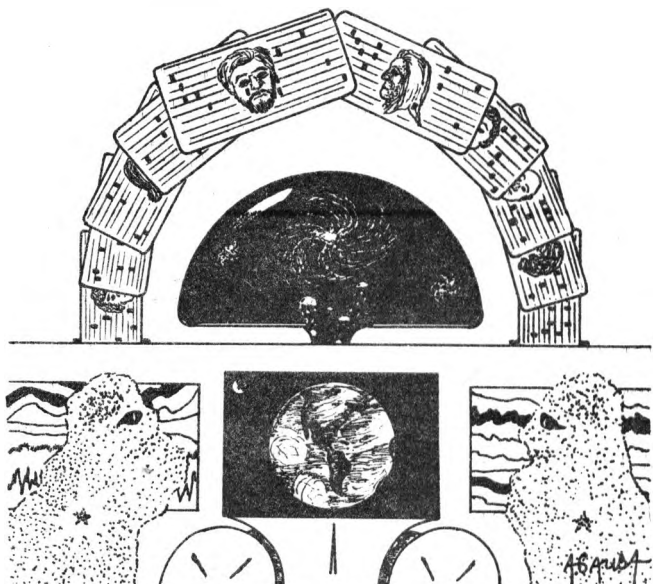
Simulating Social Problems on a Computer

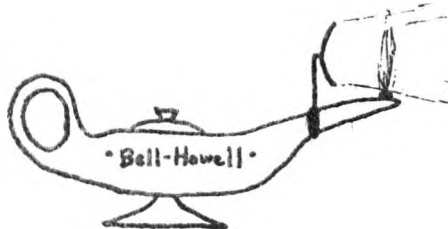
For Thom, of course

by Joe R. Christopher

The Immortals play their simulating game
In their computer (so to use our name)--
The program runs sans keyboard, cards and bits;
The goal, perhaps, is artistry of fits.
"Note how the feasts, starvation, balance well;
How neither good nor evil can prevail."

And what is simulated? There it swirls,
Galaxy on galaxy, and worlds on worlds;
But chiefly (from our point of view) one planet--
For humans suitable, and so we man it.
(We feel we're not IBM cards, of course,
Nor all our history a loop per force--
One of a million slightly varied runs,
Testing the variables 'round a million suns;
But how can elements who're programmed so
Interpret what the plan is, how can they know?)
Why do the Gods allow such ill to persist?
Yes, why upon such balances insist?
Perhaps their choice, their limits, cause our truth:
No program is as complex as the truth.





MAGIC LANTERN REVIEWS

THE FABULOUS WORLD OF JULES VERNE

What a time for my video recorder to break down!

TFWOJV is one of those films I saw a long time ago. I could barely remember anything about it save that it had a deep effect on me at the time; enough so that when I saw it listed in TV GUIDE, I felt a bit woozy.

I can't quote a lot of the credits from the film as I usually rely on being able to replay them after I watch the flick. Luckily, I do have a copy of Ed Naha's Horror - From Screen to Scream which supplies me with some background info to pass along.

This film, made by Czech director Karel Zeman and released by Warner Bros. in 1961, was originally titled THE DIABOLICAL INVENTION. I quote Mr. Naha:

"Several of Verne's themes are combined into this fanciful, though sometimes tedious, excursion into animated and live-action adventure."

[This film is made up of] "overlying cartoon cutouts, puppetry, and miniature scenes with actors..."

TFWOJV is like a series of the original book illustrations from Verne's works come to life. The engraving-like motif is carried throughout even to the design of 3D objects: solid props will have the same parallel-lining running across it as does the 2D scenery. The overall effect is positively stupendous--one of the most original pieces of cinema I have ever seen despite the derivative nature of the subject matter.

This movie owes as much to another Frenchman as it does to Monsieur Verne. Many of the cinematographic effects are very reminiscent of those practiced by one of the first pioneers

of the cinema, Georges Melies. Forced perspective scenery, in-camera mattes, etc. Cardboard, cardboard everywhere but not a drop is out of place.

The plot of the story is fairly straightforward: scientist is abducted by unscrupulous meglomaniac who wants him to develop the Ultimate Weapon. In this case we assume it is the atomic bomb.

The tone is very lighthearted and thoroughly refreshing. Sight gags abound. One of my favorites is when one of the villain's henchmen breaks the tip of his pencil while working in one of the vast construction areas in their volcano retreat. A mammoth crane swings down and deposits a fresh pencil in his nonchalantly upraised hand.

The underwater craft are a lot truer to original visualizations than the one that was used in the Disney version of 20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA. The Good Guys' sub in particular is quite novel in that it is propelled by flippers in the manner of a duck.

The music is quite evocative. The texture is very thin in mimicry of older recording techniques. The musical themes denoting mechanization are the best since the old Warner Bros. cartoon standards.

The voices are, of course, overdubbed but most of the dialogue is during medium to long shots to make the most of the fascinating backgrounds. It doesn't rankle too much. I'm not sure what Ed Naha means by "sometimes tedious". If the action is a little slow, you can always sit back and enjoy the scenery as it were. That is the real star of this ultimately stylish production.

There are several sequences involving stop motion animation. One of the better sequences is when

the crew of the Bad Guys' submarine boat embark on an undersea expedition to a sunken ship. While the animated shark attack was a trifle awkward, the supposedly-submerged figures moved in a pleasing manner during their adventures around the wreck.

This is one of the first 4-star SF movies I have seen since 2001.

mb

MAD MAX

I first made contact with MAD MAX about a year ago via a favorable review in a magazine (FUTURE LIFE or OMNI I think). It sounded interesting enough for me to file it in my memory banks under: Check This One Out If You Get The Chance.

Well, the chance arose and I took it. Viewing was on a VHS video tape machine in a friend's home. Refreshments were provided and the action commenced. (Refreshments are highly recommended before and during viewing.)

The setting is sometime in the near future. The story begins with a maniacal "scoot jockey" and his lady terrorizing the byways in a stolen police pursuit car. The bulletin is issued from the "Halls of Justice" and the chase begins. In these first minutes, the energy level is ultra high and the intense action provides the perfect stage for the initial appearance of Max who, piloting his "interceptor", brings death to the "Night Rider".

The fellow scoot jockeys of the Night Rider swear vengeance against Max and the struggle between the forces of good and evil ensue.

Don't get paranoid; I'm not going to do a complete play-by-play and ruin it for you. This is not a critical review. The reason I am doing this article is to turn you

on to this movie. If viewing takes place in a state of tabula rasa, one will understand why it has become a cult classic.

American International, who have for many years held the title of "Masters of the Slash and Flash genre", now have transcended the mold and created a piece of surrealist art. You will probably never realize how much compromise and pretense exists in the making of other movies until you witness this one.

The message is strong and one which many can't get enough of; thus, the cult following.

It's about heroes.

It's about Justice.

It's about a world that repels as it fascinates on the edge of Chaos and Order.

See it.

jbg

DR. WHO

Last issue I said that I was going to have something written on the BBC's SF longtimer, Dr. Who.

Well, a funny thing happened on the way out of the house where I had just picked up my newly-repaired video recorder. I fell down a flight of stairs. I was too busy worrying about myself to think about the VTR as it went sailing down the ole gravity well to ground. It made a one-point landing. I did a four-ointer: 2 knees, one hand, and a belly.

Ha, ha. A Dalek should have such luck.

Anyway, the long and short of it is that I wasn't able to replay the cycle of episodes which I had recorded in order to do an article.

Rather than trust to my marvelous-but-imperfect memory, I will try to have something for the next issue after I get my machine fixed.

Ohm, the god of electronics, willing.

mb

BATTLE BEYOND THE STARS

Periodically I try to hop into a Twilight Zone and return to the gone-by (bygone?) days of my hopefully misplayed youth. Sometimes this entrance is effected by running some vintage home movies wherein yours truly runs around and acts adorable (I have this on good faith from my mother); sometimes just by rapping with old friends about the the rotten things we used to do. (No, M80's were never

inserted into ANY feline orifice.)

The other week I went to an honest-to-God Saturday afternoon matinee at one of the local bijou's to catch a film called BATTLE BEYOND THE STARS. Oh, for the eyes, ears, and mind of a ten year old!

They're right, you know: you can't go back.

That mythical decader would love this movie. However, I with my doddering outlook filled with concern for inflation, pollution, and dire Saganictions, just could not find the spark. The spark that would let me believe what I was seeing on the screen, The Fault: bad story which breeds bad dialogue which masks even the best of acting, and etc. and onward...

Producer Roger Corman, king of the "B" Film, did some computations one day:

Box Office Hit "X"

+

Box Office Hit "Y"

=

Box Office Hit "Z"

"X" is STAR WARS

"Y" is THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN

"Z" is BATTLE BEYOND THE STARS

Unfortunately for Corman, it don't always work dat vey. In this case the final total is less than the sum of its parts.

A dispicable space villain (John Saxon) lays an ultimatum on the good folk of a little backwater planet named Akir. The Akirans either come up with the goods (whatever they are) or he will be thoroughly provoked to genocide. Naive young Akiran hero-type (ineptly played by Richard Thomas of John Boy fame) searches for some hired guns to help defend his planet from the more-than-slightly belligerent maurauder. In this case the gunslingers are aliens, mutants, and Robert Vaughn reprising his role from THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN of the fast-draw artist who has lost his nerve (but don't you believe it).

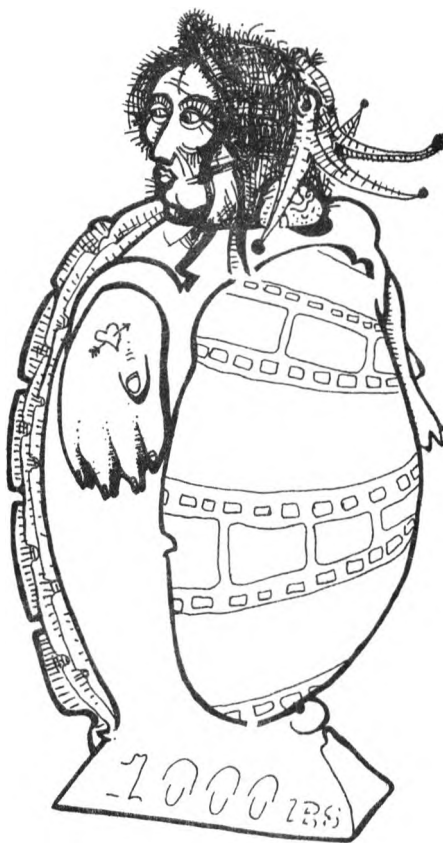
The plot is just barely able to sustain the special effects but there isn't enough left over to make the story work. There's barely enough to supply intelligible dialogue, let alone intelligent. Now I know why George Peppard (one of the gunslingers) was drunk all the time. If he was sober the words would catch in his throat.

Happily, the movie is not a complete bust. The visuals aren't halfbad; especially when you consider that the 400 opticals were brought in with a price tag of under \$600K.

This is about 25% of what was spent on movies like THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK, THE BLACK HOLE, and STAR TREK--THE MOTION PICTURE. Chuck Comiski, Corman's SFX supervisor replaced ingenuity in the stead of Big Bucks. Comiski fell back on some of the older SFX techniques to keep the cost down. One of the most widely used was forced perspective where a miniature set, for instance, will appear to be a lot larger by placing it much closer to the camera than the live action which is actually farther away. The other FX outfits opt for the more expensive process of optically adding elements after the fact.

This film definitely fits into the science fantasy mold which STAR WARS has made so popular. Unlike SW and TESB, it is not true to itself. It is like when a writer creates an imaginary universe, I expect that the goings-on in it will conform. When you establish a logic, stick with it.

BBTS doesn't.

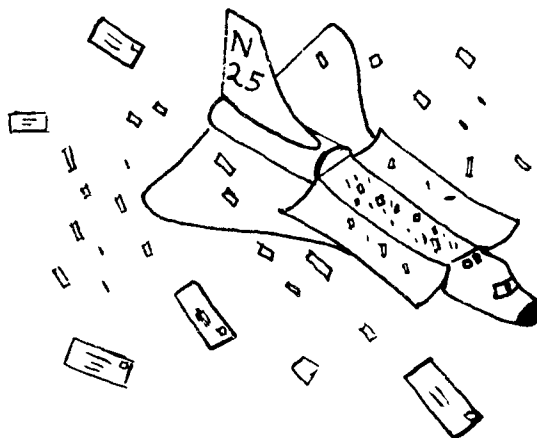


So if you're going to see this little bit o' fluff, better take along a bottle of Fountain of Youth.

You'll need it.

mb

LAISKAI



323 Dodge Street
East Providence, RI 02914

It was good to see NIEKAS [23] again. That and YANDRO are the only titles remaining from my original exposure to fandom back in the mid-1960's. It's nice to know that a few things survive the years.

I'm afraid I really disliked the film version of THE SHINING. For one thing, I refuse to accept that the topiary could not have been done well. After the special effects in STAR WARS and others, I doubt that much of any visual effect is cinematographically impossible. But there were worse flaws in the film. For one thing, one of the characters undergoes a change of name halfway through the film. For another, the suspense in the novel is built primarily because the father, Torrance, is basically a good man whose flaws are being played upon by the malevolent force that occupies the hotel. In the film, there is no redeeming aspect of his personality, and we really don't care (in fact we quite the opposite) if he is killed or not.

The cook's return is totally pointless in the film, because he is killed almost instantly. The provision of the snowmobile hardly justifies the entire subplot. Neither do we ever find out what is going on, whereas the book makes it quite clear that these are not ghosts. What is the significance of having Torrance appear in an aged photo at the end of the movie? Why make such an insipid twerp of the wife? Why ignore the detailed history of the hotel which conveyed so much of the sense of menace in the book? Why did he attempt to make the woman in the bathtub sexy, in contradiction to the book? I don't mind altering a book in the film version if it

serves some useful purpose, but frankly I think Kubrick screwed this one up royally.

I have been reading and enjoying more supernatural fiction than ever lately. As King starts to switch to SF, other excellent writers are taking up the slack. Ghost Story by Peter Straub is excellent, and I am looking forward to his next book, Shadow Land.

It is quite possible to interpret The Stand as being anti-intellectual, although it is fairer to say that it is anti-technological. Even that is an oversimplification though. It is no more so than much of the work of Clifford Simak. But Spider Robinson in particular has decided that anything critical of our misuse of technology is evil, and his review has been widely quoted as warning of an awful political treatise. Bullshit. The Stand is a very good novel (in fact, it is three very good novels). I don't think it stands together as well, because it is so diverse, and because I think King's villain, The Walking Dude, has some illogical contradictions that spoiled much of the climax for me, but that is relatively minor in comparison to the dozens of good things in the book, including some truly evil characters.

peace,
don [D'Amassa]

[I did not mean to imply in my review of THE SHINING that the only possible reason for not including the topiary sequences was due to the technical difficulties--though I believe they would have been fairly awesome due to the fact that some of these scenes would have been daylit and that stop-motion animation would have been difficult due to the nature of the structures being manipulated. It was probably a

combination of factors: time, money, the fire which burned down their soundstage, visual preference, etc.

As far as the rest of your comments on the film go, the key to the whole thing is that the book is the book and the movie is the movie: two totally different entities. What reads well does not necessarily film as appropriately. For instance, while the cook's return to the Overlook does not appear to be that crucial, it helps provide a significant amount of the suspense at the end (not to mention that it does provide the surviving Torrances with a get-away vehicle).

I would still like to know what King thinks about the production. Kubrick is certainly not averse to adaptation. As an example, read Arthur C. Clarke's Lost Worlds of 2001 and you will see how different the novel 2001: A Space Odyssey would have been if it had not been written concurrent with the film version.

I also very much enjoyed The Stand. The author's underlying motives in the writing of a story are not of uppermost importance to me so when a book is "mislabelled" as anti-this or anti-that, it doesn't bother me. -mike]

George Allen & Unwin
40 Museum Street
London WC1A 1LU
England

In your article in NIEKAS [24] entitled 'Return of the Pirates' you write, '...I could be wrong of course about the rights business and am eager to hear more'. Well, you are not alone in being wrong on this issue so perhaps I can throw a little light on the situation.

First of all, according to the most up-to-date and authoritative advice that we can obtain, The Lord of the Rings is not in the public domain in the United States, even in its original version. There has certainly been a widespread belief to the contrary, based on a simplistic reading of the circumstances surrounding its early publishing history and the notorious Ace Books controversy. And there have been no grand legal processes to establish the position simply because they were (mercifully) not necessary. Every time those who legitimately hold rights in Tolkien's work challenge an infringer, a settlement has eventuated.

The film rights in The Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit were sold in the author's lifetime and with his approval to United Artists and for many years unavailing attempts were made to convert these rights into film. Some of these projects in live action and in animation achieved a transient publicity. But eventually United Artists sold the rights they had acquired to The Saul Zaentz Production Company (Fantasy Films) who in turn commissioned Ralph Bakshi to create the animated film of the first half of the story that we have all seen. A fair amount of merchandising based on this animation has also been licensed. Another film of the second half of the story is projected.

Meanwhile, two television films entitled THE HOBBIT and THE RETURN OF THE KING - A STORY OF THE HOBBITS were produced in Japan by Rankin-Bass. In both cases production was far advanced under the misapprehension that the material was freely available before the legitimate rights-owners became aware of the project. In both cases the legitimate owners agreed terms with Rankin-Bass

and their distributors whereby restricted showings of the film within North America only, and a very few items of merchandise, were permitted.

As those who have seriously attempted to expropriate Tolkien's rights for their own gain will know, the owners of both the film and the literary rights in Tolkien's works are actively patrolling their frontiers.

Yours sincerely,
Rayner S. Unwin.

2852 14th Avenue West
Seattle, WA 98119

...I appreciate your comments on "First Person Plural" in Universe 10. I got a kick out of your comparisons to Harlan's DV series, because as it happens, I wrote FPP (in 1973) because Harlan said he needed to fill on more spot in TLDV. He hated FPP a whole lot! Of course the original ending was a real downer; when the split comes, Melanie reverts to turnip status and Ed to the bottle. Later I decided those two had too much going for them, to end up that way, and changed things. And sold the story to Scott Edelstein, for one of those Aurora Pubs anthos that was never published (I got paid though; I yelled on SFWA-VP stationery until Aurora did pay). Then the rights reverted (4 years later) so I tried FPP on Terry. As usual he came up with suggestions that improved the work; as editors go, Terry Carr has the best ear for words in the business!

From your review, I think you might also like my other story published by Terry: "If This Is Winnetka, You Must Be Judy" in Universe 5. If you can locate a copy at this late date...

Best,
F.M. Busby

717 Willow Avenue
Hoboken, NJ 07030

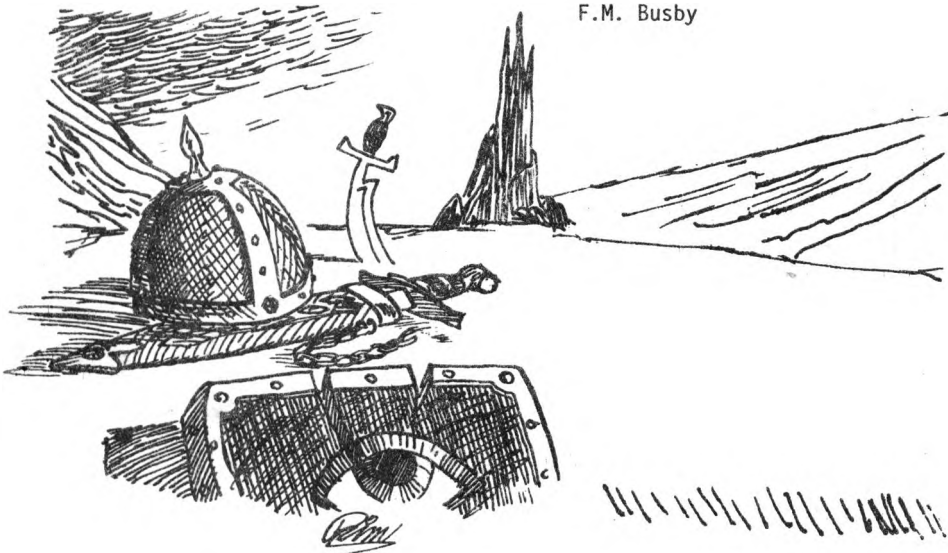
...I did pause long enough to read your comments on the production of Iolanthe you attended; as a lover of G&S, I entirely agree that 100% fidelity to the text becomes more and more counterproductive as time passes. For a reading edition, we should, of course, have the original, with footnotes explaining that which no longer has relevance to the here-and-now. But Gilbert was a master satirist, so that the principle of his jibes remains just as funny now as they were then; all we need are immediate references. And some specific things, to which nobody objected at the time, would be most offensive today--such as "the nigger serenader" in Ko-Ko's little list. The "little list" needs to be updated, perhaps every year, but it will always be delightful if the updaters have a genuine sense of humor. (Who knows--perhaps even "the science-fictionist" could be fitted in by a genius in such a way that we'd chuckle at ourselves without taking offense.)

...Right now, I'm working on my first draft of an essay on the Tremaine ASTOUNDING for possible inclusion in a book on the magazine by Robert Weinberg. In the course of the draft, I wanted to make some brief comments on what AMAZING STORIES was like in 1934, as compared to the Tremaine issues. I made them; a few days later, I received a box of old AMAZINGS from Bob Madle (I'd foolishly disposed of my pulsize issues in 1967 or thereabouts, thinking I'd never need them again) which included all the 1934 issues. Well, my memory proved to be rather good--but I still had to revise those few paragraphs after looking over the issues carefully.

Sincerely yours,
Robert A.W. Lowndes

230 Bannerdale Rd.
Sheffield S11. 9FE.
England

Many thanks for the superb copy of NIEKAS which took only nine days to get here. [the advantages of air mail, folks. ed.] A terrific Fabian cover, and very pleased to see you didn't disfigure it by running lettering across. No doubt an 'off the mind's cuff' illo, but reminds me strongly of the Blondin legend of the musician who tours the castles of Europe singing like the clappers until he found the one holding King Richard when the captive king joined in the ballad. Must be wonderful to be able to draw like that. The bacover suffered in contrast I'm



afraid. The interior art was variable, but still good ninety percent of the time (I exclude my own work from that statement) and none of it rated the Elmer Crud award so hotly contested in many a fanzine. Keep up the good work...

Not too happy about the three column layout, apart from leaving the eyes on permanent scan and feeling like a radar antenna on fast sweep, it shows up the unjustified margins too much. Why not try a two-column issue which should minimise these two snags.. AND pack in a few more words...or of course, you could buy a micro and a word processor.....OK, skip that idea.for a year or two at the outside..by which time such widgetry will have dropped to a feasible level (although paper, postage, and stencils or whatever will all have risen astronomically). [your the first to cast a "no" vote on the three column format. we did try two-column in NIEKAS 23. most of the people we have questioned locally advise us that the eye has less distance to travel to return to margin left. we DO lose about 10% from each page for wordage but it allows for greater flexibility when it comes time to place the art. we did look into possibly going to a word processor but the cost simply could not be rationalized away. like you say: "some day...". ed.]

Was also interested in Ed's talk on blind dogs (i.e. guide dogs for the blind...wonder how long direct radar/nerve transplants might be in the future..not far I'd hazard. Noted Ed says he isn't a dog lover.. depends on what he means by that.. but I would have thought he held his own guider in high esteem...yes, no?

On public radio...I retch not so quietly into the nearest container. In the UK, we have 4 BBC channels, and also in Sheffield, two local ones...and god the DREK. Radio 1 and 2, Radio Sheffield and Radio Hallam, all exist on a diet of 80% pop music (which I loath) 10% sport (likewise) and 10% local gossip and advertising. That leaves Radio 3, which is the best of the lot..and Radio 4. 3 is the highbrow programme ..trouble is it goes to the other extreme....experimental concerto for drum and dustbin lid, or somesuch...whereas 4 is TALK...books, sport, biography, news, chat shows and the like. Of the lot, the only one I occasionally give ear space to is Radio 3.

On the Hugo/fanzine/prozine award debate. I realise the problem, but its solution seems as complex as the 'define SF' debate. One can only block in areas and hope the

judges will interpret them sensibly. Off hand, I'd say a prozine is one which pays for its contributions at the official (UNION) market rate, and brings in sufficient revenue to rate a tax assessment...i.e. PROFIT over and above all its working expenses, with enough lolly to keep its publisher from other forms of occupation. OK, it has loopholes... but you can't plug 'em all.... imagine a fanzine publishing millionaire who buys ANALOG, changes not one whit of its contents, but GIVES IT AWAY...i.e. no commercial revenue, no counter sales (but if a newsagent handles it, the millionaire pays him a cut). YOU get your ANALOG exactly as it is now...the millionaire foots all the bills, including artwork, story purchases, etc. He has him a super fanzine... now would that be rate fan or pro?? ???

Spider Robinson's filk song...ugh. To complement it, I really enjoyed the Voyager article (MORE) [try and stop me! sherwood] and thought the Hal Clement piece a real scoop.... Hal is a real nice guy..in his alter ego hat of Harry Stubbs, he collected Val and I from Logan airport and ferried us to the Sheraton...even offered to host us a week at his home, but we declined with grateful thanks as we new he had a full week of meetings etc. Still, it was very kind of him to make the offer.

Piers Anthony..sorry,, don't dig the Tarot series..too anthropomorphic with all the aliens rather like muppets....humans in fancy costumes.. but all the old sex drives etc.

Full marks for the reviews..just the kind I like, brief, to the point and, after telling me what a book is about, let me make up my own mind about buying it. Keep 'em coming that way.

A GREAT issue..

All the best,
Terry Jeeves

CSC 4-37 Armor
Ft. Knox, KY 40121

billions and billions
of NIEKAS filling
the night sky..



Uh...that's what Carl Sagan would say.

N looks like an XLNT zine to me;

can't fault it for layout anywhere. The three column type is an excellent way of getting max art into space.

Your covers are excellent (thought I would have reversed them, I can see the temptation to put the great SF on front cover; but you can't be a zine title up front) [?] but your interior art doesn't stand up to it in most cases (excepts are illos on 7 (hmm that don't count; JG [Jack Gaughan] is a pro), 11 [Lawrence Laflam], 13 [Gale Turner], 15 [John Geisel]...that's about it).

Hope your havin' a happy

Capt. David Heath Jr., Cdr.

405 33 1/2 St., Apt. 2
Virginia Beach, VA 23451

...[If you are interested in Edgar Cayce] I would suggest you start out with There Is a River, The Sleeping Prophet, or both. I like There Is a River better for its in-depth stuff, but The Sleeping Prophet reads faster and is perhaps more entertaining. The book I read first was Many Mansions. I had avoided Cayce for years, thinking he was tied in with the occult, witchcraft, and black magic, and had always assumed reincarnation was just a superstition without knowing anything about it. When I was working for Caesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers in Livingston, California, I became good friends with the local librarian. We had many interests in common, and she began to hunt up books for me to read. One day she handed me Gina Cerminara's Many Mansions. I looked at it, said, "Oh no, that's Edgar Cayce, that's the occult, I don't touch that stuff." She said, "This is different, you'll like it, just give it a try." Because I trusted her, I did try it, and discovered that far from being a superstition, reincarnation explained many missing links in my understanding of God, life, and the world. Not only that, I have since found that serious parapsychological research is being done in this and many other fields, with very significant results.

Though I find most science and technology, especially astronomy, fascinating, I have tended rather to dislike most science fiction because it seemed to emphasize violence and horror and was disgustingly sexist. Partly for these reasons, I mostly stick to women science fiction writers, as they tend to deal with relationships between human and human, human and alien, and human and nature (earth, space, or other planets). They tend to bring in ethics and religion. They also, and

this seems an odd trend to me, tend to write a lot about parapsychology: ESP, kinetics, the ethical use of the psychic, and so on. When they do have violence, it will be fighting "thread" instead of people, or struggling to overcome and move away from the violence, and they will often take a seemingly disadvantageous ethical path when they could be more violent. They don't seem to glory in it, and tend to give some depth of character or interest to even the worst of enemies. Some men, of course, do this too. Tolkien made me feel great regret for Saruman, and even hinted at the loss that was Sauron. And there are some women writers I don't care for, and some men I prefer, like Poul Anderson. If writers in science were also warmly human and deeply into people, I could read the more scientific sf happily. As it is, I tend to stick more to the fantasy side. These are, of course, generalizations, and I'd love to hear of books that disprove any of the above prejudices.

Elizabeth Titcomb

6721 E. McDowell, #309-A
Scottsdale, AZ 85257

First of all, let me say how delighted I am with John Geisel's illustrations for the Barnacle. His Beowulf is exactly what I had in mind; and while the monsters of the original were probably seals and water snakes, John's drawing of Grendel's Cub Scout troop on an overnight hike suits my version much better.

In fairness to myself, I must point out that my perfectly reasonable request for the vivisection of Mike Bastraw was prompted not by the appearance of my name in very small type on the heading of the Alexander interview, which did not bother me in the slightest, but by my holding him responsible (erroneously, he claims) for the attribution of my LoC on Falstaff, Shakespeare, etc. to Archie Mercer. His aspersions on my mental health are ungentlemanly and unwarranted; and I would take pen in hand to tell him so directly, but the people here at the Home don't allow me access to sharp objects.

Ed, you claim to have gone to a production of IOLANTHE in the town of Center Sandwich; personally I refuse to believe a town called Center Sandwich could exist outside the pages of Gilbert and Sullivan! Correct me if I am wrong on this, but isn't IOLANTHE the source of the only known (to me at least) bowdlerization of G&S? The lines in

question are: "Is this the Court of Exchequer?/ Be firm, be firm, my pecker"--which in British English refers to the proverbial Stiff Upper Lip, but in American usage (USage?) means Something Quite Different, and is therefore always altered or deleted.

Your mention of the first-night joke on Captain Shaw which became a standard part of the performance reminds me--especially coming at this time of the year--of another first-night fluke which explains why everybody always stands up during the Hallelujah Chorus. It seems that



at the first performance of Handel's Messiah, King George stood up to leave at the conclusion of the preceding passage, under the impression that it was time for the intermission. When the King rises, of course, everybody else in the theater has to stand up also. The King, finding himself mistaken, remained standing during the Chorus and then went out. Naturally, everybody else did the same; and for some reason this has been perpetuated in every subsequent performance.

Speaking of technology and the blind, there is a group here in the Valley which reads newspapers and magazines to the print-handicapped over closed-circuit radio. Is this a common practice? It seems an excellent idea for making available publications which are too ephemeral to be worth committing to Braille or tape.

I assume the Bouillon a la Godfrey served in Buck Coulson's snack bar for Crusaders is made from Jerusalem artichokes....

Piers Anthony's modest proposal for a fan campaign to get his books into libraries sounds as if he is planning to adopt for himself Hilaire Belloc's self-epitaph: "His sins were scarlet, but his books were read." I enjoyed his article on how he does his books, but one on how he does his sins would be even more interesting. (He is perhaps a Murgatroyd on his mother's side?)

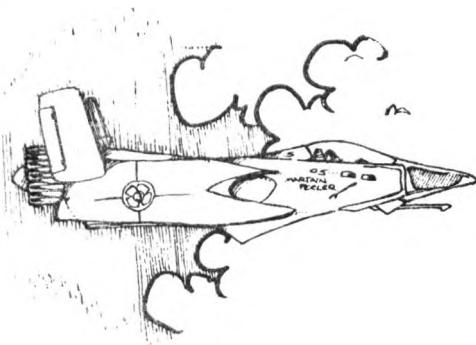
I did eventually read Hasan, by the way, and liked it--somewhat to my surprise, as I generally prefer a more morally serious secondary universe to one like that of the Arabian Nights, in which the principal values seem to be low cunning and upward mobility. I thought the hero pretty much of a fool in the opening chapters, but he improved greatly upon further acquaintance.

Ben Indick's remark that C.S. Lewis might have become a Moonie seems to me a ridiculous statement to make about someone as relentlessly committed to reason as Lewis. A professor of mine once remarked that Lewis was a natural Platonist who found himself compelled to be an Aristotelian, which really rings the bell: Lewis was very much attracted to the making of poetic myths about the transcendent, but in his role as expounder and defender of the faith had to rely on logic and reason. Anyone who wants to know more about the psychology of the "most dejected and reluctant convert in all England" should read one of his two autobiographies, Surprised by Joy (narrative) or The Pilgrim's Regress (allegorical).

Ben is also off base when he accuses Charles Williams of upper-class snobbery; Williams was probably the only Inklings who was not from the upper or upper-middle classes. He was the son of a shopkeeper and had to leave the University of London in his first year because the family finances couldn't stand the strain. He was also very active in the adult education movement, teaching evening classes for workingmen, unlike the others, who were all connected with the elite universities. In fact, when he lectured at Oxford, many of the Establishment types were so put off by his Cockney accent that they didn't bother to listen to what he had to say. I don't recall any instances of anti-Semitism in his books, though Shadows of Ecstasy is certainly racist (also a very lousy book). I think there were a couple of Jewish bad guys (goys?) in his novels; but that was because he was making use of the Cabalistic tradition as a vehicle of the demonic (a view which perhaps many Jews would endorse).

It's not clear to me whether Ben's final explosion of disgust is inspired by the Inklings' opinions or merely by their choice of a name; if the former, it gives me a good excuse to quote the opening paragraphs of the Dorothy L. Sayers essay "Dante and Charles Williams":

"When Edward Fitzgerald scribbled to a friend, 'Mrs. Browning is dead;



we shall have no more Aurora Leighs, thank God!" he was only being flippant in a deplorably tasteless way. But when certain academic persons...expressed a similar relief at the passing of Charles Williams, they probably meant rather more by it, and expressed, unintentionally, a very much higher tribute to the dead. A chronic irritation had been removed from the intellectual atmosphere, and they breathed more freely."

'Few things are more striking than the change that has taken place during my own lifetime in the attitude of the intelligentsia toward the spokesmen of Christian opinion. When I was a child, bishops expressed doubts about the Resurrection, and were called courageous. When I was a girl, G.K. Chesterton professed belief in the Resurrection "in a spiritual sense," and were called advanced (any other kind of belief was called obsolete, and its professors were held to be simple-minded). When I was middle-aged, a number of lay persons, including some poets and writers of popular fiction, put forward rational arguments for the Resurrection, and were called courageous. Today, any lay apologist for Christianity, who is not a clergyman and whose works are sold and read, is likely to be abused in no uncertain terms as a mountebank, a reactionary, a tool of the Inquisition, a spiritual snob, and intellectual bully, an escapist, an obstructionist, a psychopathic introvert, an insensitive extrovert, and an enemy of society. The charges are not always mutually compatible, but the common animus behind them is unmistakable, and its name is fear. Writers who attack these domineering Christians are called courageous."

"The wheel, it would appear, has come full circle. But in fact the situation is very different from what it was in my childhood. Then, the heretical bishops and the laymen whose lead they were in fact following were thought of as attacking a kind of bastille of inert and outworn tyranny; the

experiment of contemporary anti-Christian polemic is felt, on the contrary, to be standing in the breach against the threat of an invading, or at least of a revolutionary, army, possibly...of a gang of jailbreakers...."

(I should point out that this was written at least 30 years ago, long before the Moral Majority. But I expect it still holds true for many professional intellectuals, who use the threat of the MM, with its often highly unchristian views, as an excuse to reject the literary expression of Christian belief in any form.)

Steyn rix in thine herte,
Anne Braude

12 Thompson Lane
Milton, MA 02187

[In re: "Air of Righteousness"]
...I like the pic [by John Geisel] very much; if you had not been so kind [as to send it], I would have written asking to purchase the original--something I have not done with the Ace one!

There were a few typos in the article, but little really worrisome; I doubt that the average citizen will be seriously confused by three l's in "allowing". A few points which may conceivably give rise to reader questions:

On p. 26 middle column, slightly below the middle, my "origin of error" became "margin of error", which doesn't make very much sense; and in the right hand column of p. 28 there are three places where a line of my copy was skipped by the typist. I enclose a xerox with specifics. I don't know that's it's worth coming up with an erratum in the next issue, but you might be ready if someone asks you instead of me what I was trying to say.

There were a few other places where there are commas rather than periods, or a final "d" which changes the tense of the verb, but I find with embarrassment that these were my own mistakes, so I will, blushing, say no more. If Greg Press ever puts out a hard-cover edition of The Nitrogen Fix as a "Classic" and wants the article to go with it, as they did with Mission of Gravity, I'll do a more thorough repair job; in the meantime, congratulations and thanks.

Sincerely,
Hal Clement

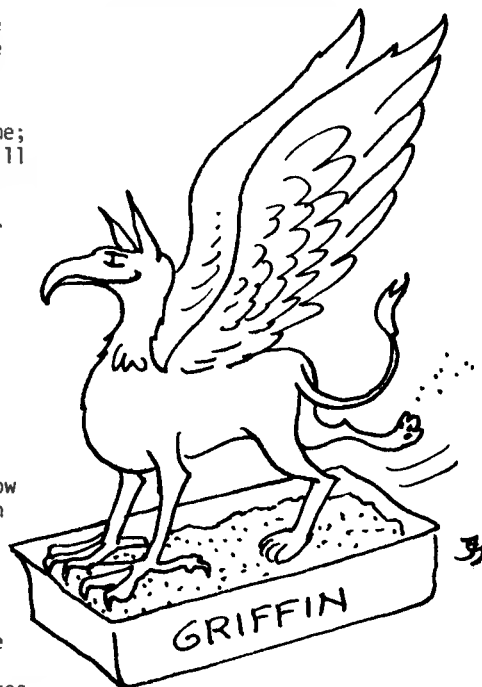
[I hope that this proves, once and for always, that we don't

descriminate between amateur and pro--we typo everyone with the same reckless abandon. ed.]

53 Prescott St.
Pasadena, CA

...I don't like fanzines in general but NIEKAS 23 had a lot more to it. I liked a lot of the articles and parts of Bumbejimas. I particularly remember the bits on energy; I am glad someone besides me is worried about coal; I personally think it is worse than nuclear even though I am no champion of nuclear power either.

There seems to be a lot of conservative reaction to the environmental movement. I keep hearing people say that the environmentalists are completely anti-technology and want everyone to go live in a cave. I don't know where they get these ideas because I have never met anyone who thinks



that way. There are some aspects of technology I would like to get turned off (like nuclear and smog-producing engines) but I don't think you would call me an anti-tech. guy. I think you have to use technology to get around these problems.

Solar power satellites? I've got mixed feelings on that sucker. Of course I like the industrialization of space and the like, but there are several things I don't like about the SPS. Mainly, it would be centralized. I want to get away from that and have the solar technology owned by individuals as part of

their homes. [What would the factories use? erm] You stick up an SPS, the power company owns it, and can charge anything they want for the electricity. I guess the Russians would really like to see us send one up. They could send up a 50¢ laser and zap them all. But trying an SPS would give us a lot of spinoff technology. For instance, it would encourage factories to switch over to the new method of mass-producing solar cells. There is a way, right now, to produce solar cells at 50¢/watt. The trouble is there is not enough of an immediate market to pay for the retooling. But if a couple SPS were put up, it would be worth doing for the company that got the contract. Then the others would have to do it to meet the competition.

There is also the question of microwaves which no one really knows how it will effect people. You are beaming back megawatts of power; there has to be some kind of damage. The thing would really have to be isolated. You know what a microwave oven can do that runs on a few hundred watts.

They did a special program on the SPS on a short wave station in Holland that I listen to. They had concluded that the microwave radiation would disrupt the ionosphere, burning a hole where the beam was. This would disrupt radio communications that pass through that area. A guy working on the project said that the efficiency of conversion was only 30%. Since the cells themselves are only 10% efficient, that means that only 3% gets to the consumer. [Yes, but for 24 hours a day including when it is cloudy or raining. erm]

We should try one or two and test them thoroughly before going whole hog. Too many cars at once without considering pollution or too many nuclear plants without finding a place for the waste are examples of going too far, too fast. You don't want to put up 200-300 SPSs and

have the whole world depending on them before you know all the consequences. Personally, I would still like to see the small decentralized stuff which will probably win-out in the end.

Diana Paxson's article about general systems theory was really interesting. It was almost like listening to Jack Garris on the radio. Diana talked about how you need to merge science and technology with fantasy and poetry and magical thinking. That is what Garris is always talking about; the balancing of the right and left halves of the brain.

Fred Lerner's piece about the industrializing of space was also very interesting.

The interview with Lloyd Alexander made it sound like he is someone who I should find out about. Apparently he has written some pretty decent fantasy stuff.

The one article I couldn't get into was the one about the Archetypes in Tolkien. I waded through it because it was about Tolkien, but basically it left me cold. I just don't care about things that tear apart and analyze fantasy stories. A friend who likes Tolkien summed it up real good. "The only real way to enjoy Tolkien is to sit by the fire with a glass of cider, kick up your furry feet, and enjoy the damned thing." I agree with him 100%.

The excerpts from NASA reports were really nice.

That damned disaster, RETURN OF THE KING, on TV. That thing sucked, didn't it? When that song "Where there's a Whip, There's a Way" came on, I grabbed my electronic board and a handful of parts and built a generator as fast as I could. I got it on the air about the middle of the song and tore the whole thing up. My friend in Altadena, about 3 miles away, was watching it too and said that it blacked his TV out. Boy was I mad at that thing. What a

piece of trash.

Some dude in the lettercol was interested in old time radio. I have a lot of the DIMENSION X's and such. If he wants to contact me, I would be glad to dub them for him.

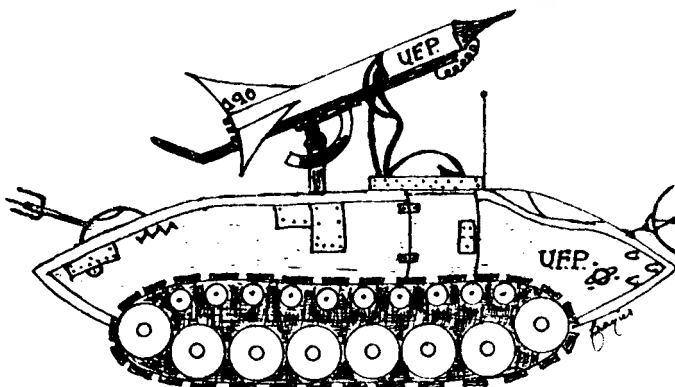
Roger Stewart

1638 Barker Ave.
Lawrence, KA 66044

...In some ways I feel out of it in responding to the magazine's content, in other ways still very much in touch. This past fall I was given my own section of Literature for Children (only a temporary lectureship, alas, while someone is on leave [from KU]). Out of the correspondence study ghetto, where I've taught the course for years, and onto the main campus! I've enjoyed this immensely, and will for one more semester, but it has meant that I have not worked as Jim Gunn's assistant in Science Fiction and have kept up much better in children's fantasy than in SF (though I'm looking forward to Jim's new novel The Dreamers to come out in January 1981).

Anne Braude may like to know what fantasies I've been teaching. Fall term it was The Hobbit, The Wind in the Willows, The Animal Family, Tuck Everlasting, and Half Magic. This spring we'll do The Dark is Rising, The Wind in the Willows, The Gammage Cup, The Mouse and His Child, and The House with a Clock in Its Walls. I read Anne's piece on Susan Cooper (I'd definitely rank The Dark is Rising as the best novel in the sequence of five) and am madly curious as to what other two authors she'll be writing about. Anne, you said three women-- and then didn't tell who the other two would be. That's unfairly tantalizing!

Have other NIEKAS readers found Unfinished Tales as moving and enthralling as Anne Etkin and I did?



I'm enraged, though, at Houghton Mifflin's lack of promotion and advertising and its unrealistically small 1st printing, as though just a few hardcore Tolkien addicts might buy it. They didn't bother to go after other readers. Lots of bookstores ran out just before Christmas. I understand it's seen very little review or promotion in England as well.

Nan Scott

Rt 3
Hartford City, IN 47348

CRUSADER SERVICE CENTER

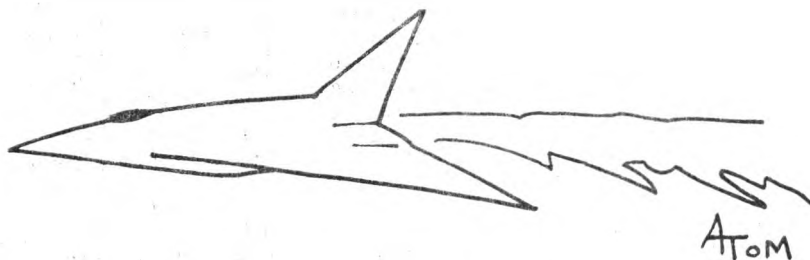
HORSES FUELED
HOOVES CHECKED
VISORS CLEANED
ARMOR VACUUMED & DELOUSED
OIL CHANGE FOR ALL WEAPONS
Boullion a la Godfrey
served in our Snack Bar

...while John Geisel's interior art is okay, the only time we used cover art as poor as his bacoover was when the artist had it printed and sent us the required number of copies at his own expense (And who was, besides, a nice person we didn't want to offend.)

[sometimes fanzine editors DON'T have the best of tastes in art. fortunately this is not true in OUR case--Ed excepted, of course. I respect your opinion but don't agree with it. by stretching my imagination to the utmost, I can view John's piece as average, but certainly no lower. but you know what they say about opinions... mike]

Geez, if you have a "seeing-eye parrot" couldn't you just dispense with the apparatus and teach the bird to describe the surroundings? "High curb" or "turn left" shouldn't be any more difficult than "Polly wants a cracker". Of course, teaching it to use each term at the proper moment might be more difficult, but I have faith in Science.

All too often in politics the choice is between fanaticism and greed. New Hampshire picked fanaticism (I assume your Bircher governor is personally honest, thought that doesn't always hold true.) [Uncle Mel didn't make it after all. ed.] In Congress, we have Abscam, and the number of congressmen who were both proven guilty and reelected. In Indiana we have the case of the former president of the state senate who was just convicted of accepting a bribe--he was reelected while his trial was going on. (He didn't run for senate



presidency again, but the man who got the job just said how terrible it is that Edwards was convicted--not terrible that he took the money, just terrible that he got caught at it--and that of course the state legislature won't bother to crank up impeachment machinery for a mere peccadillo.) Of course, in the really nasty cases, you get fanaticism and greed combined.

I doubt that many of the organizations like SCA or Heyer fandom allow people to "participate" in the cultures of historic periods. They allow people to play at participating, while remaining in a sanitized, insect-reduced environment. (I don't know positively, but I doubt very much if Renaissance Faire costumes include the lice.) Of course, if Moonwolf's folksong description of Penzic #4 is accurate, SCA may come closer than most--hornets in the codpiece is not a matter normally discussed in dreams of knights in shining armor. Neither is falling down in the mud and being unable to get up without help, though I'm sure it happened often enough in reality. Still, the lovely recipes from medieval times are not usually prepared with the rotten meat that was the original reason for all those spices, and in general the amount of participation is minimal.

[Although the SCA is frankly intended to be the Middle Ages "not as they were but as they ought to have been", I think that participation is in many ways a more realistic experience of a foreign culture than that of a traveler who stays at the Nairobi Hilton and thinks he's been to Africa. Fighters get real bruises, and cooks deal with real fires, as well as all the insects attendant on camping out. But none of those are peculiarly medieval. It is the different body movement required by a medieval costume, and the different psychological perspective involved in the swearing of fealty to a King that give one the sense of having been 'somewhere else'. Many SCA members have gone on to become entertainers at the Renaissance Faire, where they must remain 'in character' (including Elizabethan dialect) and in costumes consisting of 80 lbs. of buckram and brocade for 8 hour days in 90° heat.

Of course the amount of involvement varies from person to person, but all those organizations are intended to transform the participant from a 'viewer' to a 'doer' at least for a little while. The changes in perspective are far more significant than changes in physiology. dlp]

Would I pass up a Hugo? Why not? Why am I any less ethical than Andy Porter, who declared STARSHIP a professional magazine and ineligible? Or George Scithers, who passed up a sure win (he did win, the next year) by removing AMRA from competition when he was on the DC Worldcon committee? (At a time when he had not yet won a Hugo, incidentally.) The differentiation between fanzine and promag is simple; a promag pays for material--or promises to pay, since there have been a few that didn't come across--and a fanzine pays only in the traditional copy (or copies) of the issue in which the material appears. You find any evidence that an editor has paid or promised to pay cash for material, and he has a prozine. Circulation doesn't matter a damn, nor do profits. (Recognized prozines quite often fail to produce profits; that's why so many of them cease to exist.)

Harlan Ellison has gotten away with saying essentially the same things in public since he was a rank (very) neofan. His writing has improved considerably during that time, and therefore has provably no relationship to either his public utterances or the public's tolerance for them.

Your comments on Noreascon art sound like they went back to the old system of written bids only. [my mistake--pieces did go to auction after 8 bids. mike]

Marvelous article by Clement, and interesting background on one of the two best science-fiction books of the year (the other being Dragon's Egg, of course).

[in re: Anne Braude's COSMOS review] "...science and religion have pretty much agreed that their areas of study do not overlap." How does the Moral Majority stand on that?

You omitted the "Crusader Service Center" heading from my letter, which

was the point of all the rest of the heading that you included. (I mean, when one is presented with several reams of paper with "Crusader Service Center" printed on it, what else can one do?) It was sort of like printing an entire feghoot except for the punchline. [the person responsible has been thoroughly thrashed. hand me the liniment, eh? mike]

All too often I neglect to comment on artwork (a failing which is shared by all too many fans, according to artists). So...cover is lovely, as is expected from Fabian. Symington's elephant is nice, ~~BUT WHAT DOES IT HAVE TO DO WITH SCIENCE FICTION?~~ and Gaughan's work is also good as expected. One of the best interiors is the item on page 32; credited to Geisel but doesn't look anything at all like the rest of his work. [he did dood it. ed.] Enjoyed the Jeeves work.

Buck Coulson

234 East 19th Street
Brooklyn, NY 21226

...I am enclosing the three verses [of "Nuke the Whales"] composed independently by Bob Lipton and myself.

Bob was inspired by "all the lovely people who seem to take gratuitous pleasure from wrecking the world", including supporters of technology like Greg Costikyan and myself. Ray Heuer informed him that there is already a song "Nuke the Whales", which Ray had heard on the DOCTOR DEMENTO SHOW. However, I have never heard the song and don't know what the tune is. Ray is of the opinion that Bob's song is superior to the professional product anyway.

My views are rather more complicated. "Nuke the Whales" as a slogan has become a cynical response to some of the currently popular Causes. Saving the large whales from extinction is a popular activity with people who have dropped out of the anti-war movement, or watched it die on them, and have since undertaken the preservation of animals other than human beings. Actually, attacks on the killing of whales makes good economic sense for Americans. If the Japanese can be prevented from killing whales for food, they will instead have to import more meat, and who is the world's biggest exporter of food? Every whale we can keep the Japanese from eating means another herd of beef cattle that the United States can sell to Japan. And, considering the price that beef is now bringing in Japan, the Save-the-Whales campaign is good for

America's balance of payments. It also gratifies Americans who are still feeling sore about Pearl Harbor...

Stay well,
John Boardman

Post Office Box 606
La Canada-Flintridge, CA 91011

...The problem of getting people interested enough in space to demand an enlarged program seems to be beyond my grasp. If the Saturn pictures cannot do it, I have no idea what can.



And even if we got them interested, the main problem still remains the President of the USA. He determines the way NASA goes. History....

Eisenhower tried to keep space peaceful, and ignored the US Army and its set of German Rocket Scientists. Well, we all know the sad story of the Vanguard Project. Here was a project that set out to do something never before done. They did it, within the original schedule, within the original budget. They developed a new rocket, a space tracking network, new launch procedures, and got up three Vanguard satellites. But of course, timing is everything, and we remember Vanguard today as a failure, and it really wasn't.

But Eisenhower did start up the Mercury Program. And then came JFK. I voted against him, and yet he, of all the Presidents, put money into NASA and said....."go to the moon, and other things". We tend to forget the other things, they are such commonplace parts of our lives....the weather and communications satellites, the Air Force Spy Birds, and that sort of thing.

Johnson too, bless him, poured money into NASA. But it was here that NASA seemed to be drifting away from the ability to explain and justify its efforts to the taxpayers.

So along came Nixon, who, after trying to hog all the glory and credit for Apollo, slashed the budget, gutted Apollo, and in 1972 committed the crime of the Century.

He opted for a cheap shuttle, a second rate system instead of the first rate system the USA was capable of, damn him. So Ford agreed with him.

Then Carter....."No New Frontiers" he said, and we wound up with a third rate shuttle that may never get off the ground.

The future of NASA, and the space program, hangs on Reagan, and on nobody else. If he will back us, support us, give us funds, and so on....and remember it will be at least five years before the improved results come on line....maybe we can worry about teaching kids about the space program.

Right now, I am so worried that soon we may not have any space program. JPL is just about down and out, and the latest muddle with the IUS hasn't improved things. And the shuttle.....well, all I can say is I refuse to ride in Nixon's Flying Dumbo.

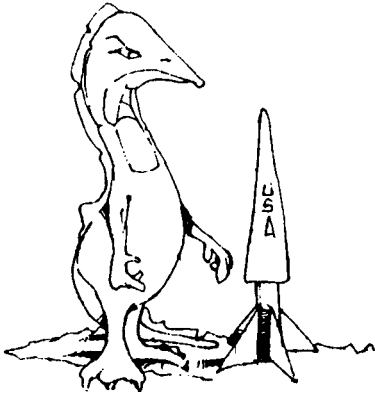
Still, in terms of education, we do have COSMOS. I regard this series as one of the more important things to happen to TV, along with CIVILIZATION and CONNECTIONS.

By now I am sure you have seen the way the fan press has torn it to rags. Well, it may have some weaknesses. But since Sagan wasn't trying to reach them, it doesn't matter.

Who was he trying to reach? Well, the whole series ties together, altho most fans have overlooked this. The key is the Alexandria Library, very prominent in the first and last episodes. It was destroyed.... and much of value with it. It was done by mobs with no idea of what was going on inside. Sagan is trying to reach those people who once before burned books, to explain to them the importance of science. He is trying to use TV to stop the mobs before they once again go on the rampage in ignorance. [see Bastraw's Bastion. ed.]

And this explains his constant put-downs of religion that upset your NIEKAS reviewer [Anne Braude. ed.]. Because he is right....of all the forces that have caused misery, poverty, ignorance....and who have opposed science if it looks if it might break their power over peoplereligion is it.

Because Sagan knows something else. Something a lot of us know, but cannot seem to convey to other people....we are on the brink of Nuclear Suicide. This is not a scare phrase....as those of us who read THE BULLETIN OF THE ATOMIC SCIENTISTS know.



I think COSMOS is going to become recognized as one of the most important creations of PBS....and to hell with the so-called fans who already think they know it all. I've met these know-it-alls....and find that none of them can explain what an INTERMEDIATE VECTOR BOSON is, for example, or the implications of oscillating neutrinos. And more important, they cannot explain to someone else, coherently, what they do know. Sagan can.

One last snide comment to AJB. If you think Science and Church are at all reconciled....bring up Evolution, and learn fast that Science and Religion are still basically incompatible.

As for the Hal Clement article, all I can say is that I wish I had been able to publish it! But one nagging point. I quote from his article.... well, it's a bit long, but it is at the start of page 28.

The Greenhouse effect. I think Clement underestimated its effect.

OK, every one now knows that Venus has a runaway greenhouse effect. At some point in its past, it got hot enough so that the carbon dioxide locked up in carbonates was "boiled off", so to speak, and this resulted in a catastrophic runaway. Several scientists at JPL have come up with the disturbing fact that Earth may have as much CO₂ as Venuslocked up in the rocks. Given the Nitrogen Fix, the increased CO₂ and the increased water vapour, the question is whether or not the tip-over point has been reached, as far as Clement's story goes. I think this is something to think about.

The fact that we know so little about Venus is one of the reasons why the Venus Orbiting Imaging Radar (VOIR) is one of NASA's top priority planet exploration program. And the question of how much CO₂ and H₂O is needed for a one-way greenhouse effect is one of the reasons.

...And I hope you all enjoyed the Saturn pictures....JPL may be going out of the planetary exploration business, but by god we are going out in style, by the numbers, and one the bounce. And we have made our names to SHINE...

Harry J.N. Andruschak

[Thank you for your comments, I was hoping that I would get more than one LoC out of the 350 or so NIEKAS that were sent out. I tend to agree with you of the Sagan program. I am, needless to say, a little pissed that the book burners are the ones who get the press and they were the ones Sagan was aiming for. Unfortunately I haven't seen much of the fan press concerning COSMOS. It is probably just as well, I might have written LoCs that I would be sorry for. I have a very short fuse when it comes to people who put down efforts to enlighten the general public. If these so-called fans who are putting down COSMOS had the guts to come out from behind their false face of intelligence and practice what they are claiming to preach, perhaps the general public would take more interest in science.

As for the space program, if it is all up to the President then it is the President we need to work on. Maybe some of the readers of NIEKAS could help by writing a letter to the President and encourage friends to do the same. At this point I think anything is worth a try. I still feel that teaching the kids is a good way to get us back on the right track in the future.

Fans are the people that are supposed to be prepared for the future because they read science fiction. Would it be too much to expect from them to ask them to try and shape the future. Or are they too wrapped up in their own little worlds (alien probably) to be concerned with the one they really live in? scf.]

...Rafe's article pulled me off guard in re: computer problemville. Just got a new one at work and it's insulting how stupid we mere humans are with typos and all. GIGO doesn't seem to fit...ours has been dubbed: FRED--F_____ing Ridiculous Electronic Device....Murphy--Q.E.D.--"Laws" & all.

...Even after knowing Ed for long-times I still am amazed by his "looks" at sight and non-same. It must be really educational to those who have not had the pleasure of exploring an alternate world with a non-sighted friend.

Mike - I must state that I have my own admiration society for Master Ellison and as far as I am concerned,

if any argument he has is right - why should it be a silent one? Anyone who has the nerve to speak up usually is more than happy to pay the price whether it be in cash or notoriety. He does both. 'Nuff said on Sir Ellison. [whence came knighthood? mb]

onward & upward...
Margaret Shepard

1666 Preston St.
Halifax, NS
Canada B3H 3V3

I'd be delighted to have you distribute Stardance to the blind. As soon as I can I will tape some short stories...

...Just got NIEKAS 24 and it is, as usual exemplary. Small glitch - someone [it was somebody else. mb.] left out the last three chords to "Ol Man Heinlein" - and nobody caught Ace's misprint of the chords in the third verse - those two A7s in the first line should be G7s. And the last 3 chords are F#7, B7, E.

Yaws,
Spider Robinson

Weran d'Glory
Soliliveien 37
N 1370 ASKER
Norway

I can't recall the details offhand, but there was once a people who had the habit (?) of killing messengers who brought bad news, and I have even heard that they believed that the bad news would be destroyed with their bringers.

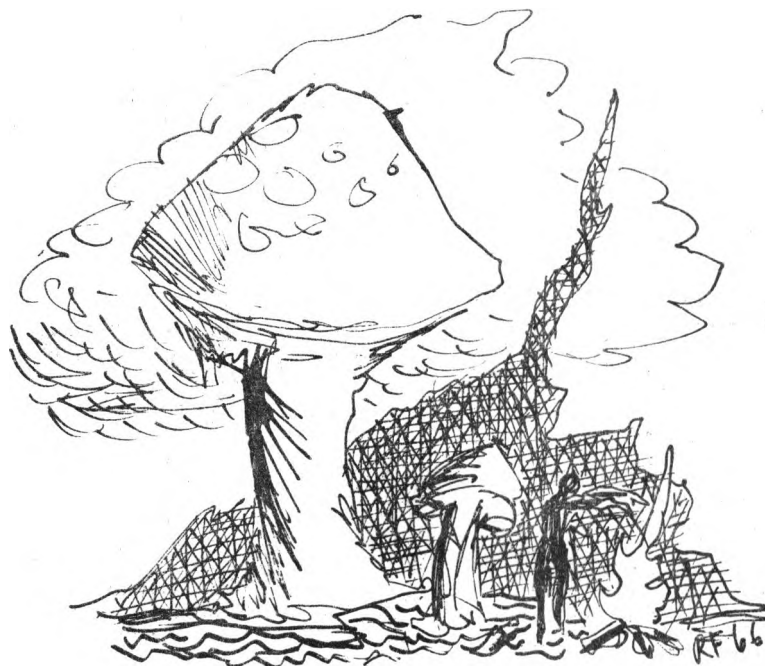


The same logic seems to be in use even today, when people criticize Richard Adams for writing about vivisection in The Plague Dogs. Personally, when I read such comments, I tend to get this mental image of ostriches hiding their heads in the sand. "Don't look at it, maybe it goes away if we ignore it!" seems to be the general idea.

Assume that a man kills another and is dragged to court accompanied by witnesses, evidence, etc., enough to kill him twice. The judge reads the charge and says: "Do you have anything to say to your defense?" and the prisoner says: "No, Your Honour." What if the judge was to say "Nothing? Then it wouldn't be fair to punish you. You can go." Well, you would think he was mad of course. But if the same man had 'merely' abused his position as a superior animal and had nothing to say to his defense, as Dr. Boycott et al do, then it would for some reason be right to leave him alone and not even talk about him..

You (Ed) have also noticed that Powell isn't 100% antivivisectionist, even though he doesn't do more than just tell his daughter rather vaguely about what scientists do to try and find a cure for various diseases. Now if that is an argument for v.s., Snitter is an elephant! Even if it had been such an argument and an expression of Adams' opinion, there would have been nothing contradictory in it. It's been years since pro-v.ists took up the faulty notion that v.s. is v.s. is v.s. is v.s. and if we want it, we want all of it, and the opposite. You might as well say that as the military forces of the world have done a lot of good, it's wrong to ban the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan.

To take off on a couple of sidetracks, Anne Braude (or whatever her name is in clear writing) says that Snitter's trouble doesn't get anyone anywhere. Doesn't it? Let's see, if he hadn't had a fit at Hard Knott he wouldn't have been left there. He wouldn't have departed later, and so he would never have met Mr. Ephriam. Even if he had, he would either have avoided him (being clear enough to understand there was a danger, and not to confuse Mr. E with a vague memory of his master) or never had that vision which caused him to jump out of the car as he did. Mr. E would have survived, and Driver would never have come up from London and raised a panic. Westcott would have chased the two wild dogs away rather than let them raid his car and photograph them, and so Snitter's master would never have found out that he was still alive and where he was. Figure out the



rest yourself. For that matter, if Snitter's ability to understand the tod and willingness to accept his ideas was a result of madness, they wouldn't even have come as far as Hard Knott. So I would rather say that it wouldn't get anyone anywhere if Snitter had been alright...

Then to the happy ending. Look, Adams is an insequelibilizer. That is, it's impossible to write sequels to his books because when he takes up a character, he doesn't let it go before it has been through everything that can happen - and a bit more. And if a character who has been through that much doesn't deserve a happy ending, I'd like to know who does. And a reporter who would call Rowf a white Angora car it could sell more newspapers, changing his mind when the entire situation changes before him, is far more likely than e.g. a group of rabbits running a mile's way to fetch a dog, one of them getting cornered by a cat, and rescued in the nick of time by a nice young human who turns him over to another human who gives him a ride to his doorstep. For that matter, it's more plausible than the beginning of the book. Three things happen that make the dogs' escape possible. 1) Snitter finds a way to get into Rowf's pen. (If he hadn't, Rowf would never have noticed by himself that the door was open. He was asleep.) 2) Tyson is in a hurry, AND he overlooks one of the packets which just happens to be Rowf's. 3) His assistant forgets to close the doors of the furnace. Either of these things has a small chance of happening at any night, the probability of the coincidence of

all three at the same night is infinitesimal. At least it's smaller than the probability that Driver will think more of his headlines than his consistency (an opinion expressed already by Mr. Hogpenny on page 171 in the Penguin version).

So a couple of dogs who have been killing a couple of sheep and happened to be in the vicinity when two men died, wouldn't be "accepted by the general public", eh? Take a look [unreadable] papers and ask people what they remember of an incident similar to that of the dogs. People forget. Maybe except for those who were personally involved, but as far as I understand, Mr. Wood doesn't live in the area concerned at all. And even if people of his hometown did remember the event, what particular reason would they have to associate the story with S&R unless they were told? After all, Britain is full of big black dogs...It might be a bit more difficult with Snitter, though, but nothing near impossible.

Dogs can't see colour. They don't speak English either. And according to one of the last paragraphs of no one else but editor Meskys, they can't understand English.

By the way, TPD has been published in Norwegian recently. If it should interest someone, the Norwegian versions of the baddies work at K.E.D. - the word 'ked' doesn't exist in any language I know...

USE SR1
Write 'e' for the clear short vowel-sound as in 'bet' regardless of present usage. (Eny, redy, sed, etc.)

Ragnar Fyri

NIEKAS 25:71

P.O. Box 149
Centerville, MA 02632

...I have read a couple of good books within the past week. The first was one I happened to stumble across at our local library--A Dreamer's Tales by Lord Dunsany. I was most amazed to see they had purchased a book put out by Owlswick Press. I had wondered if some of the talk I had been laddling out about SF books had finally started to penetrate into their minds. Anyhow I did not question the good fortune of this find, but hurriedly checked the book out and went home to read its delightful contents.

I find Lord Dunsany has an intriguing style--one that I like very much. He has a way of weaving a scene with words so the mind can see the tapestry take shape very easily. He is a most remarkable writer. Suppose I should amend that

to the past tense, was.

Also found a copy of Ursula K. Leguin's The Beginning Place. That one interested me enough to finish it in one day. It was a nice fantasy type of book. Fast reading and quite enjoyable.
[see Review and Comment. ed.]

PEACE,
Sally Ann Syrjala



9 Gables Farm
Rt. 4
Cridersville, OH 45806

...It seems to me that the Michael Moorcock trilogy beginning with Alien Heat and ending with Dancers at the End of Time is a potpourri of pastiches of Victorian writers. In

Epilogue

It's two nights after Christmas and all thru the house
Not a brain is in motion, not even a louse.
The stockings are wrapped-up for next year with care
And all are just sitting-the-blas in a chair.
Clyde and I to Toronto tomorrow we say,
But Funspot's still "in" on the list for today.
When what to our wondering eyes should appear,
But a large man in "Cuda" who must be a seer.
We all drew in our heads and were turning around
When in thru the shed door he came with a bound.
We knew he was spirit, 'cause not really here,
And he spoke so few words, but put Sherwood in fear.
It seems there's a deadline still to be met
Of three pages of typing that are not done yet.
By monday, by monday was all he would say
Then shaking his head he just faded away.

In some distant future, on some distant world
By some little master all shriveled and knurled...
Perhaps we will all learn to finish on time,
But now we're not into our letters or rhyme.

So off to Toronto, tomorrow we go
In a blue and white "cage" that's all covered in snow
Leaving sherwood to finish his ill-started Col.,
Now dash away, dash away, dash away all.
But you'll hear us exclaim, ere we ride out of sight,
"See you all "Cycle Weekend", Happy New Year, goodnight!

-M.M. Shepard
(with apologies to no one)

different passages I detected similarities to Charles Dickens, Lewis Carroll's "Alice" books, Gilbert and Sullivan, Verne, Wells, Oscar Wilde, perhaps G.B. Shaw, Henry James, and other Victorian writers. Many of the dialogues seem to be straight from Dickens: a morbid sort of writing. There is really not a great deal of action which ensues. The storyline comes nearly to a standstill while the characters display themselves via conversation. Mrs. Emily's prudery is to be found in many Victorian novels for the ladies. One of the characters uses a time machine in the form of a bicycle which one rides so fast that it leaves ones own time and emerges in another time. The ladies of the end of the world and their various occupations and preoccupations are very Shavian. Mrs. Emily remains true to her ideas and ideals (such as Christian morality) even though they are slightly ridiculous at the place where she is now to be found. Mrs. Emily's husband has a moustache which he twirls. I am not sure whether he is the father figure or the dyed-in-the-wool black villain. As in so many Victorian novels, you never come to a definite ending.

Perhaps your readers could suggest additional parallels. They should make this a sort of Silverlock and look to see how many Victorian characters they can identify in this trilogy.

Presently I am on the last of what I know to be my present stock of talking books: The Best of Damon Knight. As it happens too often, I had read much of his material in its original publication. My failure to remember authors' names or story titles puts me in bad stead when it comes to a discussion with a real SF fan.

However, there is one book which I must mention as I found it vastly amusing.

Jacqueline Susanne, she who made her fame and fortune with Valley of the Dolls and The Love Machine, in 1953 wrote an SF book. This was not published until a year or so ago. It is called Yargo.

Now, in this long ago time, Jacqueline Susanne wrote this very much pro-feminist novel, and to be different, she took Yul Brenner to be her epitome of a hero. The hero's name, as well as that of his planet, is Yargo. A great deal of the action is, in content, predictably 1953.

We have this gal who is picked up by a light beam which carries her into a spaceship and off they go, hi de ho, to the planet Yargo.

The speed of light has been overcome

so beautifully that in 5 hours they are in another arm of the galaxy. They come to his ideal place which, as you listen to the book, seems to be more and more a good mirror image of communism. Everyone is happy. Everyone is strong. No one has money. No one has anything except the state and the god epitomized by Yargo. Of course, they have solved most of the problems existant on earth in 1953. But this dumb kid keeps wanting to go back to earth. Because it is so perfect on Yargo, she can't stand it.

Eventually, after many obstacles imposed by Yargo and the council, she is permitted to return to earth. But first she is supposed to go to Mars where the citizens are less than beautiful. The heroine and her female mentor, Sano, are on their way to Mars. On their way to Mars, black ships appear and use death rays to prevent their landing. They sneak out of the enclosure of alien ships and get close to earth.

Now the Yargoan captain and crew don't want to land on earth at night time. Now, the heroine has said she will land anywhere on earth; so how can they say that they can't land at night time? While they are circling the globe, there is no universal night--only on part of the globe.

Well, anyway, we find that the evil alien ships are from Venus. Humanoids had traveled to Venus millenia ago and had somehow become bees. They wanted to stop being bees and they needed a human woman to breed with their mutant males who are half human and half bee.

Well, Susanne goes into some of her erotic scenes and eventually the heroine and her friend escape and get back to Yargo where the heroine eventually says that she is violently in love with Yargo/god. She must now go to earth but doesn't want to.

She gets to earth and goes to a psychiatrist just 3 days before the wedding which has been postponed for various reasons, including a space trip. The night before her wedding she is called inexplicably to a hill. She stands there and prays and prays. The light beam comes down again and takes her up to the spaceship. There is Yargo and he is in love with her and all ends happily and oh my!

I don't know whether Susanne wrote it as a satire, but at least in my mind it is one.

I am going to have to be very careful not to get NFB too intertwined with NIEKAS. Yes, NFB is vastly important

WE WILL WITHHOLD ADDRESSES ON REQUEST

WHAFies

Linda Leach
Roger Zelazny
Chris Keyser
Masaki Abe
Moshe Feder
Joel Hagan
Robert Bloch
Ruth Berman
Lloyd Alexander
Elliot Shorter
Rod Walker
Roberta Diamond
Gordon Summers
Mr. & Mrs. Aaron Braude
Charles Wiggins III
Alan Jackson
Al Fitzpatrick
Wayne Shumaker
Paul Demzioquoi



to me and will be for a very long time. However, for people who want to read about SF, I am not at all sure how your sighted readers are going to react.

Also, I am wondering whether being editor of two publications, NIEKAS and ATTIC [a cassette magazine for the blind whose main editor is John Boardman. ed.] will get to be an overwhelming problem for you. Perhaps eventually NIEKAS will absorb ATTIC. Perhaps it will be a necessity rather than a choice. In your editorial comments you emphasize that blind people are those with a distinct physical probelm but that blind people should be considered just as capable and productive as sighted people. I am sure you intend to keep your publication dates of NIEKAS up to the mark. But if you are overrun with work you might not be able to do that. The publishing date might slip and you could say that "I am blind and you must give me special consideration". I don't think you want that to happen at all. In order to retain your sanity and physical health, be effected. [should out schedule ever slip, my blindness would never be a cause and would never be used as an excuse. erm] [he can always blame certain other editors. mb.]

Until another time, this is
Donna Core

27 Sowamsett Ave.
Warren, RI 02885

...I'd better respond to something in Michael Bastraw's column in #24, since I was the person in charge of the 1980 Hugo voting. First of all, there is now no such thing as a

"Hugo for best amateur publication": this was amended in 1978 to "best fanzine", with the words "amateur" and "non-professional" removed and the committee forbidden to impose any criteria beyond the will of the voters. I myself pushed this amendment through, precisely to avoid the problems of defining "amateur" that Michael writes about. (Unfortunately, Denvention Two has muddled the waters by mistakenly giving the text of the old definition on this year's nomination ballot. *Sigh*) Second, I don't know where Michael got the idea that "the WSFA (actually it's WSFS...passed a resolution" to rule out zines that pay someone's living expenses. Well, yes, I do know: it was printed in the Noreascon II Program Book - but as a proposed motion, not one that had been passed! Anybody can propose a motion; but this one was defeated overwhelmingly (as were a lot of other silly proposals). Thus there is now no question whatever as to the eligibility of LOCUS and other such zines; the voters choose to consider them fanzines - and why not, since they're the only ones most members of the Worldcon see? - and therefore they get the votes. Now as for Charlie Brown and LOCUS, it's true that he wrote in 1978 that he would "decline futher nominations", and did so in 1979. But he's entitled to change his mind, so I wrote to give him a chance to withdraw, as I did with all the potential nominees. He replied that he had changed his mind (for reasons explained in hi editorial in LOCUS 223), and therefore LOCUS went on the ballot.

Sincerely yours,
George Flynn

Bumbejimas Cont'd.

The National Industries for the Blind is a parent organization to which several hundred sheltered workshops around the country are affiliated with. (Some workshops are independant and not all are as horrible as what I am talking about.) NIB had a booth in which they were trying to show how they help the multiply handicapped blind person be at least a little productive. They had a person who was blind and partially deaf sitting on a stool, stuffing greeting cards into cellophane packages. As long as he worked quickly he was rewarded with music in his headphones. If he slowed down, the music stopped. If he stopped working, he got an electric shock.

That a so-called charitable organization would do such a thing is bad enough. That they would boast about it and show it to the public as a worthy project is nauseating.

About two years ago, THE WALL STREET JOURNAL ran several articles exposing some of the worst abuses of the Sheltered Workshop system. I have reprints available of these, also. Shops would pay top management up to \$50K a year and pay workers as little as 50¢ an hour because 'they could not afford more' and are exempt from minimum wage legislation. The NFB is working with various labor unions to try and organize these shops and get the workers decent wages and working conditions. Please refer to THE WALL STREET JOURNAL and the special program on CBS's 60 MINUTES for more details.

Some so-called organizations FOR the blind do not care about the quality of the services that they deliver. They do want to be sure that their staff have proper educational and professional credentials. They are only interested in proper professional advancement for their own employees. To help further this, they--primarily the American Foundation FOR the Blind--have established the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped, or NAC. NAC is only interested in professionalism and not in real service. They accredit some of the worst, most repressive agencies in existence. I would say that it is a good rule of thumb that any charitable agency that has NAC accreditation does NOT care what kind of services it delivers, but

only that its employees have proper professional standing and that the agency has a sound financial structure.

I know that very few fans respond to charitable appeals. But if you or any member of your family is contemplating responding to a request for funds, try to find out first whether the organization is NAC accredited. If it is, the chances are 9 out of 10 that it should NOT get your support because it is really hurting its blind clients. If you really want to help the blind help themselves and achieve true independence, please become an

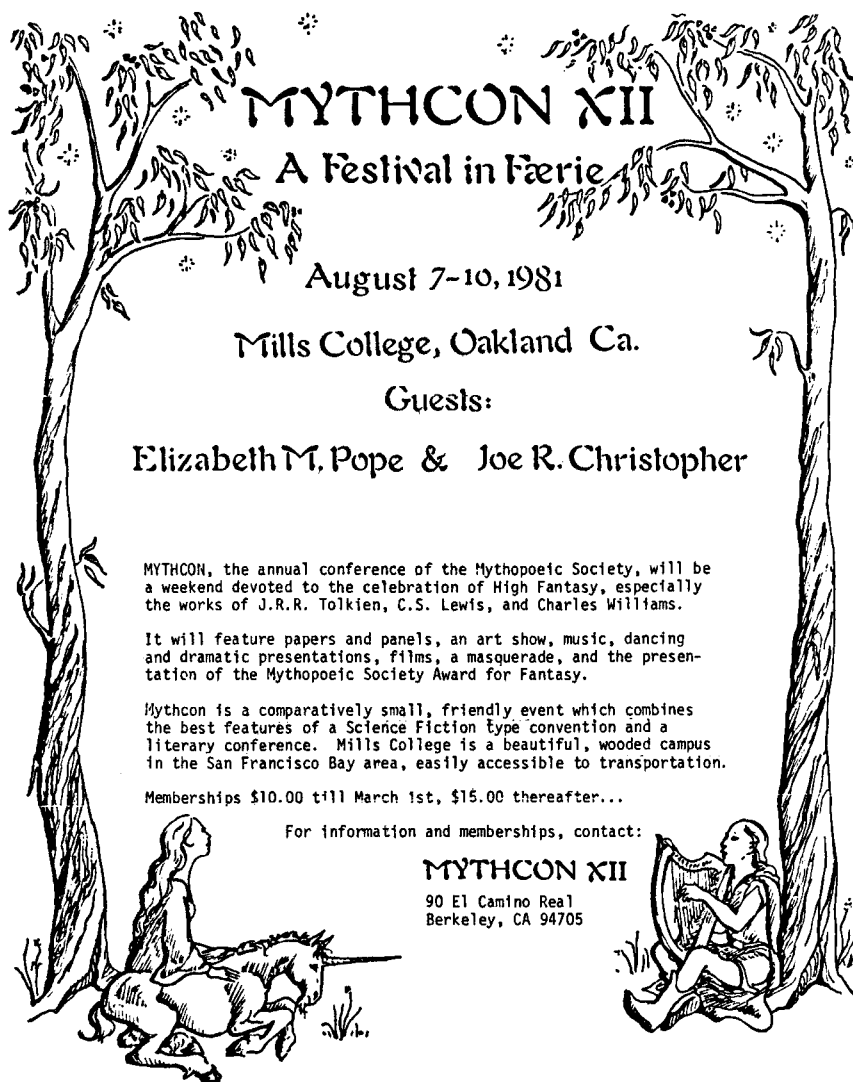
associate member of the NFB. Various levels of membership start at \$10 a year. For details write me or the NFB at 800 Johnson St., Baltimore, MD 21230.

Incidentally, I just bought, through the NFB, a talking clock for \$58 which the AFB is selling for \$90. That is the difference between groups OF and FOR the blind.

* * *

FINALE

Please keep the letters of comment coming. Iolanthe might live on love, but we live on egoboo. Also the LoC's give us our only indication [other than the rocks which sporadically fly through the windows. mb.] of what you think of our magazine and of the thoughts we express in it pages. And of course we always need more articles and reviews.



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