



Dedication

This effort is dedicated to the memory of Philip K. Dick who has simply left this reality which he enriched by his presence.

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NIEKAS

SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY

"The Too-Long Fanzine"

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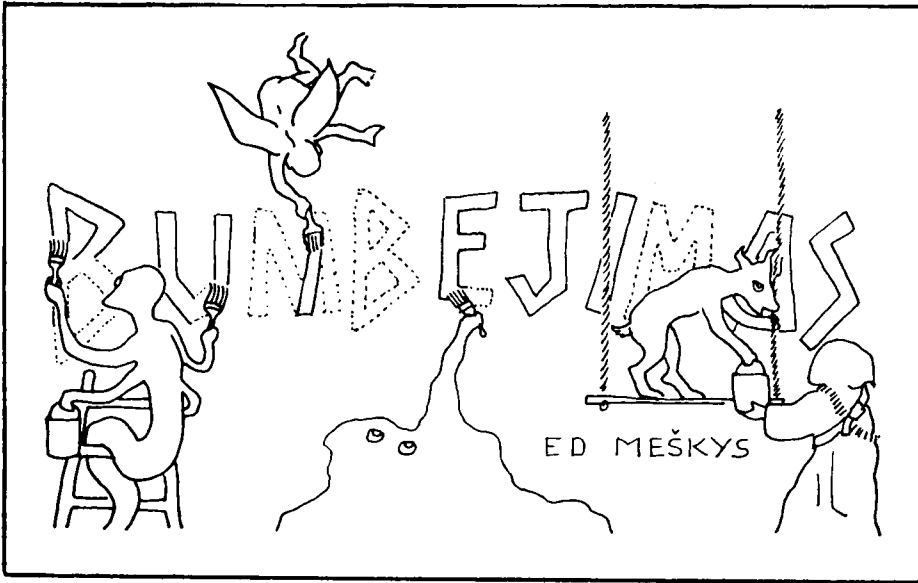
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The Ghost of NIEKAS Past

Next month will be the 20th anniversary of the first issue of NIEKAS. This was a dittoed fanzine of about a dozen pages for the June 1962 mailing of the Neffer's Amateur Press Alliance. I had joined N'APA several years earlier with its second mailing and my first fanzine was called POLHODE ("The Polhode rolls without slipping on the herpolhode lying in the invariable plane."). POLHODE was a general purpose fmz with articles and reviews but I had originally had started it because I joined the APA. I published three issues at widely separated intervals and started gathering material for a fourth. To keep up my membership I did a small zine of only mailing comments and a bit of personal chatter. I was going to graduate school and left in May 1962 to take a job at the Lawrence Radiation Lab in Livermore, California (now called the Lawrence Livermore Radiation Lab). I was dissatisfied with the title of this mailing comment zine and had been toying with the idea of changing it. I did so with the Une 1962 issue which I completed just before leaving for California. I did not have duplicating equipment of my own and the APA OE (official editor) Bob Lichtman ran it off for me. Altho NIEKAS was really a continuation of my previous MC zine, I decided to start the numbering over again with #1.

Starting with the second issue it was run off on a Gestetner mimeo. #2 was half printed on Dave Rike's machine in Berkeley and half run off for me by Fred Patton in LA. Two more issues were done on Rike's Gestetner and the next four on Karen Anderson's. I bought my own second-hand #160 in time to run off NIEKAS #9.

Initially I expected NIEKAS to remain strictly an APAzine and to eventually publish another POLHODE. But NIEKAS was appearing regularly and some of the material for POLHODE was becoming dated so I ran it in NIEKAS before it was totally useless. Anne Chartland, an artist and mathematician who was boarding with Joe and Felice Rolfe, came on board with about #5 and dropped out around #8. Felice joined the staff around #7.

I read *The Lord of the Rings* in December 1961 and was taken with it, to put it mildly. The only U.S. Tolkien fanzine of more than one issue, I PALANTIR, ceased publication and I decided to fill the gap with NIEKAS. Starting with #9 I made a point of carrying at least two items dealing with Tolkien or related matters in almost every issue.

Al Halevy, a member of the Bay Area SF club, had compiled a dictionary of names in Tolkien's books which he called "A Glossary of Middle-earth. He also got the club to revive its old fanzine, RHODOMAGNETIC DIGEST, and ran the first part of his glossary in his second and last issue. I got his permission to run it in NIEKAS and started doing so in #9.

Al lost interest in the project by 1966 and through The Tolkien Society of America I met Bob Foster who had compiled a similar glossary, only better because Bob could give translations of the Quenya and Sindarin roots. I ran his glossary until NIEKAS temporarily suspended with #20. This was published by Mirage Press and later by Ballantine Books as *A Guide to Middle-earth*. Bob had given me another installment to publish in NIEKAS 21 but that issue had not appeared until several years after the book, so the

material was superfluous by then. But the copyright credits in the book list #21 as an issue in which part had appeared.

I moved to New Hampshire in January 1966 and NIEKAS and the Gestetner stayed in Palo Alto with Felice Rolfe who put out about 4 more issues with the help of Jerry Jacks. We came in second to ERBDOM for the Hugo in 1966 and won it at the 1967 Worldcon. In the meantime, Charlie and Marsha Brown took an interest in NIEKAS and offered to help with it, so Al Lewis from LA brought the Gestetner out to NY in his van when he drove to the Worldcon in August 1967. Charlie, Marsha, and I did two more issues of NIEKAS, with the help of Elliot Shorter. The last, #20, was over 100 pages long, most in two colors, and we printed a thousand. We gathered material for another but a lot happened and we kept putting it off. Charlie and Marsha separated, I got married, lost my sight, and had many other worries. I believe the last issue was distributed at an Anachronist New Years Party January 1969.

Two or three times I started work on #21 but each time something came up and it was never finished. Sherwood Frazier, Rafe Folch-Pi, and Margaret Shepard agreed to take a hand with it and Margaret nagged us into finishing it in time for the 1977 Boskone. It was run off on the NESFA mimeo by Margaret and Rafe as my Gestetner had died.

She said she would push us into finishing one issue to prove to us that we could do it, and then leave it to us to do more. Two years went by, and Margaret moved to Canada. Rafe finally became the goad for the rest of us and typed many of the stencils himself--where they sat until Mike Bastraw came along with another push that saw the completion of the issue. We borrowed a mimeo in Laconia but it broke down just as the issue was almost finished and we did not have it for the 1980 Boskone. After redoing several stencils it was finally finished in April.

We had looked into getting my Gestetner fixed but the agency wanted at least \$300 and would not guarantee the work. My ex-wife, Nancy Moulton, put us on to a second hand offset press in working order with a platemaker for a very reasonable price; we picked it up on my 44th birthday and have been trying to learn how to use it properly ever since.

The Ghost of NIEKAS Present

Rafe got a job in Florida and had to drop out though he keeps threatening

to revive his column. Margaret has rejoined us in spirit as well as contributing occasional text, art, and money to subsidize NIEKAS. (Sherwood, Mike, and I each keep the zine going with an annual infusion of several hundred dollars a year.) Anne Braude had been a regular contributor to the old NIEKAS; she quickly became a fixed feature of the new NIEKAS as a columnist, reviewer, and feature writer and is a major source in both quality and quantity (she edited the dragon section, this issue). Without her the new NIEKAS would never have made it. We therefore decided to promote her to contributing editor.

NIEKAS is a magazine that gets its readers involved. When I lived in the Bay area I had a large circle of people who regularly helped with the magazine either by writing, drawing, typing, collating, proofreading, etc. and I referred to it as the NIEKAS Family. It has become more of an extended family now with members across the U.S. and overseas in the U.K. It would be risky business indeed to try and list all the members of such a large contingent. Fear of leaving someone out stays my typer. But they know who they are whether they contribute time, money, or material it is all appreciated and you can see the results of their efforts every time you pick up a copy of NIEKAS.

The Ghost of NIEKAS Future

(Or Bastraw's Mini-Bastion)

An 80 pp. NIEKAS is too gruesome a thing for me to push it over the brink of sanity so I do not have a column this issue. So allow me to clue you in on what will be happening with NIEKAS tomorrow and the next day and etc.

All of our "due dates" (listed on the last page) are being moved up by about 2 weeks. These dates are, admittedly, arbitrary to a certain extent. BUT THESE DATES WILL BE ADHERED TO. Forewarned is forearmed. Of course you can always send your stuff in before the deadline.

A bit of clarification on what happens when your copy of NIEKAS bounces when you have not given us a new address to go by: you not only lose that issue but you are debited an additional copy. This is not squeeze, you wouldn't believe what the post office socks us just to tell us they weren't able to deliver an issue.

Fifty Extremely SF* Stories is officially full at this point, though I have left room for an entry from Robert Heinlein when he

decides to send one in. Otherwise any entries I receive now will go into a (hopefully) subsequent edition. So keep thinkin' those short thoughts. We plan to have it available for sale in time for Worldcon Labor Day weekend though contributors will receive their's before this.

Speaking of Chicon IV. As you read this a full page ad will have appeared in the con's progress report. Such an ad costs around \$70. This is more than we have ever paid out for advertizing at one time. We still haven't--we have a Benefactor who must remain nameless for the nonce. Just didn't want you all thinking that Ed had struck oil in his backyard. We are still officially poor and as antiprofit as ever. Except now the extra publicity should net us a few more subs which is the ultimate show of approval.

This is why I now encourage You Who Are Reading This to lend a copy to a friend and encourage them to join the bandwagon. The more readers we reach, the better, as I am sure anyone who has material published can tell you.

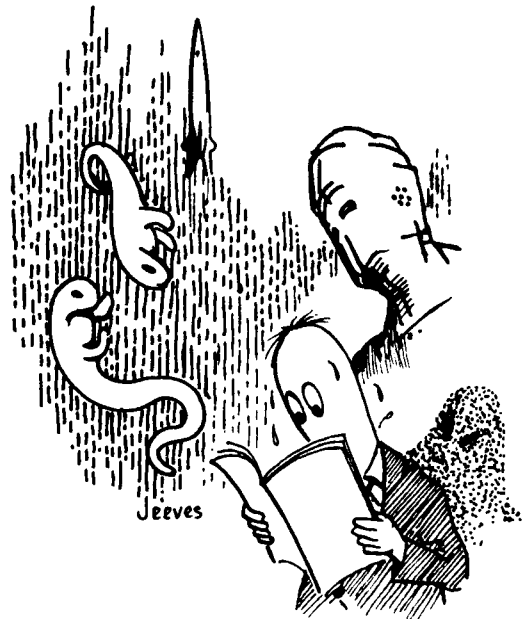
We also wish to solicit suggestions for our columnists and feature writers on topics to be covered. If we get even two letters expressing an interest in the same subject (or topic as Bob and Doug and Kurt would say, eh) that must be taken as an indication of all the people who are

also interested in said item but did not write. Your letters do count.

We seem to have found that readers like our Special Sections wherein we go into a certain topic in depth with several items--sort of a theme issue. This time it is dragons; #31 will deal with everyone's favorite Cimmerian, Conan. So dig out your barbaric pen and ink or non-electric typer and zip us some material.

Ditto for the Lewis Carroll issue that will be coming out in November. Maybe we can find out who stole them damn tarts...

As you proceed through this issue you will notice that we are using several different type faces: this you read now has been our standard, what IBM calls Letter Gothic; the Courier that The Haunted Library is rendered in; and the OCR-B which most of the rest of the zine has been done in. This last is generated by a daisywheel printer which is driven by my TRS-80 computer. It has the advantages of any wordprocessor but the printer does not allow for underscoring and overstrikes, to name but two deficiencies (also doesn't correct spelling as you see). We just got word that the printer we ordered will be shipped tomorrow. I have no idea what sort of faces will be available with it but we do solicit your opinions on the faces used in this issue so we can find something that will match the most-preferred font.



THE HAUNTED LIBRARY

by Don D'Amassa



Within the field of supernatural fiction, the ghost (or haunted house) story has become also a separate area unto itself, a highly regimented form that is virtually reduced to simple formulas. In fact, the vast majority of ghost stories are quite short because there really isn't enough flexibility to allow an entire novel to be based on such a simple plot. As a matter of fact, the two most notable recent "ghost stories" do not even include ghosts, *THE SHINING* by Stephen King and *GHOST STORY* by Peter Straub, although Straub has also written a fine ghost novel, *JULIA* (Pocket).

There have been a scattering of haunted house novels, of which the best example is almost certainly *THE HAUNTING OF HILL HOUSE* by Shirley Jackson (Popular Library), an excellent, terrifying novel that is one of the few to make the transition to the screen with reasonable success. Jackson was a master of mood in any case, and even her more mundane novels can often extend an atmosphere of gripping suspense (I particularly recommend *WE HAVE ALWAYS LIVED IN THE CASTLE* from Popular Library). Evangeline Walton is the closest rival with *WITCH HOUSE* (Monarch, Award), a novel whose obscurity has puzzled me for years. Less satisfactory is Richard

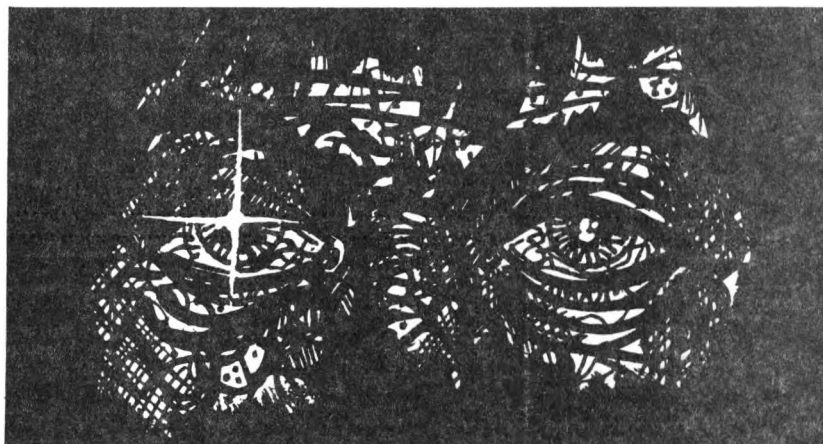
Matheson's comparatively recent *HELL HOUSE* (Bantam), which is far less subtle in its shocks, revolves around less interesting characters, and fails to successfully establish a consistent sense of pace.

Gretchen Travis provided a conventionally written, reasonably entertaining entry with *2 SPRUCE LANE* from Ballantine, but added little new to the form. There have been at least two excellent haunted house stories without supernatural elements at all, and if you doubt that such is possible, try Paul Gallico's *TOO MANY GHOSTS* (Pocket) or Charity Blackstock's *A HOUSE POSSESSED* (Ballantine). I refuse to even discuss the most notorious of these, the late Jay Anson's *THE AMITYVILLE HORROR*. Others that are worth your time without being particularly distinguished are Dorothy MacArdle's fine *THE UNINVITED* (Bantam) and

Margherite Steen's *THE UNQUIET SPIRIT* (Avon).

Paul Theroux's *THE BLACK HOUSE* (Ballantine) attempts to be a more literary type of story, and succeeds on that score, but the slow, intellectual dissolution of the couple living in the haunted house does not succeed well as a story of suspense. *THE GUARDIAN SPECTRE* by Marc Lovell (Manor) is one of the better minor entries, a fairly well plotted story that suffers a bit from the rather superficial treatment given to characterization.

There have been a number of unconventional approaches as well. Ghosts are often portrayed in humorous terms such as the classic *THE CANTERBURY GHOST* by Oscar Wilde, even as beneficent guardians, such as Thorne Smith's *TOPPER* and *TOPPER TAKES A TRIP* (Pocket, Ballantine),



Ben Stahl's **BLACKBEARD'S GHOST** (Tempo), **THE GHOST AND MRS. MUIR** - which had two separate versions, one by Josephine Leslie (Pocket) and the original by Alice Denham (Popular Library), and one of the finest ghost stories of all time, the sentimental but effective **A FINE AND PRIVATE PLACE** by Peter Beagle (Ballantine).

Tanith Lee has made excellent use of ghosts in what is really a fantasy novel rather than one of supernatural horror, **KILL THEM DEAD** (DAW Books). Ian Cameron uses the ghost of a shipwrecked woman to good effect in a reasonably entertaining adventure story, **THE WHITE SHIP** (Avon). Frederik Forsyth wrote a relatively short story that was blown up to book size by use of large margins and poor illustrations in **THE SHEPHERD**, a well written but boringly predictable story of the ghost of a long dead pilot flying his phantom airplane to save the life of another.

Sometimes the ghost story and the ancient curse overlap, and often with elements of psychic forces as well. **AN ANCIENT RAGE** by Jacqueline Latourette (Dell) is a good example. Ostensibly a fairly well written ghost story, it varies somewhat in that the ghost is actually that of a fairy warrior from another plane of existence, detected by the protagonist through her psychic powers. Clearly categorization is a path fraught with many dangers.

The outstanding ancient curse story of the past few years is probably **THE SEEKING SWORD** by Jaan Kangilaski (Ballantine), although its recent sequel, **HANDS OF GLORY** (Ballantine) was far less satisfactory. The plot is a present day, slightly gruesome version of the sword in Moorcock's **Elric** stories, one that drives its owner to drink the souls of others, in this case powered by the spirit of an ancient sorcerer to hunt down the descendants of the tribe that wiped out his own thousands of years earlier. Commercially, the most significant are **THE SENTINEL** and **THE GUARDIAN**, both by Jeffrey Konvitz (Bantam), which deal with a hotel that masks the entrance to Hell from our world. The former is reasonably well told, although with an unsatisfactory ending; the latter was frankly imitative, an attempt to capitalize on a good thing, and it fails miserably.

There have been at least a few excellent novels using this theme over the years, such as Sarban's surrealistic nightmare, **RINGSTONES**, and Stephen Marlowe's superb **TRANSLATION** (both from Ballantine). The former deals with a woman who finds herself among children who are



ageless beings from another existence, the latter dealing with strange manifestations in a small town that lead to a series of terrifying events. **THE SEARCH FOR JOSEPH TULLY** by William Hallahan (Avon) is nearly as good, though Hallahan is not the same calibre writer as Marlowe and Sarban. His novel deals with a man who is haunted by a strange sound, as of a sword swinging through the air, and memories of another existence.

There are various approaches to this device, perhaps the most famous of which is the lost gods series, the most significant of which is obviously the Cthulhu Mythos created by H.P. Lovecraft and recently added to in a rather disappointing fashion by Robert Bloch (**STRANGE BONS - Pinnacle**) and Brian Lumley, in several titles. Mona Williams wrote a heavily moody, not particularly comprehensible tale of a cursed family in **THE MESSENGER** (Signet) and Florence Stevenson spoofed this and virtually every other supernatural convention in her frequently amusing **THE CURSE OF THE CONCULLENS** (Signet).

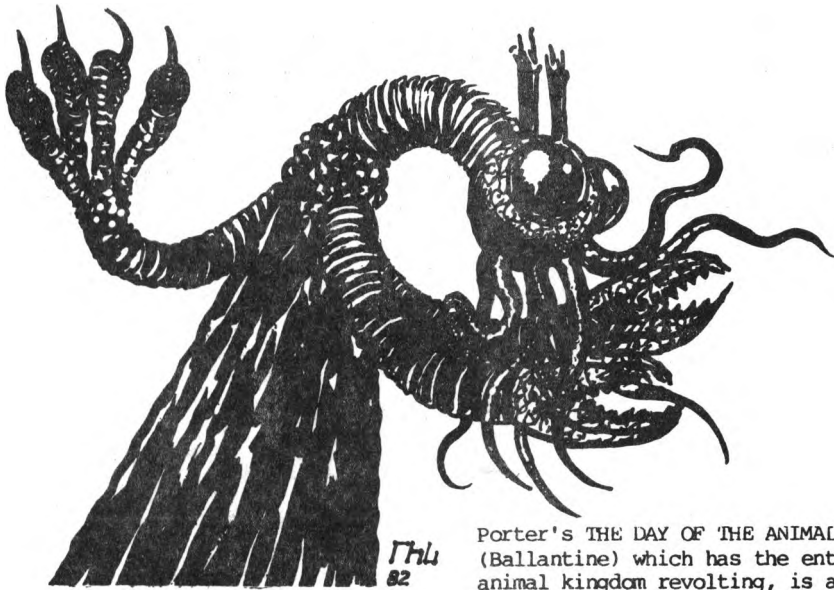
A number of science fiction writers have contributed to this sub-genre, sometimes with more rationalized causes such as the atomic bomb spawned curse in Greg Bear's silly but gripping **PSYCHLONE** (Ace), or the revived creature from somewhere else in John Blackburn's chilling **BURY HIM DARKLY** (Berkley). In the latter, an ancient monster is inadvertently released from his tomb to roam the earth once more, which is a fitting point to lead us to the next category, the monster story.

Frankenstein's monster, though not strictly supernatural, towers over other entries in the field, a frequent character in films, though rarely in novels. Don Glut has

started a new series about the monster, published exclusively in England, and Robert Myers wrote two fairly interesting but ultimately boring novels that were released in this country, **THE CROSS OF FRANKENSTEIN** and **THE SLAVE OF FRANKENSTEIN** (both from Pocket), which attempt to be more faithful to Shelley's sympathetic view of the monster, though he does so at the cost of almost every element of suspense. There was also a recent film and subsequent novelization by Christopher Isherwood, **FRANKENSTEIN: THE TRUE STORY** (Avon), which was ultimately boring in both media, and an amusing film and trivial novelization by Jack Pearl of Mel Brooks' vision of **YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN** (Ballantine).

Another familiar monster is Nessy, the Loch Ness Monster, who features in Stephen Spruill's poorly paced but otherwise fine adventure novel, **HELLSTONE** (Playboy). The automobile as monster appears in science fiction stories from time to time, particularly in the works of Roger Zelazny, for example, and in the novelized movie **THE CAR** by Dennis Shryack and Michael Butler (Dell). The novel isn't bad, and the only version of the film I ever saw was a badly cut television version, but in any case it took the authors an entire novel to do what William Temple accomplished years before in a fascinating short story, "The Green Car".

John Russo has modified the zombie as monster in his **DEAD** series, volumes of which have appeared from Paperback Library, Pocket, and Dale Books. The yeti, or abominable snowman, has appeared so far in at least two horrible novels, **SASQUATCH** by M.E. Knerr (Belmont-Tower) and the better written but even less plausible **SNOWMAN** by Norman Bogner (Dell). In



the latter, the monster can set snow aflame with beams from his eyes.

SIMON'S SOUL by Stanley Shapiro (Bantam) also counts as a possession story. Researchers attempting to probe into the nature of death kill one of their own number while under hypnosis, and something horrible from the other side occupies his body, turning it into a murderously unstoppable creature. Shapiro starts to lose control of his story because his monster is so invincible, he has to sidestep into metaphysical solutions to bring the novel to a conclusion. In **THE BROOD** by Richard Starks (no U.S. paperback), another film novelization, a psychotic woman generates in some fashion a host of tiny "children" who wreak the vengeance her subconscious calls for. I am told this was a fine film, but the novelization is awful. Another monster stalks through **THE DARK** by Max Franklin (Signet), a routine and uninteresting potboiler about a mysterious killer that may or may not be human. I believe this was also a film novelization, but the paperback credits are somewhat ambiguous.

In these days of ecological awareness, it stands to reason that we would be inundated with ecology-gone-mad books. Two that were made into films, **PROPHECY** by David Seltzer (Ballantine) and **NIGHTWINGS** by Martin Cruz Smith (Jove) are at least reasonably well written, though the story of neither is particularly interesting (and neither film is particularly good either). Lest you be tempted, I'll just mention a few of the thoroughly bad attempts that have been made in recent years: **EAT THEM ALIVE** by Pierce Nace (Manor) has giant insects, **THE PLANTS** (Bantam) by Kenneth McKenney deals with sentient plants that strangle, pierce, or otherwise attack people. Donald

Porter's **THE DAY OF THE ANIMALS** (Ballantine) which has the entire animal kingdom revolting, is another movie novelization; the novel is revolting as well as the movie. There are bats in **BATS OUT OF HELL** by Guy Smith (Signet), rats in **THE RATS** and **THE LAIR** (Signet), both by James Herbert, snakes in **THE RATTLED** by Joseph Gilmore (Signet), insects in Arthur Herzog's **THE SWARM** (Signet), Jack Laflin's **THE BEES** (Tempo), Barry Malzberg's film novelization **PHASE IV** (Pocket), **THE ANCIENT ENEMY** by Don Thompson (Gold Medal), **THE HEPHAESTUS PLAGUE** by Thomas Page (Signet), and **THE COLONY** by Paul Lalley (Carlyle).

Dogs strike back in **THE DOGS** by Robert Calder (Dell) and cats in **THE CATS** by Nick Sharman (Signet). Household pets also figure in the more interesting but still monotonous **FERAL** by Berton Roueche (Pocket). We are infested with giant shellfish in Guy Smith's abysmal **KILLER CRABS** (Signet), toothy fish in **THE TIDE** by Zack Hughes (Berkley), and the entire undersea kingdom, masterminded by artificially mutated killer whales, in what is probably the worst single entry in this mess, John Messman's **THE DEEP** (Signet). In general, one can ignore this entire school; it has yet to produce a first class novel.

A few odds and ends before we close. As one might suspect, there are always a few books that don't easily fall into the categories one can construct. One such is the entertaining but silly **CHOICE CUTS** by Pierre Boileau and Michael Narcejac (Berkley), in which a disembodied criminal is reassembled and brought back to life. One of the most gripping, frightening, and literate horror novels of all times is Ray Bradbury's **SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES** (Bantam). An almost indescribable but relentlessly frightening story also is Brian Moore's **THE GREAT VICTORIAN** COLLECTION (Ballantine).

a collection of impossible relics materializes in a parking lot. These latter two are unreservedly recommended.

I also alluded in an earlier column to mundane horror stories, those which don't contain supernatural or fantastic elements, or which have rationalized endings. The most noteworthy of these is William Goldman's **MAGIC**, a novel I actually had to put down from time to time in order to recover from the emotional shocks (an effect that holds true of several of his other works as well, particularly **THE MARATHON MAN**). Mystery stories frequently appear to have supernatural elements which are explained away in the final chapter. Two fine novels of this type are **THE SHADOW GUEST** by Hillary Waugh (Dell) and **THE RIM OF THE PIT** by Hake Talbot (Bantam). An interesting story but not on the same level as the preceding is Lou Cameron's **BEYOND THE SCARLET DOOR** (Gold Medal). Theodore Sturgeon created a superior mundane horror novel in **SOME OF YOUR BLOOD**, one of the best psychological novels of all time.

William Wilson's **DETOUR** (Berkley) is reminiscent of Shirley Jackson's incomparable "The Lottery", a town that survives by preying on tourists. It's a tourist trap in every possible meaning of the word, but the story itself is too understated; Wilson is not a fine enough writer to make the mood work well. Also of interest is the thoroughly repulsive novel, apparently based on a true story, **THE FLESH EATERS** by A.B. Morse (Manor), which deals with cannibalism in Great Britain.

In this and the previous two columns, I have endeavored to present an idea of the range of stories that fall within the general labor of horror fiction. By no stretch of the imagination has the above been all-inclusive. In fact, conspicuous by their absence above are works by such writers as Peter Straub, Graham Masterton, John Saul, Michael McDowell, Roger McCammon, T.M. Wright, Ramsay Campbell, Brian Lumley, Robert Bloch, Heinrich Graat, J.N. Williamson, Sharon Combs, Gary Bradner, William Katz, and a host of others. In subsequent installments we'll be looking at some of these writers, the science fiction horror story, and possibly into the shorter stories, which would open up to us such excellent writers as H. Russell Wakefield, Joseph Payne Brennan, M.R. James, Oliver Onions, and others. As mentioned before, if you are interested in some particular author, theme, or other facet, make such

and I'll see what can be it. See you next time.

ON THE SHOULDERS OF

VANGUARD

Harry
Andruschak

PART 1: TENURE FOR A TECHNICIAN IS
THE NUMBER FOLLOWING NINEURE.

Good news. Today is 11 January, and I am working for the rest of the month. Nobody gets laid off today. Of course, the bad news is that two more techs quit last week. One, like me, gets \$10 per hour, and quit for a company that starts at \$12 and goes on up from there. Another went to Saudi Arabia for \$40,000 tax free a year. We rehired one tech on long term sick leave. Total now is 20 technicians, 5 engineers, and 1 supervisor.

Good news. It looks as if JPL is going to have something to do with the Talon Gold project, potentially a very lucrative source of income. Talon Gold is the Military's High Energy Laser Program, and for further details see your local KGB agent.

Bad news. The word came down from Washington that the Venus Orbiting Imaging Radar mission was cut from the proposed 1983 budget. The VOIR people are looking into ways to keep the mission alive, maybe shave costs and try again later.

Good news. Today, we began to set up the second Galileo ITS system. This system is "Telemetry and Testing", and it handles all the science and engineering data the spacecraft sends back. The system consists of two Univac computers, a 1219 and a 1530 from the old Navy Technical Data System, as well as four MODCOMP CLASSIC mini-computers. First indications from Washington are that Galileo remains in the 1983 budget for launch to Jupiter in 1985. With death of VOIR, it will probably

be the ONLY U.S. Planetary Program in the 1980's.

Bad news. The Centaur Upper Stage has been cut from the 1983 budget. So instead of taking 2 1/2 years to reach Jupiter, Galileo will take 4 1/2 years. This increases the cost of the mission, of course. Just as the delay from the original launch date in 1982 raised the cost from \$300 million to \$700 million, so the delay from the 4 1/2 year journey will raise the total cost of the mission to \$1 BILLION...making it a sitting duck for budget cuts in 1984 or 1985.

How will we get to Jupiter without the Centaur? Well, we send the spacecraft into an orbit around the sun so that it eventually arrives back at Earth, then use the good old gravity assist technique to sling it on out to Jupiter. This can be done with the 2-stage Interim Upper Stage.

Good news. The Air Force is very interested in the results of the Imaging Radar that JPL flew on the Shuttle Flight. The pictures were superbly detailed, and we got elevation readings also. This will be a tremendous help in programming cruise missiles to targets in the U.S.S.R. They can hug the terrain much better. If we can sell this to the Air Force the bucks will be in the billions! After all, clouds and darkness are not a barrier to radar. Also, the work may be useful for VOIR if that ever gets going again.

Bad news. I mentioned the second Galileo ITS system? It used to be the third system for the Voyager Project. But with both Voyagers mostly in a low activity cruise mode, it was felt two systems could do the job. And it saves money, as we can point out to Congress when trying to make sure that Galileo does not die.

INTERMEZZO #1: FROM AVIATION WEEK AND SPACE TECHNOLOGY, 21 DECEMBER 1981.

Bouncing Back

Writer of a House bill that would

create a federal common law for air disaster court cases borrowed his style from Jules Verne, the 19th-century author and visionary, to define aviation terms. Examples: TAKEOFF, "ANY FORM OF ASCENT INTO FLIGHT FROM REPOSE ON EARTH." Landing, "any form of transition from takeoff or flight to a state of repose on Earth." The trampoline industry is watching this one closely. -- Washington Staff

PART 2: ASTRONAUTS ARE WHIRLED TRAVELERS.

We get some interesting speakers at JPL. Mostly they are scientists and the attendance is small. But January has seen two big shots. On 4 January the Lab hosted Dr. Harold Brown, former Caltech president and Secretary of Defense with the Carter Administration. The title of his speech was "National Security Issues of the '80s". This is the first in a series of planned lectures to acquaint the Lab with its new duties with DOD. Modified rapture. But if JPL is to get 30% of its funding from Defense Work, I guess we will have to put up with it.

After all, we sent Voyager Two across the Solar System and missed the Titan aiming point by 20 kilometers. Think what a wonderful job we can do on giving the MX missile a "first strike" capability against U.S.S.R. missiles, cities, and military and industrial complexes. Won't it be a thrill to know, as the bombs fall, that we are doing it to the Russians MORE ACCURATELY?

18 January has something much better, a visit by Joe H. Engle, the Commander of the second shuttle flight. Pilot Richard Truly was back home due to a death in the family. Engle gave a "Report to JPL", and von Karman Auditorium was PACKED. So were all the conference rooms and the two cafeterias where closed circuit TV piped in the presentation. The visit was arranged because one of the more prominent, and successful, experiments had been SIR, the Synthetic Imaging Radar, the latest version of the old SEASAT radar and prototype for the VOIR Mission.

We got a half hour film of the mission, without sound. First, takeoff in slow motion. It was fascinating. Maybe rocket launches are too dull for TV to cover anymore, and perhaps shuttle launches will follow the same route. Me, I love them all. Then came a real time picture of how the launch looked from the pilot's window. A slow start, the landscape of the Cape falling away, the turn on to the shuttle's back,

and the slow change of the sky outside from daylight blue to deep space black. We saw the doors open and the pallet exposed. Views of the manipulator arm.

In fact, a camera on the arm was aimed back at the cabin, to see what the hard-working astronauts looked like. Truly was making faces at the camera and Engle was holding up a sign that said "Hi Mom!".

The rest of the film was just pictures. Just? I was impressed at how much fine detail came out of the SIR. I wonder if the U.S. Air Force has developed this radar separately for use in satellites flying over Russia. You can get a lot of information from it, and darkness and clouds are no barriers. If not, maybe JPL can convince the Air Force it needs such a satellite...developed and built by JPL, of course. Should be megabucks in that.

After the film came the usual Question and Answer session, after which Engle took the usual tour of the Lab. He was warmly applauded at the end. For a short moment I thought I was back in the 60's, when the astronauts were Heroes. It was a job well done, Engle, and I hope others get more chances to fly again and again.

Just to show you how much JPL appreciated this visit, I can report that Dr. Bruce Murrey WORE A TIE! And a suit to boot.

INTERMEZZO #2: FROM JPL UNIVERSE, 29 JANUARY 1982.

New Awards

The U.S. Air Force Office of Scientific Research provided funds



for research in the mathematical formulation and analysis of the wrinkling phenomenon in structural elements. The work is under the cognizance of the Assistant Laboratory Director for Defence Programs and Division 35.

The U.S. Naval Environmental Prediction Research Facility provided funds for the evaluation of techniques for deriving sea surface wind speed and direction from satellite sensors. The work is under the cognizance of the Assistant Laboratory Director for Defense Programs and Division 38.

PART 3: THE MARINER MARK TWO CONCEPT.

In the light of the fact that the White House wants to kill off the planetary exploration program, the section at JPL that plans for new missions has come up with the Mariner Mark II plan. Today, 28 January, the group held their usual quarterly meeting about future plans, and here the new game plan was unfolded. First some background information.

The main problem with planetary programs is their very conspicuous "peak" costs. Budget cutters going thru the NASA budget can, and have, pounced on them and brought the program to its present sorry state. Goddard Space Flight Center is to near-Earth science satellites what JPL is to planetary exploration. Right now Goddard has to fight, every year, to keep funding alive for the Large Space Telescope. Their Gamma Ray Observatory, scheduled for 1988 launch, has the same problem.

But Goddard has a second program of space science, the Explorer Group. The individual missions do not appear in the budget, but are all grouped

together as "Space Science". Thus they have stable funding. And that is the key for success...to be able to plan ahead many years without the bean counters chopping this or that program.

Mariner Mark II is a plan to fund planetary exploration at \$100 million a year on a steady basis for decades. Individual missions would not be listed. Ideally, the money should be allocated by special act of Congress so that it is not a part of the regular NASA budget subject to annual review. This is all 1982 dollars, automatic increases to cover inflation will be needed.

The idea is to build a series of modular spacecraft on a continual basis to hold down costs. They must be light enough to be launched from the shuttle with only a two-stage IUS. The actual missions will cost from \$150 million to \$300 million each...launched every two or three years for a launch rate of 4 or 5 per decade. The whole idea is to avoid those "peaks" that killed off so many worthy projects.

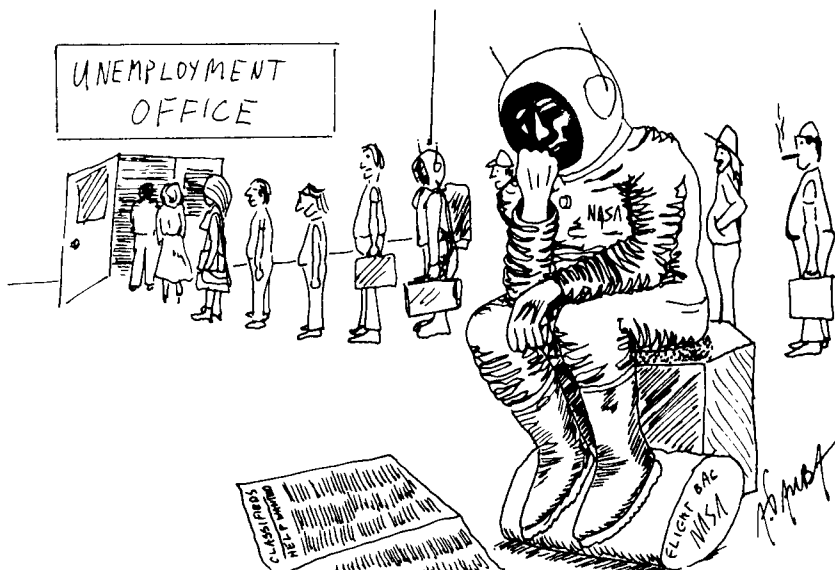
There are, of course, drawbacks. Telemetry rate for data will be 25 kilobits per second. This is much lower than Voyager's rate of 112 kilobits/sec. or Galileo's planned rate of one megabits per second. This is achieved by limiting the number of instruments on board. Instead of the over one dozen that has been typical, only 4 to 6 will be carried.

What this means is that it may take two or three separate spacecraft to do what could be done by one big one.

Overall costs in the long run are much higher. For example, Galileo could be restructured as a three spacecraft mission. First launch the probe. Two years later launch a spin-stabilized spacecraft with field and particle instruments. Two years after the launch a three-axis spacecraft with camera and spectrometers. Total cost is greater but has no visible peaks.

Another drawback is that this limits the kind of missions that can be flown. Obviously something like VOIR is impossible. The Radar is too expensive and the need for a high rate of telemetry makes the transmitting costs excessive for Mariner Mark II funding. Starprobe? No way.

Remember this is just the first plan. It will have to be revised. Then it must be sold to NASA headquarters. And then we start the fight for money, and I emphasize once again that this is a long term project, a



package that requires guaranteed funding without the chance of cuts ruining it all.

When? It was mentioned that with a Fiscal 1983 start the first project could be launched in 1988. My own personal opinion is that this will happen the day after a pig grows wings and flies. President Reagan is solidly AGAINST planetary exploration. Period. He is obsessed with "Reaganomics", and unable to see that it will ultimately fail because there is little funding for R&D.

So when? My own guess (and I repeat this is not the official JPL position) is Fiscal 1987 for two reasons. One, this gets a spacecraft off in 1992, just as the Galileo Mission comes to an end. Also, 1986 will see the Russians at Halley's Comet, and perhaps the shame and realization of what the U.S.A. has allowed its Space Program to sink to will galvanize the Electorate just as Sputnik One did in 1957. We can only hope.

INTERMEZZO #3: FROM AVIATION WEEK & SPACE TECHNOLOGY, 15 FEBRUARY 1982.

Soviet development of a space shuttle-type winged reusable spacecraft was acknowledged last week by Anatoliy Y. Skripko, science and technology attache at the Soviet Embassy in Washington. Skripko's statement confirms earlier AVIATION WEEK & SPACE TECHNOLOGY reports on this development (AW&ST June 16, 1980, p. 27; Nov. 6, 1978, p. 19). He told an American Astronautical Society meeting that launch of the system could occur in about five years.

DA CAPO

from AVIATION WEEK & SPACE

TECHNOLOGY, April 12

PIONEER'S UNFUNDED REACH FOR THE STARS

by Dr. James A. Van Allen

One of the most incredible features of the Fiscal 1983 program of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration is the premature termination of the deep-space missions of Pioneer 10 and Pioneer 11. The annual saving is \$3 million or four ten-thousandths of the agency's budget...

...There is a speculative but reasonable expectation that by 1990 Pioneer 10 will have passed through the outer boundary of the heliosphere and have entered the interstellar medium. This crossing, IF OBSERVED, will be the crowning achievement of its extended mission and a milestone in human achievement. It is difficult to imagine any deep space missions that have as favorable a ratio of prospective scientific yield to cost as the extended missions of Pioneers 10 and 11 do.

I fervently hope that NASA and Congress will recognize the importance of maintaining an adequate program of flight operations and data analysis for all four of our existing outer solar system missions. There is no prospect for getting any other spacecraft to such enormous distances from the Sun before the year 2010 or thereabouts.

((Andy has advised us that, for personal reasons, his column will be suspended indefinitely. This is as good a place as any to express our thanks for his candid observations on the state of the Space Program. We wish him all the best in the future. The Editors.))

LANGEVELD'S CATALOG OF MILITARY HISTORY, UNIFORMS AND TRADITIONS

BY COLIN LANGEVELD

22ND REGIMENT, EMPIRIC MARINES
(BRUGELLAN RANGERS)

PLANET OF ORIGIN: Dayton's World
(Kruger IV).

FIRST CONTACT: Empiric Forward
Survey Team.

TERRAN DATE: 10/1/2192

Extract from Forward Survey
78/6539 report. Subaltern
Commander Newlove.

"Shortly after touch-down, we were exposed to an unprecedented attack by class 5 low-tech humanoids. As a force field had not yet been erected, the survey team was caught totally unprotected. In the first wave we lost one third of our force. Very few survived long enough to be encased in life support systems as the aggressors were of an extremely powerful type and were armed primarily with one handed axes. None of the survey team were wearing Mini-Medics. If not for the rapid and unselfish action of Team Commander Telford, the complete expedition would have been annihilated. It is with deep regret that I report the death of the Commander."

Yes indeed, if not for the quick thinking of Team Commander Telford, the existence of these magnificent warriors would not have been reported to the outside galaxy. (See Van Tjid's SPECIES BEST FORGOTTEN). Three years later, a unit of Marines landed on Dayton's World, fully prepared for trouble. As expected, the

interned in a concentration camp but this only presented the unhappy C.O. with another problem: what to do with these fearsome creatures. The Terran Emporer does not indulge in genocide. (The Sarii of Algol III would argue this point but as there are no longer any living specimens of this race available to question, the debate is void.) Nor could he release them in their present state of mind. It was then that the decision was made which was to make a mark on military history. The Brugellans were to be incorporated into the Empiric forces. After 18 months of cajoling, bribery, pleading, and the forceful use of quick-learning drugs, this was achieved. They were consequently released to spread the word among their people.

Brugellans attacked. They advanced in packs of half a thousand, each wave commanded by a 'Kennel Lord'. After witnessing the total destruction of the first two waves by laser fire, the Marine commander, sickened by the useless slaughter (he was two-fifths British) ordered the use of Narco-Gas. The survivors were

The Brugella (CANIS VACUMIS) are bipedal mammals of definite canine descent. The height of the average male is 2.5 metres, the body is covered with short bristly hair ranging from light blue to maggot grey in colour. While their physique is enormous, their mental ability is a matter of great



discussion (see Tanowski's CRANIAL CAPACITIES IN MINIATURE). At the time of first contact they lived a semi-nomadic existence and consumed their meat raw. The Brugella hardly ever tell the truth ("Let sleeping canines lie, because if you wake them up they won't tell the truth anyway.") and anyone they took an intense dislike to were eaten alive. This quaint custom existed at first only as a rumour but became an established fact while the first Charge de Affair to Terra was staying at the Bankok Hilton. This resulted in the disappearance of the vice manager, two wine waiters, a small dog, and a Country and Western singer from Tau Ceti II. After another 18 months of cajoling, bribery, etc., this practice was discontinued.

During their first three years of Empiric service, the Brugella were used as shock troops. It can only be imagined what these massive warriors looked like to the opposition as they bore down on them after being totally demoralized by heavy lasers manned by support personnel. The Brugellans at this time wore their traditional costume and weapons (see illustration). It was at this point that a further discovery was made about their culture that had been overlooked by anthropologists, namely their custom of removing certain parts of their male prisoners' anatomy (see FALSETOS: THEIR LIFESTYLE AND WHAT THEY HAVE TO PUT UP WITH by Eyvonne Juanoff). The Brugellan Rangers now wear the marine issue combat coveralls, the only deviation being fur-trimmed cuffs and boots, and the now famous traditional battle axe. The battle cry is still used which could be heard in the old days when the Kennel Lords, who did not participate in the fighting, directed them where the action was thickest. (The more men they lost, the more honour they received.) The cry, 'AAAAAAH EEEEEEE GULKA'--loosely translated as 'OH SHIIIIIT') is now of galatic fame. The Kennel Lords' power came to an abrupt end shortly after first contact when the entire regiment became deaf for five Terran minutes due to an ear infection. It is at this point that the Kennel Lords disappeared from the pages of history.

Many Brugellans are now finding a place in civilian life; the males mostly in the field of politics and as used car dealers, the females excel in the worlds of beauticians and book critics.

MATHOMS



by Anne Braude

What is it that makes the detective stories of Dorothy L. Sayers so special? Why is she, for her devoted fans, so much more rereadable than Agatha Christie or Rex Stout or Erle Stanley Gardner? Leaving aside that elusive but by no means irrelevant quality, style, which is too subjective a taste on which to build an argument, I can cite three qualities which matter to ME. First is comedy, in its broader sense. The earlier books often have scenes verging on farce, with Lord Peter Wimsey resembling an escapee from the works of P.G. Wodehouse; in the later books, where his character becomes more three-dimensional, this is explained as an attitude he assumes while detecting in order to disarm suspects. In the novels in which he is involved with Harriet Vane, they both display their Oxford educations in a duel of wit and witticisms - a latter-day Beatrice and Benedick, exchanging Latin puns and allusions to seventeenth-century metaphysical poetry. Finally, there is social satire, used intermittently in the earlier books; it is dominant in MURDER MUST ADVERTISE, which draws largely on Sayers' own experiences in working for an ad agency.

Next is a quality common to all but the shallowest fiction: characterization. Even in the later books, Lord Peter remains a bit too good to be true, but Harriet Vane is a fully realized and believable human being. The later Sayers is particularly good at displaying the interactions between characters; clues and motivations are psychological. We are invited to

solve the mystery by asking "Is X capable of a cold-blooded murder for gain?" rather than "Who could have entered the library unobserved between 5:02 and 5:07?" and never mind the whys and wherefores. In GAUDY NIGHT, Lord Peter eliminates almost all the suspects by determining their opinions of C.P. Snow's novel THE MASTERS.

This brings in the third quality, interest in ideas and values. This category is hard to separate from characterization because such ideas are displayed dramatically. The aforementioned GAUDY NIGHT is again the best example; it is a complex examination of the concerns of the academic life and of the desirability and utility of higher education for women, still a question for debate at the time the novel was written (1935).

All of these qualities are attributes of fiction in general, not merely of the genre. But they are not the only attributes of fiction. With my criteria limited to these three, and taking into account the genre of mystery fiction only, here is a short list of current detective-story writers whom I regard as having inherited the mantle of Dorothy L. Sayers.

For the purely comic element, I like Charlotte MacLeod's stories about Professor Peter Shandy, the rutabaga expert of Balaclava Agricultural College, which has a remarkably practical work-study program and a mad Viking president called Thorkjeld Svenson, who likes to persuade Peter to investigate crimes by threatening to tear him limb from limb. In REST YOU MERRY, Balaclava's friendly neighborhood yenta is done to death in Peter's living room while he is out of town in order to escape the annual Christmas Grand Illumination, which he has just tried his best to sabotage. In THE LUCK RUNS OUT, he has to contend with a gold heist, the murder of a lady farrier who likes to quote C.S. Lewis, and the abduction of Belinda of Balaclava, the college's pregnant prize sow. There are charming and likeable characters as well as a full complement of nasties; and the action is fast-paced and preposterous. Both books are published in paperback by Avon; a third, WRACK AND RUNE, is new in hardcover and I've not yet received it from my book club. (This is as good a spot as any to insert a plug for The Mystery Guild.) I'm not quite as fond of MacLeod's other books, which have a Boston setting and a too-much-put-upon heroine.

The best writer of satirical

detective fiction around is Emma Lathen, actually a female writing duo, one a lawyer and the other a former government administrator. They have a sharp eye and an even sharper pen for the business world, with Wall Street as their prime target, though banker-sleuth John Putnam Thatcher has ranged as far afield as Greece and Puerto Rico. He is supported by a regular cast of friends and associates, including a broker who changes wives with each novel and an irritatingly perfect secretary. Even the poorer books of the series usually have at least one scene guaranteed to set you quietly chuckling if not laughing out loud; ASHES TO ASHES, in which murder results when a group of concerned parents try to stop the sale of a parochial school to a developer bankrolled by Thatcher's Sloan Guaranty Trust, has at least two: the evacuation of the Sloan after a bomb threat (with the Glee Club singing "Nearer My God to Thee"), and the appearance of a group of protesting parents in UN Plaza midway between Arab and Jewish demonstrators ("Do you mean that now WE want Jerusalem?" exclaims a bemused Irish police official.) The Lathen books are published in paperback by Pocket Books; among the better ones are DEATH SHALL OVERCOME and WHEN IN GREECE.

My favorite for characterization and ideas are, like Lathen and MacLeod, female and American. Jane Langton, who has written quite a bit of juvenile fiction, some of it fantasy based on Transcendentalism, has published three mysteries featuring sleuth Homer Kelly: THE MINUTEMAN MURDER (originally THE TRANSCENDENTAL MURDER) (Dell), DARK NANTUCKET NOON, and THE MEMORIAL HALL MURDER (Penguin). In the first book, he woos and wins librarian Mary Morgan, his wife and colleague in the third; her absence from most of DARK NANTUCKET NOON makes it decidedly inferior to the others. The first is set in Concord, where the spirits of the great Transcendentalists are so much alive that they are practically characters in the story, and the third at Harvard, with most of the characters involved in a community concert presentation of THE MESSIAH. Both are suspenseful and intelligently plotted, rich in quirky minor characters, and deeply engaged with values. They are also frequently very funny. The only criticism I have to make of Langton as a mystery writer is that she doesn't produce enough books.

Amanda Cross (in real life Columbia University professor Carolyn Heilbrun) has created in Professor Kate Fansler a female version of Lord

Peter Wimsey. She is also the offspring of a rich and socially prominent family who disapprove of her activities - in her case working for a living rather than involvement with crime - and she is wittier, and far more liberated, than Harriet Vane. She also enters into a love affair which leads after much heart-searching to marriage. The best Cross novels in Avon paperbacks are POETIC JUSTICE, in which murder takes second place to student revolution and the poetry of W.H. Auden; and THE THEBAN MYSTERIES, in which Kate, teaching a seminar on the ANTIGONE at a select girls' school, finds herself involved in a modern replay of the tragedy resulting from the Vietnam war. My other favorite, DEATH IN A TENURED POSITION, where Kate is enlisted to foil a conspiracy to discredit the first female professor at Harvard, is not yet in paperback. (If detective stories are anything to go by, Harvard professors are definitely an endangered species.)

Another female author, this one English, is hard to fit into any of these categories but definitely belongs in this column, as her books are sure to appeal to anyone with a taste for Sayers. I am referring to Ellis Peters, the nom de crime of historical novelist Edith Pargeter. Her novels do not exactly form a series, but most of them involve in some way Detective-Inspector George Felse of the Midshire (on the Welsh border) C.I.D. and/or his wife Bunt and son Dominic. They are especially marked by a rich evocation of the setting, a trait one associates more with Mary Stewart than with Sayers, though it does appear in THE NINE TAILORS and intermittently in GAUDY NIGHT. The unique characteristic of her books is the use of music as a thematic and plot device. In BLACK IS THE COLOUR OF MY TRUE LOVE'S HEART (murder at a folksong seminar), the plot of an ancient Scottish ballad set by Mahler in DES KNABEN WUNDERHORN. Also highly recommended, though without the musical element, are CITY OF GOLD AND SHADOWS (Pyramid), which takes place in and for much of the time under the ruins of an ancient Roman-British city; and THE KNOCKER IN DEATH'S DOOR, which might be described as an inside-out Gothic.

Although BUSMAN'S HONEYMOON (1937) was the last of the Peter Wimsey novels, as Sayers turned her attention to writing religious drama and translating Dante, there have been two bonuses for her fans in the last decade. All the Wimsey short stories were collected in LORD PETER (Flare/Avon), including the previously uncollected "The Haunted Policeman" and, in the paperback

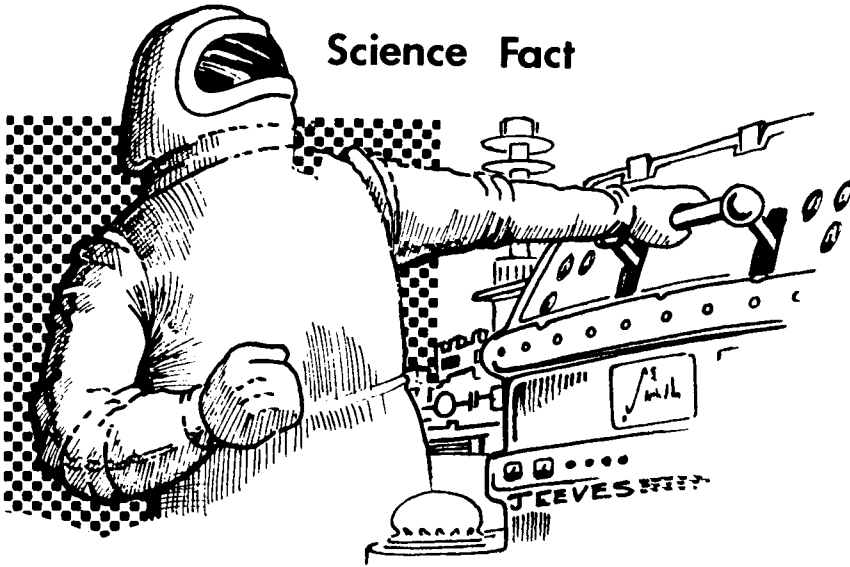
edition, a story written in 1942 but undiscovered at the time the hardcover came out, "Talboys" (sic; Peter and Harriet's Elizabethan farmhouse was actually called Tallboys). And in 1977 C.W. Scott-Giles, Fitzalan Pursuivant of Arms Extraordinary, published THE WIMSEY FAMILY (Avon), an account of Lord Peter's ancestry in the pseudohistorical tradition of the Baker Street Irregulars, of which Sayers herself was a notable adornment. Here one may find a true account of the murrain of mice which afflicted the second Earl and of how the eleventh Duke, while still Viscount St. George, came to marry a hosier's widow.

As I am closing on a note of semifrivolous scholarship (or semi-scholarly frivolity, if you prefer), I will take the opportunity to mention MURDER INK (Workman, 1977, \$7.95 softbound) and MURDERESS INK (Workman, 1979, \$6.95 softbound), both perpetrated by Dilys Winn, founder of the first bookstore devoted exclusively to mystery fiction, also called Murder Ink. They are immense compendia of all kinds of data of interest to mystery readers, including instructions on how to break into Fort Knox (with maps), a short history of the trench coat, where to order the standard Gothic nightgown ("...all sizes to 8...order now and pay later, after you've married the heir!"), articles on handy household poisons and the correct use of the blunt instrument, Dorothy L. Sayers paper dolls designed by Jane Langton, and a host of other data on crime fact and crime fiction, including a useful list of things to avoid if you don't want to be the next victim: DON'T: go for lonely walks with those you've just disinherited (#1); rendezvous with the mysterious stranger who offered you a dukedom over the phone in a decidedly muffled voice (#4); stand with your back to billowing draperies, particularly if the windows are shut (#12). These are essential to the library of any mystery fan and surely contain something of interest to the casual dropper-in. I cannot recommend better guidebooks to anyone who has been inspired by these columns to sample the genre.



Sherwood Frazier

Science Fact



With the recent increase in political conservatism in this country, there also comes a popularity in fundamentalist religion. This popularity has helped usher into being many proposed state statutes that only need final voting to become law. At last count there were 16 states that were waiting final balloting on laws that would force public schools to teach creation science alongside evolution science.

If you, like many people, thought the creationist vs. the evolutionist argument was settled in Dayton, Tennessee some 58 years ago, guess again. That was merely Round 1; Round 2 was won in Arkansas this year in any one of a dozen bible belt states. My first choice is Louisiana where this fall, when the children go back to school, they will be required to learn creation science. It will be taught by public school teachers, these teachers have no choice, it is state law.

As a scientifically minded person, I cannot accept creation science as a respectable theory of evolution; it has no scientific basis or merit. How can anyone that claims to think for him or herself dismiss the evidence in favor of creationism? Do we simply cast aside the fossil records of earth, do we condemn astronomers who tell us the universe is expanding and has been doing so for 15 billion plus years? No! In my opinion and in the words of Clarence Darrow, that would be "...marching backward to the glorious days of the sixteenth century..."

In the Arkansas case this past December, the judge ruled that "Since creation science is not science, the

conclusion is inescapable that the only real effect of the act is the advancement of religion...and (it) is therefore unconstitutional." Therein lies the crux of the situation. How can a so-called science that is based on religious writings be taught without the advancement of the religion? Would it not be a little like trying to sell an automobile without ever letting the prospective buyer touch or see it. I refuse to believe that the human race was ever intended to be so mindless as to accept something as factless as creation science. "Knowledge is our destiny," those words spoken by Jacob Bronowski are closer, in my opinion, to what mankind's past, present, and future exemplifies than the blind faith of fundamentalist religions. We are thinking beings, does this not count for some shred of evidence as to where we came from and where we are going?

Let's look at what the Arkansas law (Act 590) would have said. "Creation science" means the scientific evidences for creation and inferences from that evidence. Creation science includes the scientific and related inferences that indicate:

1. Sudden creation of the universe, energy, and life from nothing.
2. The insufficiency of mutation and natural selection in bringing about development of all living kinds from a single organism.
3. Changes only within the fixed limits of originally created kinds of planets and animals.
4. Separate ancestry for man and apes.
5. Explanation of the earth's geology by catastrophism, including the occurrence of a worldwide flood.

6. A relatively recent inception of the earth and living kinds.

Steve Clark, the attorney general that was defending the suit for the state of Arkansas had hoped to show that the above law could be taught without reference to religious writings, he was defeated before he started.

In their pretrial depositions many creationist scientists admitted that what they practiced was not scientific if measured by the agreement reached by both the plaintiffs and the defendants in early trial discussions: that science must be explanatory, tentative, and falsifiable (testable). In admitting that creationism is inaccessible to scientific method, creationists are asking that creation science be accepted as it is in religious writings. Yet religious writings cannot be used to teach in public schools: separation of church and state, hence Judge Overton's ruling.

We are at a point in our social history where we must make a decision as to the direction the human race will expand in the future. I do not think creationism is a valid history to use as a base for future societies, but I do feel that without such arguments and fights we will never know our full potential. If we do not explore via human experience, science, court trials, or whatever form of experimentation occurs, whether it be on purpose or by accident, we will have no strong base for our future thoughts.

I am of the opinion that man's destiny is in his own hands and not in the hands of a divine being. I find it very hard to accept the idea that we are being lead about, especially in view of our illustrious history (The Holy Roman Empire, Attila the Hun, Hitler, and Communism).

The answer to the problem, Creationism vs. Evolutionism can only be brought about by education. This is not only the responsibility of public and private schools, it is the responsibility of each and every one of us. We have a big stake in the future. It is the direction we are all headed.

There is a need in a society such as ours today to cling to something that is not racing up and down a scale in some economist's office, I think religion offers this to some people. If this is so, all well and good, but a line must be drawn somewhere to divide faith and reality. Who will draw it, or when the line will be drawn is anybody's guess, but we must

do so soon.

Pioneer 10, the first spacecraft to Jupiter, now making man's first trip out of the solar system, completed 10 years in space on March 2 of this year.

Since its launch in 1972, the far-travelling U.S. spacecraft has traversed the asteroid belt, survived Jupiter's punishing radiation belts and operated almost without flaw. Pioneer 10 has travelled in excess of 6.6 billion kilometers, received more than 40,000 commands from Earth, and returned more than 125 billion bits of scientific data.

Pioneer continues to function well and is currently engaged in a new enterprise, defining the extent and behavior of the sun's atmosphere, the magnetic bubble which contains the sun and the planets. This bubble in the interstellar medium is called the heliosphere.

Pioneer 10 is now more than half way between the orbits of Uranus and Neptune, 4.6 billion km from the Sun. About a year from now, in April 1983, Pioneer will be further from the Sun than the planet Pluto. By June 1983, it will be farther out than Neptune, outside all of the planets of the solar system, in their current positions.

Pluto's orbit is so elongated that the "outermost planet" will be inside Neptune's orbit for the next 17 years. NASA officials have, therefore, selected October 1986 (when Pioneer crosses the mean orbit of Pluto) as the official date for the first spacecraft to leave the solar system. Pioneer will cross the farthest extension of Pluto's orbit in April 1989.

At Pioneer's current distance of 4.6 billion km, it takes three hours and 42 mins. for spacecraft data, travelling at the speed of light, to reach the Pioneer Operations Center at NASA's Ames Research Center, Mountain View, California. This one way communication time currently is lengthening at a rate of one minute every four days.

Despite damage from intense Jovian radiation, and hits from tiny micrometeoroids, plus 10 years of continuous operation, almost all systems are performing well. Pioneer's magnetometer ceased to function in 1975, but experimenters can calculate the interplanetary field from charged particle trajectories, magnetic data already gathered and several correlations

from five other on-board instruments.

Scientists await current spacecraft findings "with intense excitement," says Dr. James Van Allen, Pioneer 10 experimenter, "Because we think the Sun is typical of all the stars in the universe. It's the only star we can measure from close up. Finding the extent and exact mechanisms of the Sun's atmosphere will tell us a great deal about the Sun itself, about the interstellar gas surrounding the solar system, and hence about stars in general."

The picture now emerging seems to show that the heliosphere is enormous, far larger than predicted. The heliosphere (created by the million-mile-an-hour solar wind, blowing out from the Sun in all directions) appears to be a tear drop shaped magnetic bubble. The bubble is "streamlined" by the motion of the solar system through the interstellar gas.

Pioneer is travelling down the length of the tear drop shaped heliosphere. The spacecraft is seeking the "skin" of this heliospheric bubble, the boundary between the Sun's atmosphere and true interstellar space. No one knows, but scientists think this boundary region may lie between 5 billion and 10 billion miles from the Sun.

At the long lived spacecraft's current distance, the earth would be seen as a pinpoint of light, never more than 2.2 degrees away from a Sun still intensely bright, but no larger than the head of a pin. Because of this huge distance, and the declines in brightness of the Sun, Pioneer will no longer be able to rely on its Sun sensor for rotational positioning. However, NASA's Ames Research Center mission controllers have devised, and will soon be using, a method of making star maps with the Pioneer camera (imaging photopolarimeter) to provide the needed rotational and attitude data. The experts at NASA's deep space network expect to be able to track Pioneer out to somewhere beyond 9.25 billion km.

Pioneer has chalked up a pretty impressive record of achievements over the first 10 years of its life. I will list some of them:

- first trip to Jupiter.
- first crossing of the asteroid belt and finding that it presents little hazard to spacecraft.
- confirmation that Jupiter is a liquid planet.
- first measurement of Jupiter's huge, pulsating, magnetosphere and tremendously powerful radiation

belts.

--first accurate measurements of mass and densities of Jupiter's planet sized moons, key to the planet's formation history.

--first closeup pictures of Jupiter's Great Red Spot and belts and zones details of atmosphere circulation.

--resolution of the controversy of the origin of the GEGENSCHIN (German for "counterglow") and zodiacal light in interplanetary space.

With recent Pioneer discoveries about space at the edge of the solar system, we now believe that the heliosphere bubble breathes in and out with the 11 year solar cycle. The shock waves of the enormous storms of the Sun seem to persist in the heliosphere for as long as a year, probably changing the heliosphere bubble's shape, as if it were a huge pulsating jellyfish.

Some of the most recent findings concerning the heliosphere are as follows:

--the solar wind was expected to slow with distance from the Sun, but this has not happened. Almost no motion energy has been lost as heat.

--the primary source of turbulence in the outer heliosphere is storms on the Sun, not solar wind collisions.

--near solar maximum, cosmic ray particles incoming from the galaxy in all velocity ranges (including near light speeds) are reduced by one half or are shut out completely from the heliosphere do not wobble as expected from the planet's axial tilt.

--the heliosphere is bisected by a flapping current sheet, aligned with the Sun's equator, and is believed to extend to the interstellar boundary.

--as solar storm activity builds up, the heliosphere is believed to deform into a more oval shape lined up with the Sun's equator, from its rounder shape at solar minimum. It also may expand in size.

The physics coming out of this phase of the Pioneer mission is worth the price of admission, Dr. Aaron Barnes, NASA-Ames astrophysicist comments, "We are constantly entering unexplored territory, and we really don't know what we'll learn about our local star."

Pioneer 10 was a very modest investment of a nation hungry for knowledge, in the words of James A. Michener, "...we cannot be indifferent to space...to turn back now would be to deny our history." Pioneer has suddenly become a very important part of our history.

(See DA CAPO in "On the Shoulders of Vanguard" this issue.)



It's been a really educational winter in some respects. I've learned more than I ever wanted to know about de-icing a car the first thing in the morning and driving through thick freezing fog. The most important thing I learned about the latter is that it really isn't something you want to do if you have any reasonable alternatives. The second most important thing is that if you can't see a thing ahead of you, try driving with your head out the window, watching the white line next to the car, and pray that you don't run out of white line.

I've also learned another method for killing buttercups, although I can't honestly recommend that either. Dropping a brick wall on them may work, but you are apt to find it expensive in terms of garden walls as well as being a bit unselective. Our garden wall came down after a particularly bad series of frosts, taking half the buttercup patch with it. Unfortunately it left the other half of the buttercup patch untouched but took our chive plant out as well as a hydrangea bush. I don't mind about the hydrangea since it was coming out this spring anyhow but I do miss the chives. Actually, I miss the garden wall as well and getting 20 feet of 6 foot high brick wall replaced is likely to be an expensive deal, even allowing for the fact that our neighbors will be going halves with us, the wall between our two houses being a jointly owned affair. The four of us are giving serious thought to having a go at salvaging the bricks and doing the rebuilding ourselves. The problem isn't unique to us. All the buildings in this area are of about the same age and I think somewhere between a third and half of them have lost at least a small bit

of garden wall as a result of the extremely severe winter we've been having.

Probably the worst thing about convalescing from a really serious illness is that it is incredibly boring. After getting caught up on a lot of reading and watching a lot more television than I like to, I was ready to cheer when the doctor OK'd my going to the movies (on the understanding that this involve a minimum of walking). At least it meant a change of scenery and, since luck was on my side for a change, the local cinemas were showing loads of SF and fantasy movies over the next five to six weeks. It seemed as though they'd saved up most of the previous years's output for this one short period.

Worst of the batch, and my personal nominee for a Golden Turkey Award, was CLASH OF THE TITANS. A batch of perfectly good mythology was chopped and changed for no good reason that I could see (it certainly didn't improve the story) in order to inflict a dreadful script on a batch of normally good-to-brilliant actors and actresses. The acting sank to new depths to match the script and the Harryhausen special effects, which should have provided one redeeming feature for the film, were dreadful.

OUTLAND was pretty much a study in cliché - HIGH NOON in space and a man's gotta do what a man's gotta do. It was redeemed by the bad tempered lady doctor and Sean Connery's competence, even when dealing with mediocre material.

Bo Derek's TARZAN: words failed me but luckily Eddie remedied the lack (see illo).

ESCAPE FROM NEW YORK was moderately amusing providing you were keen on action and not too fussy about things like logic and consistency. The basic idea was interesting but considering what expensive real estate Manhattan is, I just don't see the whole of the island being turned into a maximum security prison.

BATTLE BEYOND THE STARS turned out to be "The Magnificent Seven" in space. I suppose someone had to do it sooner or later. If this had been done straight it would have been a disaster but fortunately they had the good sense to do it up as a comedy and produced 90 minutes or so of quite passable light entertainment.

CONQUEST OF THE EARTH is the latest of the Battlestar Galactica movies. Instead of getting a TV series, we've gotten Battlestar Galactica as three (so far) feature films. This was probably the least worst of them. I will give credit where credit is due and point out that the special effects people do some lovely explosions. We had the good luck to see this on the same week as CLASH OF THE TITANS and it seemed almost like a work of genius by contrast.

Moving from the lower end of the spectrum toward the higher, we went to see TIME BANDITS. For those who are into capsule descriptions, this could be described as Monty Python meets the seven dwarves. And there WERE seven of them, chasing though holes in time (left over from Creation, but what can you expect considering what a rush job that was) with the aid of a map they stole from

God and a young lad they picked up along the way, determined to become rich by setting up as time bandits. They're persistent but not awfully good at it. The film is an interesting blend of fantasy, whimsy, and total insanity and if you're partial to humor in the Monty Python and/or Mel Brooks schools you should enjoy it.

SCANNERS was the biggest surprise we had this year. We were put off by the publicity it got but we really felt like going to the movies that week and there was nothing else that sounded even remotely interesting. After seeing it we were very pleased that we hadn't let ourselves be put off by the posters and TV adverts. Instead of the Grade D horror flick the adverts had led us to expect, we had the pleasure of seeing a very good straight science fiction film about a form of drug induced telepathy with some strange but logical side effects, and a rather bizarre but quite fitting ending. It really is a pity that the publicity seemed to be designed to put off the people who could best appreciate the film. (But I suppose to the people doing the publicity, it wasn't really an SF film because it didn't have any space ships in it.) Hopefully, this one will be picked up for convention film programs as it really deserves to be seen.

Mel Brooks' HISTORY OF THE WORLD, PART 1 is a marvelously entertaining sendup, historically speaking, of all sorts of things, with a few digs taken at some famous movies (2001 and THE TEN COMMANDMENTS to name a couple) along the way. It's a bit higher on vulgarity and lower on plot than most Mel Brooks movies have been but overall was very funny. I particularly liked the Roman sequence and the coming attractions for PART 2. Pity he's never likely to make PART 2. I'd be fascinated to see what he and science fiction did to one another.

I assume that by now just about everyone has seen RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK. Good action adventure movies are so rare as to be nearly nonexistent these days. I am excluding SF films, war films, and other films that fall into specific categories or genres. In these sophisticated times, film producers seem to feel that you can't make an action-adventure movie without throwing in some SF, a touch of horror (either supernatural or merely psychotic) or a spot of irrelevant sex and if you omit all of these, then you have to put one or more of the main characters through a great moral or spiritual crisis, generally to the great detriment of the story. RAIDERS seems to have

escaped these traps quite nicely. Admittedly there is a large splash of fantasy at the climax of the film but it is relevant and in keeping with what has gone before. And the rest of the movie moves along beautifully. Actually, even if it had been a terrible movie I'd have loved it just for one scene which I'd been longing to see someone do for years. One thing which has annoyed me for a long time is the number of fight sequences in films where the hero is outnumbered and, in spite of having access to a gun, goes on fighting with bare hands or knives or whatever, apparently so as not to take unfair advantage of the nasties who are trying to kill him. For years I've been waiting for one of these idiotic heroes to realize that this was less than totally sensible behavior, pull out his gun, and use

it on the baddies. And now it's finally been done and I'd have loved RAIDERS for that even if it hadn't been the extremely good movie that it was.

Last, and in some ways the most interesting of the lot (please note that I did not say best) was the John Boorman production of EXCALIBUR. If you are particularly wedded to the traditional version of the Arthurian legends, you would undoubtedly hate this a lot. Even so, you might enjoy watching it simply because it is visually extremely beautiful. If you don't operate on the premise that Mallory provides the definitive version of King Arthur, you'll probably enjoy it as more than just a visual treat. Overall, I liked it very much though parts of it exasperated me mightily. I was

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particularly pleased that Merlin had a distinctive identity as opposed to the cliché ridden figure in a pointed hat that he tends to be in things dealing with the Arthurian legends. On the other hand, I wasn't happy with the young Arthur, just after he pulled the sword from the stone. He seemed stupid rather than naive. I was even willing to forgive Boorman the chromium-plated plate armor since, although it was quite wrong for armor of the period (even ignoring the little matter of the chrome plating) it helped contribute to the visual appeal of the picture and did make it easier to tell the two sides apart in the fog-shrouded final battle (the bad guys didn't have chrome plating on their armor).

EXCALIBUR started me thinking about the changes the last 20 years or so have brought to the handling of the Arthurian legends. When I was a kid, King Arthur and his plate-armored knights, pointed-hatted wizard, and Round Table were classic clichés. It just wasn't the done thing to take liberties with the basic concept. But in 1963 Rosemary Sutcliffe's novel *SWORD AT SUNSET* was published, a sequel to her award winning juvenile historical *THE LANTERN BEARERS*. In this Artos, the bastard nephew of Ambrosius, the High King, is a war leader who is fighting to preserve the last fading bits of Roman Britain against the Saxon invaders. Both books are part of a sequence of novels that stretch from early Roman Britain to England during the reign of Henry I. In *SWORD AT SUNSET* the fantasy element is virtually non-existent and the picture of Artos the war leader is a far cry from the plate armored clichés of more traditional Arthurian books and a great relief to anyone who knows anything of the period during which King Arthur is supposed to have lived.

More recently, in the nonfantasy vein, I encountered Catherine Christian's really excellent novel *THE SWORD AND THE FLAME* (Pan, £1.95) which is the best non-fantasy Arthurian novel I've found. I was particularly pleased with the use of Merlin as a bardic title of rank. If you are at all interested in Arthurian novels or just like historical novels that are really well written and very absorbing, this one shouldn't be missed.

Mary Stewart's lovely fantasy trilogy *THE CRYSTAL CAVE*, *THE HOLLOW HILLS*, and *THE LAST ENCHANTMENT* are also very much worth picking up and are readily available in paperback. These are almost more Merlin's story than

Arthur's and for me I think that counted as a plus. A lot of people have written about Arthur and his assorted knights but very few have dealt with Merlin as an individual in his own right. Merlin, more than any of the other characters in the Arthurian legends, has tended to be treated as a stereotype wizard (good variety) and totally ignored as human being whose talents were more likely to have been a tremendous burden than an asset to promote his own happiness.

I very nearly didn't pick these up because of their being best sellers, the few best sellers I have read in the past having left me with a feeling that my taste in books is not usually awfully compatible with the majority of the reading public, but I'd been reading and enjoying Mary Stewart's books since before she became a best seller. I knew this was quite a departure from her usual line of writing and was even more sceptical on that account but I decided to have a go anyway and picked up the first two volumes. I was delighted with them, though I slightly preferred the first volume, and only annoyed because I then had to wait for several years before the third volume was published.

Strictly for laughs was David Drake's novel *THE DRAGON LORD* which bears no resemblance to any other telling of the Arthurian legend that I've encountered. I can't honestly say that I'd recommend it unless you're really an Arthurian completist or are pretty hard up for something to read (and in the latter case I think you'd be better off rereading an old favorite). I did find it mildly entertaining once the writing style had settled down but the first 60 pages or so were fairly hard going. It read rather like a cross between King Arthur and one of the imitation Conan books, which isn't an awfully workable combination.

British television has also been doing it's bit by King Arthur over the last ten years or so. ITV is currently rerunning its excellent children's series ("children's" only by virtue of the time slot it occupies) *ARTHUR OF THE BRITAINS* which deals with the subject along the lines suggested by Rosemary Sutcliffe: Arthur the local chieftan who becomes the war leader in the fight against the Saxon invaders in post Roman Britain.

BBC kept the ball rolling with two more series, one called *THE YOUNG MERLIN*, which dealt with Merlin's discovery of his powers. Judging by the two episodes I managed to see and what Eddie told me about the rest,

this was excellent. Unfortunately, this was another series that went into a kid's time slot but this was a weekday one and I seldom got home from work early enough to see it.

The other series, *THE LEGEND OF KING ARTHUR*, was a relatively straight-forward rendering of the basic story with much of the magic being a matter of drugs and/or hypnosis (though not all of it). The costuming and weaponry was consistent with post Roman Britain. It wasn't a spectacular production but it was a very nice one.

The worst contribution to Arthur-related TV series is the American sitcom *MR. MERLIN* which has, unfortunately, been picked up over here by ITV. The idea of Merlin running a garage in San Francisco in the present day and having to take a modern teenager on as an apprentice has possibilities but whoever is writing the scripts has seen fit to ignore them. The best I can say is that the series is boring and repetitious.

Staying with the subject of TV, BBC has shown a couple of particularly nice things recently. They produced an excellent six part series of John Wyndham's *THE DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS*, which I hope will be picked up by one of the U.S. TV networks. I wasn't sure what to expect from this and wasn't terribly optimistic since *DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS* has never been one of my favorite Wyndham novels and the movie that had been made years ago had been pretty dreadful; but what I got was a lovely surprise. The book was followed very faithfully from what I can remember of it (though I admit it's been about 20 years since I last read it), the acting was excellent and even the triffids were pretty effective (BBC tends to operate on the premise that SF is low budget for special effects). It was very enjoyable and definitely worth watching if it comes on in your area. In fact, I enjoyed it better than the book and I don't think I've ever said that about an SF movie or TV series before.

The other incredibly neat thing to turn up on BBC recently was a Czechoslovakian science fiction film called *TOMORROW I'LL BE SCALDING MYSELF WITH TEA*. This film has two distinctions, one major and one minor. The minor one is that it has totally readable sub-titles. The major one is that this film has the most complex time travel plot ever filmed (at least to the best of my knowledge). It starts 20 or 30 years in the future with a tourist

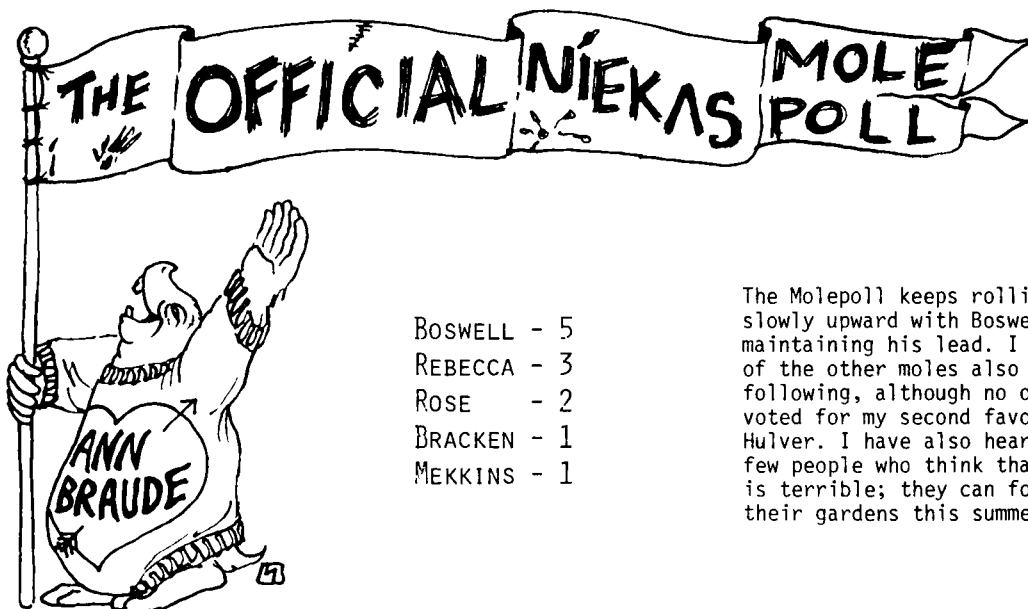
organization in Prague running tours into the past ("See the dinosaurs, watch the battle of Waterloo...") which sparks off a plot by some elderly Nazis (medicine to cut down on or prevent aging having been discovered some time earlier so they haven't all died of old age at this point) to steal an attache case-sized atom bomb from a war museum, bribe one of the time tour pilots to take them back to Germany in 1944, and give the bomb to Hitler along with plans to build more so that he can win the war after all. Unfortunately for them, this ingenious idea is loused up when the pilot they have bribed chokes on a breadroll and dies and his identical twin brother takes his place. Karel, the brother, is one of the scientists who developed the time rocket and since he's bored with his life in research and in love with his brother's fiancée, as well as envious of his more exciting life, he tells the doctor who is making out the death certificate that it is Karel who has died and that he is Jan. Since he knows nothing of his brother's private little business venture, he is stunned when three supposed tourists take over the ship and substitute a program for a trip back to 1944 for the dinosaur tour program.

Fortunately, the Nazi computer expert goofed slightly and instead of coming down in 1944, they arrive three years too early, when Hitler is still riding high and not in the least interested in grasping at any straws

to avert defeat. When the Nazis try to explain when they're from and how the war ended he orders them questioned and shot. The elderly Nazi general is shot by his younger self and Karel and the other two baddies escape and make it back to the rocket minus the stewardess and the two legitimate tourists. In an attempt to avert the whole mess, Karel brings the rocket back to the day before it left, hoping to save his brother's life as part of the deal. The two remaining Nazis have by this time found out about the Jan/Karel swap and decide to split up, one to dispose of Karel and the other to save Jan so they have the right pilot when they try the scheme out the second time around.

Unfortunately for their plans, the one who is supposed to be saving Jan gets hit by a truck and killed and the Jan/Karel swap goes ahead for the second time. Karel 1, who survives his attempted murder by the remaining Nazi, tries to abort Karel 2's visit to the fiancée and in an unlikely accident he, the fiancée, and her father are all killed. Karel 1 then hurries to the tour center to take the Nazi party on to its date with the past. Since this is the second time around for him, he knows what is going to happen and manages to prevent the stewardess and the two legitimate tourists from getting on board before taking off and heading back to 1941 again. This time he remains behind in the rocket while the Nazis set off for their visit with Hitler and makes use of the

rocket's radio equipment to cut in on one of the Nazi transmissions and anonymously warn them that two Allied spies dressed as Nazi generals are about to attempt to waylay an officer's car on the nearby road. The two remaining Nazis are killed and Karel 1 heads forward in time again, again coming back a day early to try and save his brother's life. Once again he's too late to prevent Jan's death, though he does tell the police about the Nazi plot and have all three men and their stolen atom bomb picked up. However, when he realizes he's too late to prevent Jan's death, he hides his body in the bathroom when Karel 3 comes back with the doctor and pretends to be Jan, just recovering from choking on the roll. Jan's body is accidentally destroyed by the chemical used to dissolve dirty disposable dishes and when Karel 1 realizes what has happened to it, he continues to take Jan's place, leaving Karel 3 to continue on as Karel (after first making a date for Karel 3 with the Stewardess who, he found out while he was being Jan, has liked Karel). This description doesn't really do justice to the complexity of the film though I think it gives some idea of why it fascinates me. This is another one of the films I hope some convention picks up for inclusion in their film program, partly because I think other people would enjoy it and partly because BBC rarely shows subtitled films a second time and I'm not likely to see it again unless it turns up on a con film program.



BOSWELL - 5
REBECCA - 3
ROSE - 2
BRACKEN - 1
MEKKINS - 1

The Molepoll keeps rolling on and slowly upward with Boswell maintaining his lead. I see some of the other moles also have their following, although no one has yet voted for my second favorite, Hulver. I have also heard from a few people who think that the book is terrible; they can forget about their gardens this summer.



DLS FOR DIRAGON

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This section was edited by Anne Braude and includes the work of:

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by Anne Braude ~~was~~...

dragons:

(for Felice, and other Secret Sympathizers)

Dragons lead less than exemplary lives:
They have nasty habits, like eating their wives.
Cold, green, and coily, and full of ill will,
Their pleasure in virtue is practically nil.
If they help an old lady who's crossing the street,
The poor thing's usually asked home to eat.
They crave gold and jewels to garnish their scales,
And never pay tax on them, income or sales.
They lurk in deep caverns, all gloomy and wet,
And dine upon damsels and knights en brochette.
Their most notable character trait is plain greed;
In fine, they are not a desirable breed.
They've died out, thank heavens ... except one or two ...
(Keep quiet about me, and I won't mention you.)



A SLITHER OF DRAGONS

Lin Carter

This "Who's Who of Dragonry" is taken rather hastily from my notes for a work-in-progress, and is to be regarded more as a sketch of an unfinished work than as a finished piece. (The reason for the haste is the nearness of NIEKAS' deadline for its dragon issue.) When completed to my satisfaction, the work will be published in pamphlet form and will be considerably lengthier, more detailed and comprehensive.

Incidentally, I would very much appreciate hearing from any readers with information on dragons not listed here, for there must certainly be many that I have forgotten about, or overlooked, or whose acquaintance I have yet to make in the course of my reading.

I have strictly limited these entries to only those members of the dragonish breed with individual names or titles; there seems no point in listing every dragon anyone in a story ever fought, for there is nothing in particular to distinguish one dragon from another. To illustrate this, I need only cite the history of St. George, who battled many of the scaly creatures during his years of travel and adventure, but who is chiefly remembered for his famous battle against the Dragon of Dunsmore Heath.

Also, please note that I have included herein a few members of the breed whose dragonhood may be questioned, as, for example, Iormungandar the Midgard Serpent, and the Worm Ouroboros. Both of these are sometimes described or depicted as a serpent, rather than as a dragon, and (confusing), elsewhere as dragons rather than as serpents. You pays your money and you take your cherge.

The title of this piece comes from a

phrase coined by L. Sprague de Camp, who years ago voiced his opinion that dragons were important enough to have their own collective noun, equivalent to "a pride of lions" or "a flock of sheep" or "a herd of cattle."

I could not agree with him more!

AGNES. An amiable, two-headed lady dragon kept as a pet by Tattypoo, the Good Witch of the North, in Ruth Plumly Thompson's 1928 Oz book, THE GIANT HORSE OF OZ.

CRYSOPHYLAX DIVES. A wealthy dragon of ancient and imperial lineage, which Aegidius of Hame battled against by means of the sword Caudimordax (in the Vulgar tongue, "Tailbiter"), which had formerly belonged to a famous dragon-fighter named Bellomarius; in J.R.R. Tolkien's tale, FARMER GILES OF HAM (1949).

CUSTARD. A friendly dragon, hero of the children's book, CUSTARD THE DRAGON, by Ogden Nash.

THE DRAGON OF DUNSMORE HEATH. The most celebrated of the several dragons fought against by the famous St. George. This particular battle was waged near Coventry, England.

THE DRAGON OF WANTLEY. A phony dragon fabricated from wood and painted cloth, used by con-men to fleece tribute from the nearest village, in Owen Wister's tale of the same name (itself a sardonic retelling of an old English poem of unknown authorship, in which the brute is battled by More of More-hall).

DZIMDAZOUL. In my Gondwane Epic, one of the first of all created things, encountered by Ganelon Silvermane in the Halfworld. He lives in the Den of Miracles, and is half as old as the Moon.

DZORAug. In my fantasy novel, KESRICK, a dragon who lives at the Edge of the World, and who guards the bridge which spans the spaces between this world and the next. He remembers the first star.

EARTHQUAKE. A friendly female dragon (parenthetically, for some reason, most female dragons seem to be friendly to mankind) who aids the young hero Ewan in the children's novel GIFTWISH, by Graham Dunstan Martin (Houghton Mifflin, 1981).

EUSTACE. In the Narnia books, a bad little boy who is punished by being transformed into a dragon. See the novel THE VOYAGE OF THE DAWN TRADER by C.S. Lewis.

FAFNIR. Perhaps the most famous of all dragons, this, a wicked dwarf transformed into a dragon to guard the treasure of the Nibelungs. The tale is retold in everything from the ELDER EDDA and BEOWULF, to the NIEBELUNGENLIED and Wagner's RING.

GARGOUILLE. In Medieval legend, a famous dragon tamed by St. Romain,



then Bishop of Rouen, by flinging his episcopal stole around its neck. Its children were the Gargoyles which forever after adorned the cathedrals of France.

GLAURUNG. The first of the dragons of Morgoth, slain by Turin at Cabed-en-Aras. See Tolkien's *UNFINISHED TALES*, (Houghton Mifflin, 1980).

ORMUNGANDAR. The Midgard Worm in Norse mythology, whom Thor wrestled during his visit to Jotunheim. Sometimes described as a dragon, and sometimes a serpent, but note that the word Worm in the Germanic languages is equivocal, used to describe both.

THE LAUGHING DRAGON. A friendly Oz dragon, in *THE LAUGHING DRAGON OF OZ*, by "Frank Baum." This is not L. Frank Baum, but his son, Frank Joslyn Baum, who wanted to continue the Oz books after his father's death, was refused by the publisher, and illegally sold a version (mostly illustrations) as a Big Little Book. Reilly & Lee sued and the printed copies were almost entirely withdrawn and destroyed.

OUROBOROS. In the ancient literature of alchemy, a symbol depicting a dragon swallowing his own tail; variously, symbolizing infinity (a circle), and rebirth.

THE PAPER DRAGON. In *RAGGEDY ANN AND THE PAPER DRAGON*, by Johnny Gruelle, another phony dragon, like that of Wantley above, this time made of flimsy lathes and painted paper. This one lives and moves and talks, though, and is very amiable.

PING-POO. A black Mongolian dragon of the female persuasion, belonging to the Royal Menagerie of Puffleburg, in my spoof of fairy-tales, *ONE DRAGON TOO MANY*. Prince Pancho uses her as his mount on his journey to fight another of the scaly brood, as his favorite charger, Thunderbolt, is dragon-shy.

QUIBERON. A ferocious, fire-breathing dragon employed by the wicked witch, Mombi, to haunt the Lost Lake of Orizon and keep the inhabitants of the Ozure Isles at home. See Ruth Plumly Thompson's *THE GIANT HORSE OF OZ*.

THE RELUCTANT DRAGON. A gentle, peace-loving dragon who agrees to stage a fake fight with St. George so that they both will look good, and the local villagers will enjoy a great show, in the story of the same name by Kenneth Grahame, bless him!

RINJIN. In Japanese legend, the

dragon who is ruler of the seas. Most dragons in Oriental lore, incidentally, are depicted as awesome but beneficent elemental spirits.

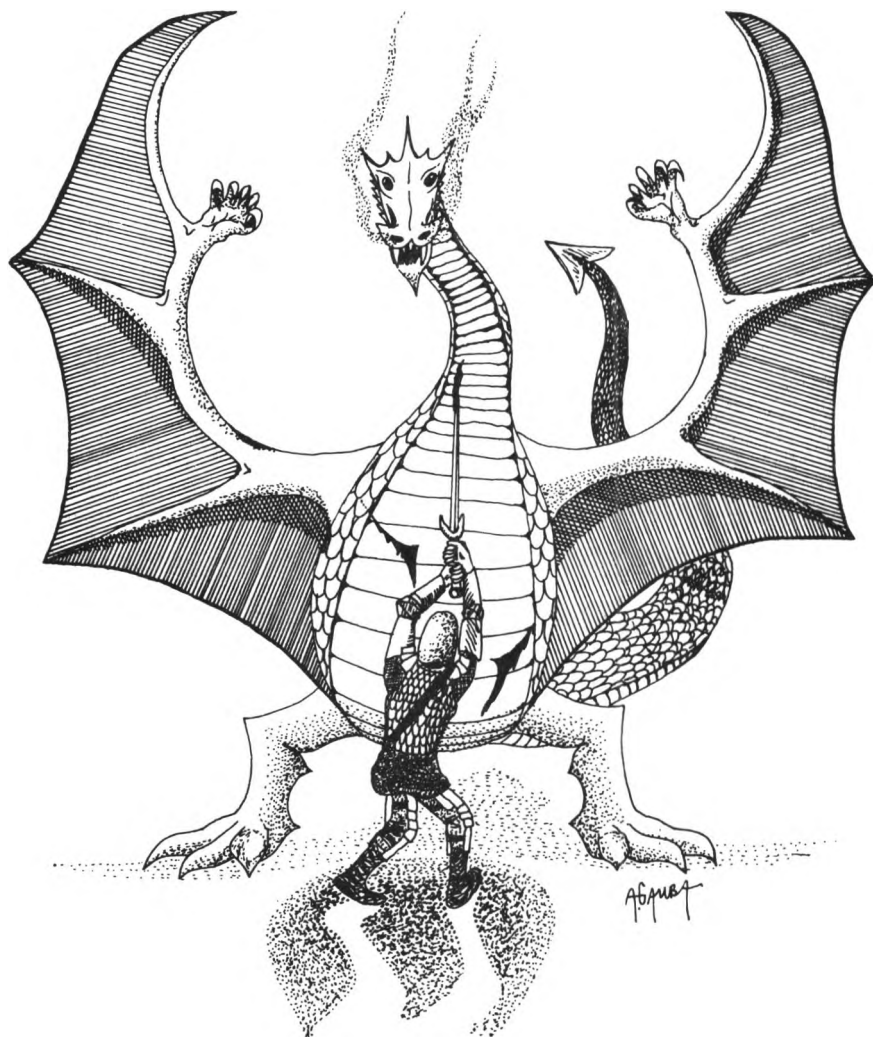
SMARASDERAGD. A treasure-loving dragon (whose name means "Lover of emeralds" in the Greek), who appears in Avram Davison's delightful novel, *PEREGRINE: SECUNDUS* (Berkley Books, 1981).

SMAUG. Surely, I don't have to tell you anything about HIM, do I? Well, if I do, look in *THE HOBBIT*.

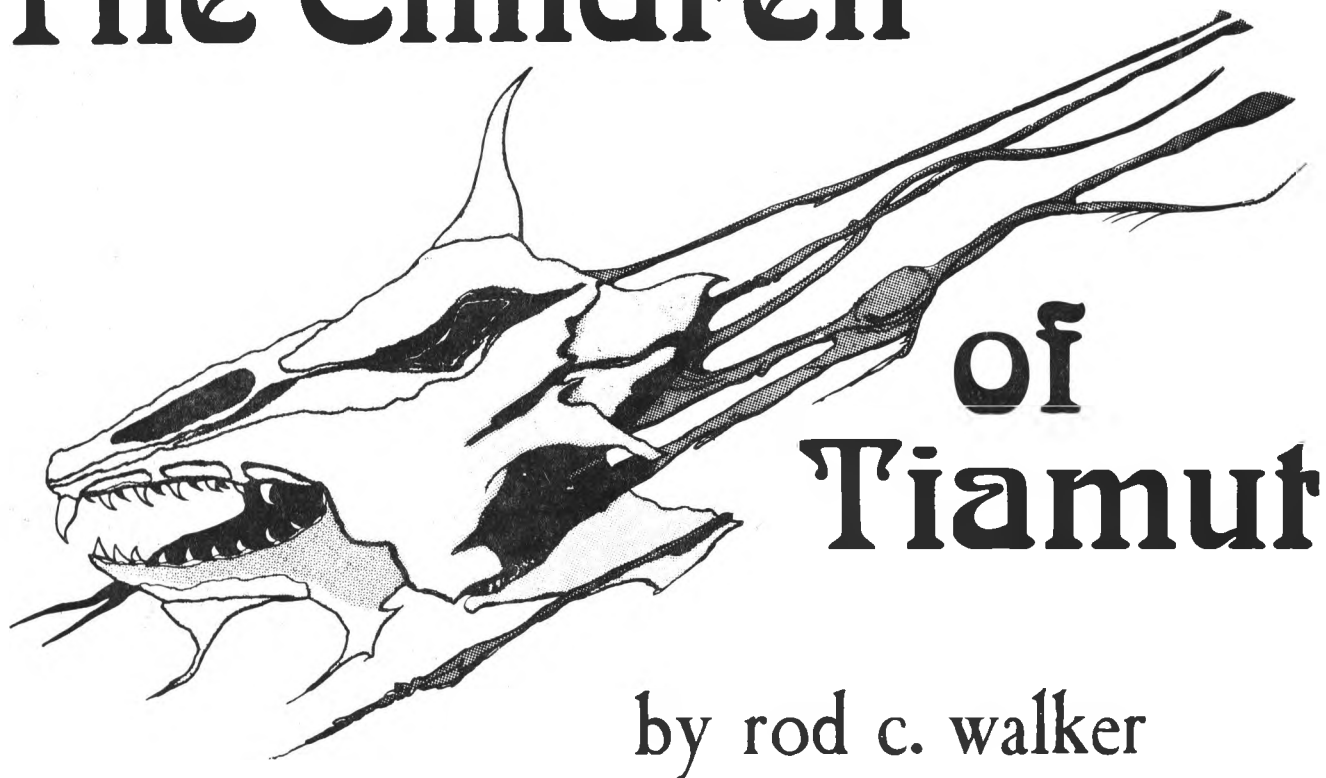
SPAGOPHRASTUS. A rampaging dragon who once caused a lot of trouble down in Orn, until Prince Pancho of Puffleburg arrived on the scene to fight him two falls out of three. See *ONE DRAGON TOO MANY* (1971) by the present author, if you can find a copy. His full name was Spagophrastus Bombastus von Zetzelstein, by the way.

TARASQUE. A dragon who dwelt in the desert of Crau and who was ravaging the countryside; St. Martha, then preaching to the Heathen at Arles, made him tame as a pussycat by the sheer, overwhelming virtue of her maidenhood (not to mention a bucket or two of Holy Water). She later led him through the streets, using her garter for a leash.

VERMITHRAX PREJORATIVE. The wonderful fire-breathing, wing-flapping dragon in the recent Walt Disney movie, *DRAGONSLAYER*, and a fine healthy specimen of the breed he was, too!



The Children



by rod c. walker

In the beginning, there were dragons. The conflict of a heroic figure and an awesome monster stands at the very foundation of the mythic universe, and the echoes of that struggle reverberate down to our own age, even to the monster of DRAGONSLAYER and all the other literary children of the First Dragon, who was Tiamut.

We must be careful of this word, "dragon". Hearing it, we moderns will immediately envision a giant reptile, winged, breathing fire, possessed of an intelligence and malevolence far exceeding that of the nastiest crocodile. The serpentine nature of the dragon is now well established...such terms as "serpent" and "snake" are applied to dragons, as well as the Nordic word, "worm" (or "orm"). But as we will see, some of the earliest creatures referred to as "dragons" were not necessarily reptiles at all.

Furthermore, one book very commonly read, which uses the term quite a bit, does so in a very indiscriminate and confused manner. This is the King James version of the Bible. The words normally rendered as "dragon" and "dragons" are TANNIN and TAN respectively. The latter term (see, e.g., JEREMIAH 9:11, 10:22, 49:33, and 51:37) is always used in the plural and denotes some

desert-dwelling creature. Ronald Knox, in his translation, renders it as "serpents"; however, based on a Syriac cognate, it probably means "jackals". The former term should really be translated "monster". It is always used on an inimical being and implies great size, but not necessarily reptilian appearance. The term could thus apply to Babe the Blue Ox as well as to Ancalagon the Black, although with much greater likelihood to the latter. In fact, it usually applies to such charmers as Rahab and Leviathan, whom we will have the pleasure of meeting shortly.

I should also mention that even after a "dragon" became definitely a sort of super-crocodile, it didn't always fly or breathe fire. There were "cold-drakes" which sometimes flew and sometimes didn't. And there were flightless fire-breathers. But this gets us far into the real of mediaeval and modern dragonry, a subject beyond the scope of this inquiry.

The best way to examine the idea of dragons in the ancient world is to do so by motif, rather than by grouping the myths by national origin. This is because myths migrate and coningle. Modern stories in which a hero slays a monster of some kind (usually what we would now call a "dragon") are

rooted in such mediaeval fantasies as those involving Beowulf, Siegfried (or Sigurd), and St. George. These in turn are variations on the story of Perseus rescuing Andromeda. This story can be traced back through Hittite, Canaanite, and Egyptian versions to the Babylonian myth of Bel and the Dragon and on to the Sumerian "original", Marduk and Tiamut. I say "original" within quotation marks because even the Sumerian prototype obviously had literary antecedents which are now lost to us. In any event, this kind of mythic chain reaction is a common one but presents too complex and interwoven a skein of influences to be unravelled in a short amateur presentation of this sort.

Looking at the various sorts of dragons presented in the ancient myths, as motifs, seems better...and gives us a look at some of the skeins which tie similar myths together in time and space. The motifs used here will be:

1. Creation of the Universe
2. The Pursuer or Enemy
3. The Guardian
4. The Neighborhood Pest
5. The Friendly Savant
6. The Infinite Serpent
7. Miscellaneous

1. CREATION OF THE UNIVERSE

The monster Tiamut is generally referred to as a dragon, although no precise physical description of her exists. She did breathe fire, and she did fly.

Various versions of the Sumerian creation epic exist. It is usually known by its Akkadian title, ENUMA ELISH ("When on High"). The general drift of the story is as follows: In the beginning there existed only the primeval waters, Apsu, and the chaos-monster, Tiamut: male and female, respectively. After Tiamut had coupled with Apsu, she bore a large progeny of monsters and gods, of which a few generations rapidly appear. The gods turn out to be a fractious and noisy lot and Tiamut would really rather they be done away with. Apsu attacks them but, led by their chief Ea, they defeat and kill him. Well, Tiamut is simply furious. She couples with her first-born, Kingu, and breeds a whole new set of perfectly awful monsters, and prepares to attack the gods herself. The gods are thoroughly unnerved by this threat. Ea is virtually in hiding. His son, Marduk, however, offers to meet Tiamut if the gods will make him their King, which they do. There is then a big battle in which Marduk wins. He splits Tiamut in half, the lower part becoming the earth and the upper part becoming the dome of the heavens. Marduk also kills Kingsu, mixing his blood with clay and making mankind out of the resulting glop.

(NOTE: It should be mentioned that no Sumerian version of this myth has ever been found. I presume a Sumerian prototype, perhaps without good reason, although the Akkadian version is so well-developed it obviously has antecedents somewhere. There is in fact a well-attested Sumerian creation myth which involves no dragon nor a big battle, but the syncretic nature of Middle Eastern religions would easily allow for multiple myths. In fact, in both the extant Akkadian and Sumerian myths, the primeval waters are called by the same name, APSU.)

A surprisingly similar myth is found in India. The god Indra is the child of Earth and Sky, which are permanently separated when he is born. The Adityas (good gods) beseech him to aid them against the Danavas (evil gods), which he agrees to do on condition they make him their King, which they do. The Danavas are the children of Danu, and her chief son is Vritra, described as a gigantic serpent lying among the hills. Indra does battle. Just as Marduk is assisted by the winds, Indra is assisted by the Maruts,

which are storm gods. He defeats and kills both Danu and her son Vritra. After dying, Vritra splits open, releasing the primeval sweet waters. These are in turn already pregnant and give birth to the sun. Many of the same elements are in both this myth and in that of Tiamut and Marduk, although obviously not used always in quite the same way.

The area of Canaan was inhabited by a variety of Semitic-speaking people whose myths were influenced by Mesopotamia and also by Egypt. Non-Semitic people, such as Hittites and Philistines, also lived there at one time or another. We might expect out of this melange of influences to find multiple versions of any given myth, which is what we do find. However, outside the Bible, the only good collection of Canaanite myths we have comes from the northern Phoenician city of Ugarit. Although no copy is extant, it is clear they possessed a creation myth involving the killing of a dragon. Ba'al, the son of El, kills a 7-headed chaos-dragon, Lotan. In another version of the myth, Ba'al defeats (but does not kill) a sea-dragon figure named Yam-Nahar, as part of a running feud with his father El. However, it appears that another version of these myths exist in which the victor in the battles is not Ba'al, but his sister Anath. On one tablet she herself asks rhetorically:

Have I not crushed Yamm, El's darling,

Annihilated the great god River?

Have I not muzzled the dragon, Crushed the crooked serpent, Mighty monster with seven heads?

Anath also bears the title, RABBATU 'ARTHIRATU YAMMI (Lady Who Treads on the Sea ((Dragon))). It also appears that Anath had usurped myths and titles formerly connected with another goddess, Asherah (that is, Ishtar?).

The Hebrews were relative latecomers to Canaan. Available evidence suggests that the term "Hebrew" (HABIRU, 'APIRU) originally had a meaning similar to the modern "Gypsy", and meant wandering people of uncertain and varying ethnic and linguistic affiliations. They ranged in status from respected citizens to slaves and outlaws; and engaged in many trades, particularly the donkey caravaneering which formed the backbone of Middle Eastern long-distance trade until the geological disaster, c.1800 B.C., which destroyed the Vale of Siddim (Sodom, Gomorrah, and that bunch). Bands of these stateless people

roamed the area, serving as private soldiers-for-hire, and also engaging in itinerant farming, herding, and banditry. A number of these groups settled in Egypt and became enslaved there during the upheavals occasioned by the military reconquest of Lower Egypt by the 18th Dynasty. Several bands, which we can now call "Tribes", left Egypt during the 19th Dynasty. They combined with others then living to the south of Canaan, allied with others living within Canaan, and proceeded to conquer a good portion of the area. Out of this conquest came the Twin Kingdoms of Judah and Israel, and out of their unique historical experience came the Bible.

The Hebrews had their own dragon-slaying myths...which did not, however, appear in the Book of GENESIS. The debate over how and why this omission occurred need not concern us here. We need only observe that the extraordinarily large number of cultural influences which touched the Hebrews must have given them access to many mythic ideas which they came to accept or reject selectively. Certainly a common myth early in the Twin Kingdoms would have been that of Jehovah creating the universe by slaying a dragon. Echoes of these myths may be found in later midrashic glosses on the Old Testament. But equally may echoes be found within the Bible itself.

The myth may be reconstructed as follows, perhaps: In the beginning, Jehovah and his sons battled Tehom, the primeval waters. She was aided by the great dragons Leviathan and Rahab. But from his fiery chariot he smote them with lightning and the winds and defeated them. Rahab he chastened, and Tehom he restrained; but Leviathan he split in twain to form the firmament below and the vault of the heavens above. Then the sons of Jehovah shouted with joy and the work of creation was begun.

However, the sources and influences involved are so numerous that no one coherent myth seems possible. It may even be doubted that the Hebrews had such myths, but references to them are to be found throughout the Bible. It might be useful to look at a few of these:

PSALMS 74:13-14: Thou didst divide the sea by thy strength: thou brakest the heads of the dragons in the waters. Thou brakest the heads of Leviathan in pieces, and gavest him /as prey to the sea-beasts/. (// - Thus the Knox translation.)

PSALMS 89:10: Thou hast broken Rahab in pieces, as one that is slain; thou has scattered thine

enemeies with thy strong arm.

ISAIAH 27:1: In that day the Lord with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish Leviathan the piercing serpent, even Leviathan the crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea. (Here, as elsewhere, I have capitalized "Leviathan", although in the KJV it is in lower case.)

ISAIAH 51:9: Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon?

JOB 41:14-21: who can penetrate into the cavern of his /Leviathan's/ mouth, forcing the gates that guard it, the terrors of his teeth? The body of him is like shields of cast metal, scale pressing on scale, so close to one another as to leave no vent between; so well joined that nothing will part them. Let him but sneeze, the fire flashes out; let him open his eyes, it is like the glimmer of dawn; flames come from his jaws, bright as a burning torch, smoke from his nostrils, thick as fumes of a seething pot; his very breath will set coals aflame, such fire issues from that mouth. (Knox trans.)

And so on. Leviathan is of course the Ugaritic Lotan, whom we have already met. Rahab is a word meaning "haughtiness" and the phrase "proud serpent" is also used to mean Egypt. (There is also a prostitute named Rahab in the Bible; no connection.) But where is Tehom in all this? Very carefully hidden. She is of course the Mesopotamian Tiamut, and she appears as TOHU, a word which means a waste of primal chaos. We find her in the very first sentences of the Bible: GENESIS 1:2: "The earth was without form, and void." "Without form, and void" is the Hebrew phrase TOHU WA-BOHU, a literary construction known as HENDIADYS - where two connected nouns really stand for a single emphatic concept. In this case, the phrase might be better rendered, "a for 'less void". We use the same sort of construction in English; where, e.g., "null and void" is used to mean "a complete nullity". This phrase embodies a mythic concept wherein (according to later midrashes) there were two primal monsters, a sea-dragon (Tehemoth, or Leviathan) and a land-monster (Behemoth). In this phrase, Tiamut's mate Apsu is replaced by the chaos-goddess of a myth of Byblos cited by Philo of Byblos; namely, Baou. But Apsu passed into Hebrew as the word EPHES, "nothingness"...and we find the two of them paired again in ISAIAH 40:17: "All nations before

him /Jehovah/ are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing (EPHES) and vanity (TOHU)." And we meet all three of these lovelies in ISAIAH 34:11-12: "...and he /Jehovah/ shall stretch out upon it /Edom/ the line of confusion (TOHU), and the stones of emptiness (BOHU)...and all her /Edom's/ princes shall be nothing (EPHES)." The author of ISAIAH uses these words with such definite mythic implications because he is certain his readers will understand them. But little now remains in the Old Testament of Jehovah's heroic battle with the dragons of chaos.

An interesting departure from these grisly carryings-on makes a dragon or great serpent of the father of all things. An ancient pre-Hellenic (Pelagian) myth starts with the chaos-goddess, Eurynome. She dances toward the south, raising a north wind. This becomes the serpent Ophion (or Ophioneos), who impregnates her and makes her the Mother of All Things. The story of Baou, already mentioned, is the same sort of thing; she is impregnated by the Wind-god Kolpia. A Sumerian version of this myth may involve a goddess named Yahu, a title or name which was later (perhaps only by linguistic accident) associated with Jehovah.

2. THE PURSUER OR ENEMY

A great many myths involve a battle between a god or hero and a monster...sometimes with the rescue of a lady in view. This motif will be more familiar to modern readers than the last one.

In an early Sumerian myth, a monster called the Kur carries off the goddess Ereshkigal. The god Enki, son of Enlil, seeks out the Kur in a boat, at which the monster throws stones. The rest of the tale is lost, but one presumes the defeat and death of the monster and the rescue of the damsel in distress.

A later myth involves Asag, a dragon/demon of disease who lives in a place known as...would you believe?...the Kur. The god Ninurta has a weapon named Sharur which talks. Sharur for some reason feels that Ninurta ought to go to the Kur and kill Asag. So Ninurta does. There is a nice little interlude in the middle where Ninurta has run away after his first, unsuccessful attack on Asag, and Sharur has to talk him into going back and finishing the job.

A third myth, involving the mortal Gilgamesh, will be discussed under the Guardian motif.

Dragon-killing stories are common in Egypt, where the monster in question is a gigantic serpent (not a crocodile as might be expected). A hero named Ahura, for instance, goes

out to kill "The Deathless Snake". He is at first not too successful at this, because every time he chops the Snake in pieces, it grows back together again. Finally he rubs sand between the parts as he chops them, and the Snake dies. He puts his fingers to his lips and then finds he can understand the speech of birds. (This miraculous element in the story appears in many versions.)

Many Egyptian gods are called upon to kill dragons...Horus, Ra, and Sutekh (another name for Set) particularly. In the conflict between Horus and Set, however, the latter himself became a dragon ("the Roaring Set"). Set was an ambivalent god in the sense that he was revered and worshipped (sometimes as a serpent, apparently) in parts of Egypt, particularly on the Delta; and yet in the Osiris/Isis/Horus myths he is the great Enemy, the Pursuer, usurper, murderer. This latter myth cycle was an unavoidable part of the funerary cult in Egypt...particularly that of the royal house. Yet simultaneously some of the dynasties...#19, for instance, many of whose sons were named Seti...also revered Set.

Set also appeared as the ally of Ra in the continual battle against the sun-god's eternal Enemy and Pursuer, the serpent Apep (also called Apaf, Apapef = Apophis). The slaying of Apep played some part in creation myths involving Ra, but primarily it was Apep and his demons who tried to attack and destroy the Barque of the Sun during its nightly journey through the Netherworld. The name Apep is usually written with a determinative at the end of an undulating serpent with lances or spears stuck in its folds. Apep was also held responsible for eclipses of the sun, a role assigned to a dragon in China as well.

Illuyankas is a dragon found in two Hittite myths (it is used as a proper name but is in fact a noun meaning "dragon" or "serpent"). In each of them he is the Enemy of the unnamed Hittite Storm-God. In the earlier myth the Storm-god is at first worsted. A goddess and a mortal man get Illuyankas drunk, however, and bind him so that the Storm-god can return and kill him. Not nice.

In the second (and presumably later) version, the Storm-god is defeated in his first encounter with Illuyankas, who takes his heart and yes. The Storm-god then turns to a mortal

woman, on whom he begets a son. He then sends his son to take service with Illuyankas and steal the heart and eyes. This he does, but in the process marries Illuyankas' daughter. The Storm-god is therefore obliged to kill the whole bunch of them.

In Indian myth, Ravana, the great Enemy of Rama, is said to have had heads. He is not, however, described otherwise as a dragon.

The Greeks had a good share of dragons. Python (good name for a dragon) was the Pursuer of Leto. That poor damsel did nothing more awful than have an affair with Zeus in the form of a quail. Hera, however, went into a jealous snit and ordered the serpent Python to pursue Leto to the ends of the earth (she got no further than Delos, however). She became the mother of Apollo who then killed Python when he (Apollo) was five days old. (Apollo also rescued his mother from the giant Tityous. One can only imagine what went through the lady's mind when this being...who, lying down, covered 9 acres...attempted to ravish her.)

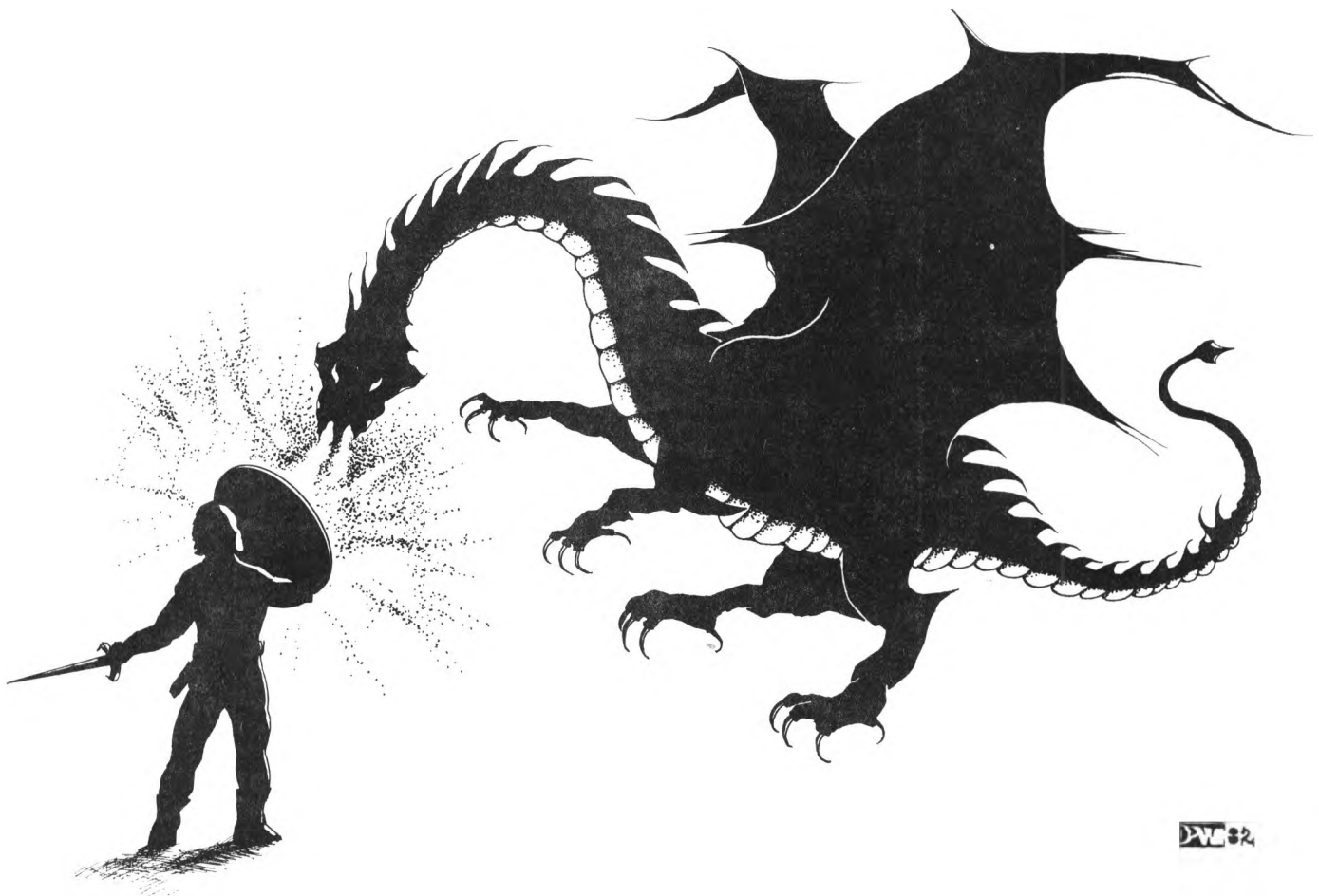
Typhon was the Enemy and Pursuer of no less than Zeus himself. He was the

last of Mother Earth's children, and also the largest. With an ass's head he doesn't exactly qualify as your typical dragon, but his legs were coiled serpents and his arms terminated in countless serpents' heads. Each arm, by the way, was hundreds of leagues in length. The gods did not think much of fighting this brute and fled, in disguise, to Egypt. Zeus finally comes forth, taunted with cowardice by Athene. He fights Typhon with a sort of family heirloom, a flint sickle used for castration of one's father. He loses. Typhon uses the sickle to cut out the sinews in Zeus' hands and feet and goes away. Zeus is rescued by Pan and Hermes. He resumes the fight against Typhon, who has been slipped some poisoned apples by the three Fates, who were pretending to nurse him back to health. This time Zeus wins, and dispatches Typhon by dropping Mt. Etna on him.

The movie CLASH OF THE TITANS has of course no titans in it, properly speaking. It also doesn't do much for the myth of Perseus and Andromeda. The former is a nice young man who is out to get Medusa's head more or less on a dare. He flies on winged sandals, not on Pegasus...the winged

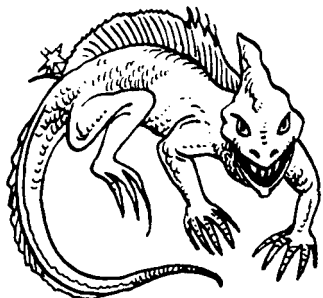
horse being born from Medusa's dead body and immediately vanishing from this tale. Andromeda is the daughter of Kepheos and Kassiopeia, King and Queen of Joppa. Kassiopeia has done the usual thing in Greek myth by offending the Nereids through claiming that she and her daughter were more beautiful than they. This leads to the usual ravaging monster, a sea-dragon (female; were you wondering?). The only way to get rid of the curse is to sacrifice Andromeda to the monster. Well, that's in the movie, anyway. Perseus accidentally flies by and see her chained (wearing maybe a little jewelry) to a rock. He kills the monster by decapitating it, not by turning it into stone. The story does not end here, but goes on into further convolutions, but they needn't detain us now that the dragon is dead.

Similar to the preceeding is the story of Herakles and Hesione. This involves Laomedon, King of Troy. This worthy had angered Poseidon by welching in some way involving building the walls of the city...either not paying, or not paying Union Scale, or whatever. The result was a ravaging sea-dragon, and



to get rid of it required the usual exposure of the usual King's daughter (Hesione) on the usual rocks in the usual scanty jewels. This is how Herakles finds her. As for destroying the dragon, instead of decapitation he opts for an inside job, jumping fully armored into the monster's jaws and spending three days cutting his way out. The tale then goes on into various confused peripatations which don't involve further dragons.

3. THE GUARDIAN



The word "dragon" ultimately derives from the Greek verb *DRAKEIN*, to see. True to that derivation, many dragons are found guarding... watching over...some treasure or other. Serpents have, in fact, long been associated with wealth and treasure (particularly if hidden) and with metallurgy.

The earliest treasure-guarding monster was probably Huwawa (or "Humbaba" in the Assyrian), a firebreathing lovely who guarded the sacred cedars in the "Land of the Living"...sort of the original Smokey the Bear. Anyway, this Sumerian story involves the hero-King Gilgamesh and his Tarzanesque friend, Enkidu. (Enkidu is the original "wild man of the jungle", raised by the beasts. He is seduced several times outside the walls of Erech by a harlot and immediately forgets all about jungle living.) Huwara is described as terribly fearsome, but the minute Gilgamesh makes a swipe at him, he pleads for mercy. Gilgamesh wants to spare the monster, but Enkidu talks him out of that, so they kill Huwawa. We also apparently have a picture of Huwawa: there is a Mesopotamian cylinder seal which shows two heroic figures killing a monster. One of the former has a tail and is presumably Enkidu. If the monster is Huwawa, he is very undragonlike. He looks more like a poorly drawn tiger or female lion. But he DID breathe fire, and that counts for something.

Another watchful dragon was that which guarded the golden fleece. This was a biggie, born of the blood of Typhon, with a thousand coils, larger than the ship ARGO, but with only one head. No fire...all the fire

breathing in this myth was done by a pair of bulls. As a nice respite from all the bloodshed, Jason does not kill the dragon. Instead, Medea lulls it to sleep with lullabies and juniper drops in the eyes. Since the dragon was immortal, it is still presumably still out there in Kolkhis.

Another dragon guarded the Kastalian Spring, near the site of Thebes. The hero Kadmos followed a cow to the vicinity but when he sent his men to draw water from the spring for a sacrifice, the dragon killed most of them. Kadmos then killed the dragon. The teeth of this dragon were more important than it was, and will be mentioned later.

The dragon Ladon ("the Embracer") guarded a tree of golden apples, a wedding gift to Hera, in the garden of Atlas' daughters, the Hesperides. Fetching the fruit of this tree was the eleventh labor set for Herakles by Eurystheos, King of Tiryns. The interesting thing about this tale is that finding the garden and getting the apples were far more difficult than dealing with Ladon...whom Herakles dispatched simply by shooting him with an arrow.

It's interesting that all four of these guardian dragons proved to be pushovers.

4. THE NEIGHBORHOOD PEST



Some dragons seem to have little purpose other than to cause trouble in their immediate areas. They are set upon by heroes and dispatched. In time they came to be equated with treasure-guarding dragons, perhaps as a way of explaining why they would confine themselves to such a restricted locale.

Lerna lay near Argos, and was a swampy area bounded by the rivers Pontinos and Anymone. A sacred grove stood in the region. The Lernaian Hydra, the terror of Lerna, was a multi-headed (7 or 9 or more) aquatic dragon. Encompassing the death of this creature was the second task assigned to Herakles. His method was to club it to death...not really a wonderful idea considering how slow

that would be and also (as it turned out) because every time he crushed one head, a couple more grew in its place. This problem was eventually solved with the help of Iolaos (a friend; you know the Greeks), who seared the stumps with torches after Herakles knocked them off. Robert Graves notes that the earliest version of this myth may have had Herakles wrestling the Hydra underwater with the object of gaining a treasure it was guarding. Well, why not?

Wrestling and/or slaying a totem animal may have been a common feature of kingship rites in ancient preliterate societies, and Robert Graves believes that these ritual acts eventually came to be embodied in myths. In a typical myth of this sort, the totem animal would be transformed into a monster terrorizing the local area, as the Lernaian Hydra. Two other myths of this sort come from the islands. In one, Phorbas kills the monster (snake) Ophiusa and wins the rule of Rhodes. In the other, Kykhreos kills the great dragon of Salamis and is made King. In each case, the myth may arise from the requirement that a candidate for Kingship defeat a totemic serpent. Graves also refers to wrestling other things, such as bulls...and also scorpions. "How do you wrestle a scorpion?" the reader will ask. Very carefully, of course.

The god Krishna had his share of problems with local dragons. While he was herding cows in his youth, a great serpent swallowed him, his fellow herders, and also the cows...a great serpent, indeed! Krishna burst that one open from the inside. Another local dragon, Kalia, who terrorized the river Yamuna, was either killed or exiled to the ocean by Krishna.

In the Far East, dragons do not have quite the nasty reputation they have in the west. Nevertheless, one particularly terrible one dwelt at the headwaters of the river Hii, in the land of Izumo in western Japan opposite Korea. This dragon had eight heads and eight tails and was addicted to eating maidens (all, in this case, daughters of the same couple). Having eaten eight, it was after the ninth when the hero Susanowo contrived to get all eight heads drunk and then to slay the dragon. He of course gets the girl.

5. THE FRIENDLY SAVANT

Jesus once told his apostles to be as "wise as serpents" (MATTHEW 10:16), although by that he might have meant "cunning" or even "devious". In any



event, the wisdom of dragons and serpents is a common matter of myth. The worship or veneration of serpents is frequently based on a conception of them as wise beings. A common theme in mythology is that of the wise teacher of mankind who is a serpent, becomes a serpent, or is half-serpent. These wisdom-figures are sometimes ambivalent; being regarded as human and as serpentine without there necessarily being a portion of their myths in which they actually change from one form to the other. Such individuals include: Ea (Mesopotamia), Quetzalcoatl (Mesoamerica), Votan (Amerind legend), Seshu Naga (India), and Harmonia (Greece).

Friendly dragons appear in myth. The T'IENT WEN, a collection of Chinese mythic materials in riddle form, refers to hornless dragons that play by carrying bears on their backs. The god-king Yu, son of Kun, drains the flooded land of China with the help of the winged dragon (but at the same time, he expells other dragons from the marshes).

One western myth...in fact, the only such I know of...is the Egyptian "Tale of the Isle of Enchantment". This should probably be classed as a fairy tale (perhaps the first on record), since it seems to have no mythic elements in it at all. However: a sailor, the only survivor of a shipwreck, washes up on an island. He finds food, and as he is eating he is encountered by a giant bearded serpent. Many of these live on the island. They are friendly, helpful, and possessed of godlike powers. The serpent tells the sailor that another Egyptian ship will come to the island soon and until that time he can stay with the serpent people. The ship does come, and when he leaves the serpents load him with precious gifts. This whole episode seems to have been recorded with a straight face by a priest of Amon.

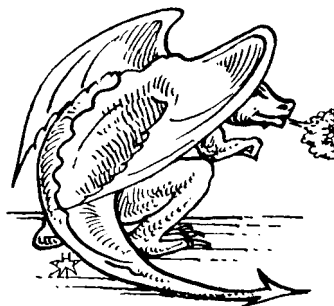
No discussion of the myths of wise dragons can be complete without the serpent of the Garden of Eden. By the time of Jesus and Paul, this creature had grown both in stature and in size. Among the orthodox, the Serpent (now capitalized) was the great Enemy, Satan, himself. This is

manifestly contrary to the express statement of GENESIS, but it did carry doctrine over the difficulty of explaining the serpent's actions otherwise. The Gnostics, however, went as far in the other direction: to them the serpent was in fact the living embodiment of Wisdom, the Universal Dragon (see the next section).

The serpent in the Garden of Eden is represented as the most "cunning" (Knox translation of GENESIS) of all creatures. For wholly unexplained reasons, it deceives Eve into eating of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. When this happens, she and Adam (who also eats) lose their innocence. The serpent is later cursed. This enmity which is placed between mankind and serpentkind can in part account for why it is more popular to regard dragons as inimical to men than as friendly.

The ancient EPIC OF GILGAMESH has all of the elements of the Garden of Eden story, although the story lines are in no way similar. But the pieces are all there: making a man out of clay, forbidden fruit, a garden, "the Mother of All Living" as a title, gaining wisdom and losing innocence, and so on. There is also a snake. In the Bible, the serpent tempts Eve (and Adam) with the Tree of Wisdom, thereby causing them to lose the Tree of Immortality. In GILGAMESH, the hero finally obtains an herb which will make him immortal...only to have it stolen by a snake.

6. THE INFINITE SERPENT



At this point we are beginning to pass out of myth and into mysticism. The notion of an infinite heavenly serpent can be found in old myths, but spread widely in mystical cults from the time of Alexander the Great on. The Indian myths, for instance, speak of the endless serpent Shesha, who was the throne of Vishnu and also part of him

The constellation Draco, pretty universally held to be a dragon or serpent, was long regarded as the axis of the universe ("Teli" to the Jews). This is easier to understand

when one realizes that 4000 years ago the star (Alpha) Draconis was the Pole Star. The celestial globe would then seem to revolve about the head of the Dragon. Jean Doresse (THE SECRET BOOKS OF THE EGYPTIAN Gnostics, 292f.) quotes from a mystical 13th-Century book, the ZOHAR, which repeats this ancient doctrine:

"Know and believe that the Serpent, at the beginning of creation, was indispensable to the order of the world, so long as he kept his place; and he was a great servant, created to bear the yoke and servitude of kingdoms. His head reached high above the earth and his tail reached down even into Sheol and Abaddon, for in all worlds there was a place for him.... It is he who moves the spheres and turns them from the East to the West and from the North to the South."

The Gnostics had a notion of the serpent, and the Serpent, which was quite opposed to the orthodox view. Unravelling the complex and arcane tangle of beliefs and doctrines which made up Gnosticism is beyond the scope of anything but a very large book. But a few words about them are necessary...although generalization is dangerous because consistency and simplicity are two things absolutely uncharacteristic of the Gnostic beliefs. In general, the Gnostics believed that the universe was brought into being by a debased spirit referred to as "the Demiurge" and bearing any one of dozens of names (including "Jehovah"). This is the old "matter is nasty, spirit is groovy" routine. Jesus is regarded as an emanation of the Father (the chief god, who would never dirty his hands with anything so gross as creating...yeck...a material universe), whose purpose is to direct

the spirits of men toward the higher spiritual road back to the Father (and so on; there are reams of this stuff). In the Gnostic view, the serpent in the Garden of Eden is trying to save Adam and Eve, not damn them. This view has the advantage of squaring with the statement that the serpent was the most cunning of all creatures and also explains why the Tree of Knowledge was forbidden. This also leads to relating that serpent to the great Dragons of the sky. In an ancient Gnostic text, the pseudo-gospel ACTS OF THOMAS, the apostle is punishing a serpent, which says to him:

"I am the son of him who reigns over all the earth. I am the son of him who encircles the globe. I am related to him who is beyond the Ocean and whose tail is in his own mouth. It is I who stole into

Paradise to speak to Eve and tell her that which my father had bidden me let her know...."

It is at this point that it becomes hard to tell dragons from saints.

7. MISCELLANEOUS

A pervasive myth, among the Greeks at any rate, is that of the dragon's teeth. In the Pelasgian (pre-Hellenic Greek) creation myth already mentioned, Eurynome has a falling out with the dragon Ophion and kicked him in the head with her heel (cf. GENESIS 3:15 "And I will put enmity between thee /the serpent/ and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."). This knocks out all of Ophion's teeth. Later Greeks said that the Pelasgians (more properly, some of their tribes) claimed that their ancestors sprang from those teeth when they fell to the ground.

After Kadmos had slain the dragon of the Kastalian Spring (see the Guardian section) he was told by Athene to knock out its teeth and sow them on the ground. From these teeth came the "Sown Men", fearsome warriors. Kadmos tossed a stone among them and they fell to fighting over which of them had thrown it. Five of them survived, swore allegiance to Kadmos, and with him became the founders of the Greek Thebes. However, it seems not all the teeth were sown...Athene gave some to Aietes, King of Kolkhis and father of Medea. He later assigned Jason of the ARGOS to sow the teeth (among other fun things). When Jason did so, more "Sown Men" sprang up. He got rid of them by the same trick Kadmos used, tossing a stone. He then did away with the wounded survivors. However wise dragons are, their teeth aren't too bright.

Kadmos, by the way, was later turned into a serpent, or half-serpent, and carried civilization to primitive tribes in the north. Another civilizing half-serpent was the woman Echidna.

Winged dragons put in a brief appearance in Greek myth, on loan to Medea. They draw a chariot which she used to escape from Korinth.

There are also "fiery" or "flying fiery" serpents of the Old Testament (DEUTERONOMY 8:15; ISAIAH 14:29 and 30:6). These are actually just snakes. "Fiery" refers to how certain snake bites feel; "flying" refers either to the "winged" (hooded) look of certain snakes (such as cobras) or to other snakes which can climb trees

and then drop on their prey from the branches.

SUMMARY AND NOTIONS

A myth is, in its origin, a story which serves a purpose... explanation, justification, even mystic recreation...and is couched in symbolic terms, frequently. Thus the splitting of the chaos-dragon Tiamut represents the division of the Upper Waters from the Lower Waters, a common (almost pervasive) theme in creation mythology. The myths of the ancient world teemed with monsters which were of dragon sort (even though, in their earliest conceptions, perhaps not reptilian in form). Even so, serpents (giant and otherwise) appear with great frequency in the old myths

Myths grow old, cease to be relevant as myths, and come to be fables, tales, and stories; or they may transmogrify into new myths with new meanings. However that may be, our own concepts of dragons...which these days are mostly of the "story" sort...are made up of elements left over from the myths of ancient times.

Stories of the St. George sort, or the Sigurd/Siegfried type of tale, form the transmission pipeline through the mediaeval period from ancient times to our own. The dragons of modern fantasy are limned with the strokes and colors inherited over the millenia... consider, for instance, the dragons of Richard Wagner, J.R.R. Tolkien, or Wayland Drew (DRAGONSLAYER). It is the complex of old themes to which we react best, perhaps, because we expect dragons to be like that. We find dragons guarding treasures, menacing local neighborhoods and local maidens, pursuing with enmity some hero figure or other, full of (usually evil) wisdom, and so on.

Our physical conception of a dragon is now pretty standard. It is that of a dinosaur...perhaps a horned brontosaurus with teeth...which breathes fire and has wings, sharp claws, and a nasty disposition. This concept has in part come to us from Biblical and Norse descriptions of dragons, plus the standard concept of the Chinese dragon. All of these may have in turn been influenced by finds of actual skeletal remains of

dinosaurs. (No finds of that sort have survived the ancient and mediaeval periods, probably because anything of the sort would have been presumed to have medicinal value and would have been ground down for potions, poultices, and philtres.)

Some of the more off-beat themes

regarding dragons can also be found in modern fantasy. The theme of ancestral dragons is treated in Brian Aldiss' THE MALACIA TAPESTRY. The theme of wise, friendly, helpful dragons can be found most prominently in Anne McCaffrey's "Pern" novels (all of which have "Dragon" in the title). We don't see much of multi-headed dragons, but a two-headed one appears in Robert Don Hughes' THE PROPHET OF LAMATH (and in the sequel, THE WIZARD IN WAITING).

The theme of dragons being an instrumentality in the creation of the universe is one that seems to have dropped out of use. Of course, few writers even deal with the subject. Stapledon (STAR MAKER) and Dunsany are in different millieux entirely. Tolkien's extended creation mythos in THE SILMARILLION introduces a monster early on, but she is of spider kind, rather than a dragon. The creation of Narnia is accomplished by a lion rather than a dragon. Some slight echo of this theme might be found in Howard's "Conan" tales, since the human race was apparently preceded by a race of sentient serpent-beings.

It is beyond the scope of this essay to survey the use of dragons in modern fiction. However, I did want to give some idea about the use of the old themes in works appearing in the last century or so.

Of all the dragons of myth, the universal chaos-dragon Tiamut was the most ancient. Her name echoes today, in disguise, through the Bible. She was the prototype, or at least the archetype, or ancient creation- and enemy-dragons, such as Ophion and Apep...and ultimately Ouroboros, the Dragon of Infinity who appears in mediaeval alchemical and kabbalistic texts. Out of the primal chaos-dragons and their actual monstrous progeny would have sprung much of the conceptualization of monsters which appeared in other myths. And from those monsters the lineage to the dragons of modern fantasy is clear. It is thus no real exaggeration to say that they are all...Fafnir, Smaug, Vermithrax, and many others...the children of Tiamut.

A BRIEF BUT ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF WORKS CONSULTED

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Publications, 1967 (originally published, 1895). Contains a good discussion of dragons and other monsters in Egyptian creation, solar, and funerary myths.

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Jean Doresse, *THE SECRET BOOKS OF THE EGYPTIAN Gnostics*. New York: The Viking Press, 1960. Based on the Gnostic Library discovered at Chenoboskion in 1945. The Gnostic view of the serpent and The Serpent is interesting, to say the least. Do not expect to come away from this book other than confused, although Doresse does a splendid job of spelling the notions of the Gnostics out with great clarity and precision...it's just that clarity and precision were not the Gnostics' thing.

Ivor H. Evans, ed., *BREWER'S DICTIONARY OF PHRASE AND FABLE*. New York: Harper and Row, 1981. Some interesting entries on dragons, including a list of many saints who were reputed to have killed them. St. George is only one of many spin-offs from the Perseus/Andromeda legend.

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S.H. Hooke, *MIDDLE EASTERN MYTHOLOGY*. Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1963. A general recounting of main myths from several Middle Eastern societies. Included is an interesting section on the mythology of the New Testament, something one does not always see.

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Donald MacKenzie, *EGYPTIAN MYTH AND LEGEND*. New York: Bell Publishing Co., 1978 (originally published, 1907). An interesting but not entirely satisfactory book. The myths and legends are paraphrased rather than quoted, and MacKenzie uses titles often very different from those generally used today...confusing, but not his fault. The book ties myth and legend in with the development of Egyptian history. A lot of the information here is of course no longer completely current.

Walter Alison Philips, "Dragon",

ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA XI Edition (1910), VIII, 466ff. Good coverage of the dragon motif in myth and legend. Most modern encyclopedias (make that "all") aren't worth a damn when it comes to coverage of things before the 20th Century. The *Britannica's* XI and XIII editions are considered classics in the breadth and depth of their coverage. I don't necessarily prefer the former, but it's the one I found and bought first.

James B. Prichard, *THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST*. Princeton University Press, 1958. This is a collection of original texts, a severe abridgement of *ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN TEXTS RELATING TO THE OLD TESTAMENT* (usually referred to as ANET). The great value of this collection is that every line or passage which relates to a line or passage of the O.T. is referenced by book and chapter/verse.

Eunice Riedel, Thomas Tracy, & Barbara D. Moskowitz, *THE BOOK OF THE BIBLE*. New York: Bantam Books, 1981. This is a delightful and informative collection which organizes facts and information in the Bible under various headings, many of them presented with appropriate irony or appreciation for their inherent humor. A good way to find topical cross-references.

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Varlak the Wizard

by
Jane Sibley
© 1992

"DRAGONS ARE
PURELY MYTHICAL..."



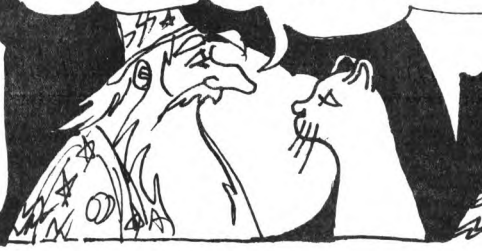
RIGHT.



HOW DO YOU THINK
I HEAT THIS PLACE?



THERE'S **ONE** PROBLEM,
THOUGH. RIGHT NOW I
NEED DRAGON'S BLOOD
FOR A LITTLE EXPERIMENT...



200 cc. DOESN'T
MATTER MUCH TO
THE DRAGON, BUT...



WRONG.



HERE WE GO AGAIN.

RIGHT.



I CAN'T BEAR
TO WATCH!



JUST TELL
ME WHEN
HE'S
..... back...



SNIF. HE COULDN'T
HAVE SURVIVED
THAT.....



O.K., NOW FOR THE NEXT
INGREDIENT... A BASILISK
TOOTH?!



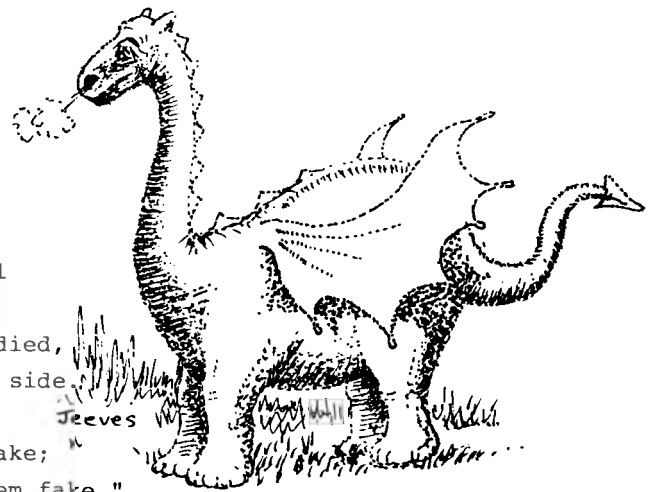
DRAGONLORE

THE MISSING THIRD VERSE TO "PUFF THE MAGIC DRAGON"

BY SPIDER ROBINSON

But even when you're bigger, part of you stays small
Distant days of childhood aren't really gone at all
and Puff the Magic Dragon, just when he might have died,
Heard a sound and looked around and Jack was by his side.

"I'm sorry that I left you, Puff -- that was a mistake;
dragons may be make believe -- that doesn't make them fake."
He bent over his old Friend, kissed him on the snout,
The dying dragon gave a roar; jumped up and flew about!



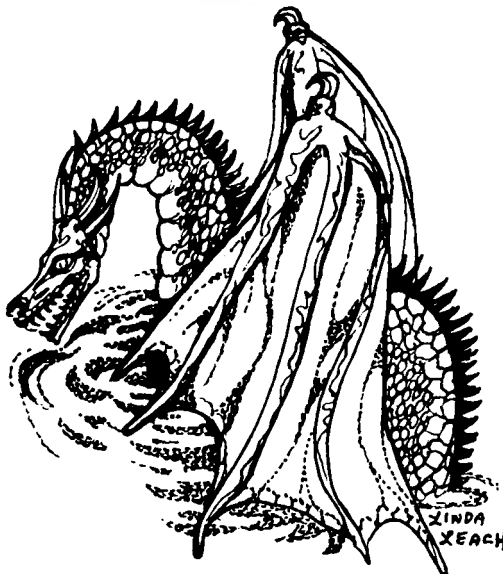
"WHAT IS REAL?" BY MICHAELA DUNCAN

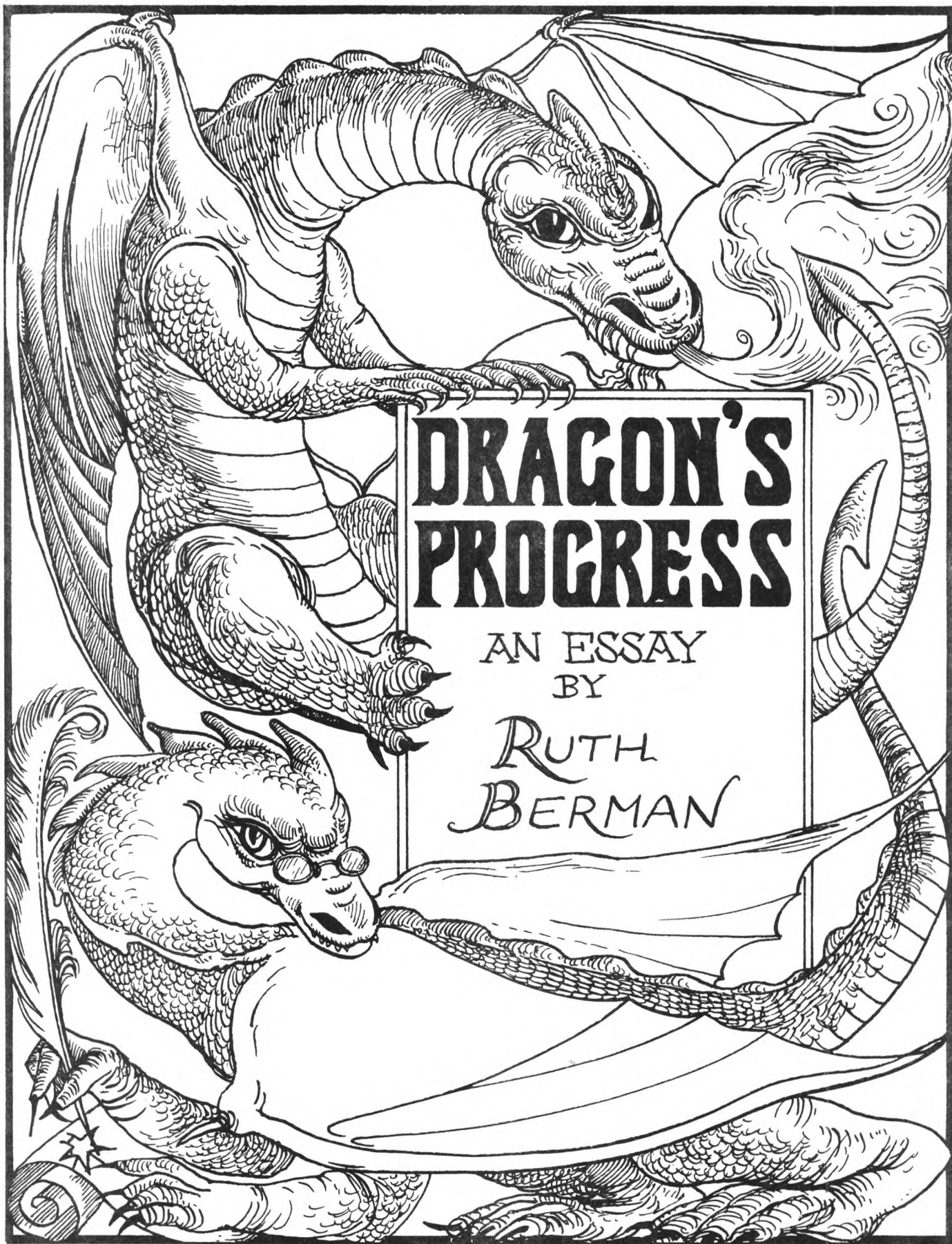
Who are they anyway?
Dragons on my bed
Playing with my head.
Are they alive
Or are they dead?



"DESIRING DRAGONS" BY DIANA PAXSON

I have desired dragons--dragons high
As sleeping stone-flanked hills against the sky
That wake to fill the night with jewelled fire--
And yet to see them has been my desire.
And I am not alone--was not Eve's sin,
An evening, listening to their lesser kin?
Man has dared their vast, imperial pride--
Those desiring dragon-treasure died,
But wizards bore back knowledge in their eyes
Of something ancient, dangerous, and wise.
So I confess I have desired them too,
And yearned to learn if all the tales were true.
Yet once I fled a cave I'd found alone,
Thinking I heard the rasp of scales on stone...





DRAGON'S PROGRESS

AN ESSAY
BY

RUTH
BERMAN

instance, if there is a drunken dragon reluctant to go home and get to bed.

In Nesbit's "The Deliverers of their Country" the statue of St. George refuses to get up and fight a horde of dragons, but gives two children some weather-lore from his companion saint, Denis, so that they can kill the dragons on their own. In "The Fairy Dragon," Sabrinetta, grand-daughter of St. George and Princess Sabra, captures the dragon in an inherited dragon-proof bottle.

The other stories do not involve George directly, but in each one the comedy turns on the discovery of an ingenious, and unheroic way of getting rid of dragons. Nesbit's purple dragon (in "Uncle James, or the Purple Stranger") is tied to a pillar by its long tail and miniaturized by a quirk of evolution when it pulls loose and upsets the island's balance. (The island had been rotating the wrong way round and evolved small versions of large animals and vice versa.) Baum's Purple Dragon knots its own tail at the conclusion of A NEW WONDERLAND, in a tug-of-war with the king, who is trying to extract its teeth; it turns out to be elastic and is pulled tight and cut up into fiddle-strings. In an earlier chapter, "The Strange Adventures of the King's Head," the king loses his fight with the Purple Dragon entirely and has his head bitten off, producing a whimsical problem of identity as the king's body tries out substitute heads, and the dragon mischievously puts the head on another man's body. David L. Greene chose this "Strange Adventure" for the title story in a collection

of Baum's short stories, THE PURPLE DRAGON AND OTHER FANTASIES.

Nesbit and Baum both presented traditionally evil dragons in these books, but the evil is undercut by the comedy. As Greene remarks, "The Purple Dragon is not frightening but 'naughty'." (1) These dragons are amusing, and their evil deeds are amusing. It is not entirely a surprise when children succeed in taming one, by a mixture of kindness and deceit, and it turns into a real pussycat (Nesbit's "The Dragon Tamers").

Grahame, however, chose a dragon who was not just amusing but loveable. The Reluctant Dragon is a poet -- according to Peter Green, "a living portrait of Grahame's anarchic, artistic, anti-social, irresponsible, indolent self." (2) He's also a force of nature -- the beauty and grace of nature, the idyllic nature Grahame portrayed again in THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS. The view is deliberately

incomplete. Grahame's Rat and Badger don't attack other animals; the Dragon is reluctant to eat maidens. Knowledge of what goes on in the Wild Wood and what more energetic dragons ate in the olden days is mentioned, and then quietly ignored, leaving Grahame free to concentrate on the beauty, which is, after all, as real as the danger:

A cloud of smoke obscured the mouth of the cave, and out of the midst of it the dragon himself, shining, sea-blue, magnificent, pranced splendidly forth; and everybody said "Oo-oo-oo!" as if he had been a mighty rocket! His scales were glittering, his long spiky tail lashed his sides, his claws tore up the turf and sent it flying high over his back, and smoke and fire jetted from his angry nostrils. "Oh, well done, dragon!" cried the Boy, excitedly. "Didn't think he had it in him!" he said to himself. (3)

With the appearance of these comic dragons, the dragon lost its automatic, stereotyped identification as Satan and regained the ambiguity which is, after all, mythically proper to dragons. As Joseph L. Fontenrose shows in his PYTHON, dragons are many-natured. Hero and dragon change places easily, and dragons can be "benevolent reptilian deities: snakes that were spirits of springs, GENII LOCI, embodiments or attributes of gods, e.g., Asklepios, Athena, Apollo..." (4) Twentieth century dragons have been numerous, various of mood, meaning, virtuousness -- and memorable.

FOOTNOTES

(1) David L. Greene, "Introduction" to "Tales from Phunnyland," in Baum's THE PURPLE DRAGON AND OTHER FANTASIES (Lakemont GA: Fictioneer Books, 1976), p. 18.

(2) Peter Green, KENNETH GRAHAME, A BIOGRAPHY (Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1959), p. 183.

(3) Kenneth Grahame, "The Reluctant Dragon," in DREAM DAYS (London and New York: John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1898), p. 190.

(4) Joseph L. Fontenrose, PYTHON, A STUDY OF DELPHIC MYTH AND ITS ORIGINS (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1959), p. 492. There is a paperback edition of this fascinating and exhaustive study of Classical dragons: ISBN 04091-0, \$8.95 plus \$1.50 postage, from U of CA Press, 2223 Fulton, Berkeley 94720.

At the end of the 19th century three books with dragons as leading characters appeared, the first stories to feature dragons since, perhaps, Milton's PARADISE LOST (1667). During the 18th century, writers had avoided most kinds of fantasy; during the 19th century much great fantasy was written, almost none of it including dragons. The tradition of the dragon as a creature of Satan, or Satan himself, to be slain by St. George or the angel Michael, was uncongenial to later writers. It represented a particular religious doctrine not shared by all the writers or by all their readers, and it represented a view of evil as something outside humanity and alien to it, a view less interesting to a century defining and discovering the science of psychology than the view that evil was from within -- a Mr. Hyde, not a dragon.

Then in 1898 came Kenneth Grahame's "The Reluctant Dragon" in his DREAM DAYS, and in 1900 E. Nesbit's THE BOOK OF DRAGONS and L. Frank Baum's A NEW WONDERLAND. THE BOOK OF DRAGONS was made up of unrelated short stories, each one featuring a dragon; the series had first been published the year before, in the STRAND MAGAZINE. A NEW WONDERLAND was a loosely connected set of episodes set in Phunnyland (in 1903 the title and locale were changed, and the book became THE MAGICAL MONARCH OF MO); the opening and closing episodes had a Purple Dragon as antagonist.

All three writers turned the legend of St. George upsidedown, Grahame and Nesbit in two of her stories explicitly, the rest implicitly. In "The Reluctant Dragon" the evil, maiden-eating dragon destined to be slain by the virtuous knight is a figment of the villagers' conventional imaginations. The Dragon is understandably reluctant to live up to any part of this role. St. George, complete with red-cross

banner, is willing to live up to his part, but is much better pleased not to have to kill the Dragon. In his shyness and good-heartedness, the knight is more like Lewis Carroll's White Knight than like a traditional hero, even though he can summon up heroic efficiency if necessary -- for



THE JOY OF THE WORM

by Susan M. Schwartz

"There is in you a desire to see dragons," Ged teels young Prince Arren in LeGuin's *THE FARTHEST SHORE*. (1) That desire is upon us all, especially those of us who read and love the old texts, and who read and write (let's hope) the new books that one day, perhaps, will evoke the love of dragons and the desire to see them as they have done in many writers since the first dragon uncoiled from the depths of the human imagination, spread its webbed, brilliant wings, and soared aloft, to terrify, inspire, and -- if we can forgive the pun -- enlighten the humans who remained with their feet on the ground, their hearts in their mouths, and their souls flying with the great, glittering beasts.

Such a man, of course, was J.R.R. Tolkien, who tells us in his essay "On Faerie Stories", that he passionately desired dragons. (2) Much of his work is a fabulous dragon hunt, from the sinister riddles of Smaug to the malignant Worms of the *SILMARILLION*. Scholar that he is, he acknowledges his sources as "the Northern thing" -- the dragons of the Norse epics, the great worm of *BEOWULF*, and the "vast and vague encircler of the world", (3) *Mírgarðr* sommr itself, the Midgard serpent. Dragons gave heroes something to kill, and -- in the Pendragon line -- gave them a name too.

It remained, however, for Ursula LeGuin to come and liberate the dragons, not from the constraint of myth, but from the bonds of constraint in only one mythic tradition. This she does in her *Earthsea* trilogy.

LeGuin too regards dragons as numinous. For her the love of dragons symbolizes the freedom of the human

imagination. In her essay, "Why Are Americans Afraid of Dragons?" she equates the rejection of dragons with people's fear to accept freedom and to let their imaginations soar. (4) Dragons haunt her work as they do Tolkien's or the work of Tolkien's inspiration, *BEOWULF*.

In both *BEOWULF* and LeGuin's *Earthsea* trilogy, the presence of dragons starts as the very sigil of peril and proceeds to more complex meanings. Dragons on the wing mean terror; they burn, they devour and plunder; they must somehow be faced. In *BEOWULF*, the hero kills a dragon and is himself killed. In *THE FARTHEST SHORE*, a wizard and a king work in harmony with dragons to save their world from the wizard who has rejected death. In both works, dragons are juxtaposed with death; in every other way, the authors present them differently. That the authors treat dragons so differently -- the *BEOWULF*-poet uses them as a symbol of evil; LeGuin as one of beauty -- is, I contend, the result of the context of belief out of which each writes. This context, and the reason for the differing symbolism attached to dragons, will emerge in the course of this discussion.

The fight against the ancient dragon of *BEOWULF* occupies the last third of the poem. The poet renders his introduction of the dragon sinister by paratactical construction: the same line in which the poet praises Beowulf's reign as ancient guardian of the people (line 2210) (5) breaks off with a mention of an even older, fiercer guardian who is to end that reign:

"...until in the dark nights, a dragon began to rule, he who guarded a hoard on the high heath, a

high-arched stone-barrow. Under it lay a path unknown to men." (lines 2210-2214)

Beowulf has ruled well for fifty years, but this dragon has gloated over its secret hoard for three centuries.

In the first passage which describes the dragon, the poet condemns it as *UHTSCÉAFA*, a harm from the half-light, a night-flier enveloped in flame, and a naked murder-dragon. But he adds that the dragon has found *HORDWYNNE* (the joy of a treasure-hoard). This joy is the first glimpse into the mind of the dragon that the poet gives us, colored as it is by the grim observation that such happiness will not leave him at all the better (ll. 2270-74).

With his theft of a cup, an unnamed thief hoping to pacify his master brings news of the ancient hoard to men. Now the curse common to all such hoards is activated: the dragon wakes and, discovering the theft, is angered. It is an old enemy. *WROHT WAES GENIWAD* (1. 2287), the poet says. Wrath is renewed. Three hundred years of peace have just ended; the theft of one cup causes the dragon to revive what the poet calls *ANDA*, his ancient feud with mankind. The portrait of the great, enraged beast writhing about his barrow, searching for the thief whose traces he sees, waiting about his barrow, searching for the thief whose traces he sees, waiting impatiently for night, adds emotional intensity to the menace which even his mention of a dragon evokes.

Here again the poet allows his audience to enter the mind of the dragon:

"The guardian of the hoard waited impatiently until evening came; the barrow's guard was enraged, the hateful one wished to repay the theft of the cup with flame." (11. 2302-2307)

In this passage the poet has created for us the dragon's desires: to avenge, to destroy, and to cast an evil, ravaging light upon a sleeping world. The poet calls the dragon a GAEST, or evil spirit, whose attack continues until pillars of light stand as a token of his feud against mankind (11. 2312-2314). The sight of the Geatish fortress, burning in the night, is brilliant, even -- in a horrible way -- beautiful, especially to an avenging dragon. For an instant we see again with his eyes and share his satisfaction: then we remember with horror that this is a human town he is destroying. The dragon must be stopped before he attains his full desire -- the destruction of all human life -- and draws us into his clutches, whether physical or emotional.

Like the dragon's flames, Beowulf's uncharacteristically dark thoughts when he hears of the destruction, are described as WYLMUM -- surges, whether of fire or emotion. Though the dragon will fight for outraged greed and a love of destruction, and Beowulf to defend his people, for an instant dragon and would-be dragon-slayer seem akin, linked by violent feelings. Even the long speech outside the dragon's barrow in which Beowulf recalls his past and restates his purpose, uses some of the same surging flame imagery which has characterized dragon and hero. The old king Hre el, Hygelac's father, had three sons. One was killed by another, and the old king, Beowulf says, could not hear the WEALLENDE WEAG (11. 2267), the surges of boiling hate, at his other son. Unable to avenge one son upon the other, he chooses instead the light of God. Here again the poet describes anger and hatred as something which seethes and boils -- as opposed to Truth, which is described in the same passage as a serene light. Not just between light and darkness is the conflict, but between the right and wrong kinds of light.

Though Beowulf, after this last melancholy reminiscence, rouses himself to utter a stirring boast, the long, sad story he tells establishes his mood. He is old, tired, and sad, but nevertheless, he claims the fight. His use of the dual pronoun UNCER (we two, 1. 2532) reinforces his contention that combat with the dragon is for him alone. He will test strength, measure lordship, he boasts, with his enemy and emerge

with either victory or death. But we sense that Beowulf is fey -- and that he knows it: victorious he may be, but he is not destined to survive this battle.

The combat between man and dragon consists of three movements, each marked by kennings which add vivid, violent sensory impressions to the struggle. The bellow of Beowulf's warcry into the echoing cave, which wakes and angers the sleeping beast, begins the action. Sight, sound, and sense reel as the dragon spits out a blast of poisonous flame; the gray stone echoes to its roar. This fire is described as HILDESWAT, a common kenning for blood, but no blood was ever so hot or so deadly. Beowulf barely has time to swing his iron shield into position. In one half-line the coiled and venomous dragon menaces the king who opposes him in the very next phrase. Thus paratactical construction again reinforces the archetypal battle between evil and the representative of mankind who fights it.

In the second onslaught, the poet chooses his kennings for visual impact: the gold of the WAELFYRE (slaughter-fire) and the HILDELEOMAN (flame of battle) contrasts with the GOLDWINE GAETA, the goldfriend of the Geats. Again the right sort of light is contrasted with unholy fire. But the poet immediately tells us that this goldfriend is about to die:

"Thus shall each man abandon his fleeting days.!" (2590-91)

As Beowulf's strength lessens, the dragon's heart and flame grow stronger. Only Wiglaf's intervention saves Beowulf. In his speech to the cowardly retainers, Wiglaf contrasts in paired hairlines his GOLDFYFAN (gold-giver) with the GLED (burning coals) spat by the dragon, light again opposed to evil fire. This movement of the fight sequence then closes with the flames (FYRWYLMUM, LIGYFUM, GLEDUM -- wellings of flame, waves of fire, and hot coals) which lick out at the two heroes who shelter behind the one shield. Again parataxis reinforces the comparison.

The dragon's third attack penetrates Beowulf's guard in a passage that horrifies the audience because of its tactile intensity:

"It rushed on the renowned one, when it found the opening, fierce, flaming with battle, and with his bitter fangs, clasped Beowulf's throat. He was stained with Beowulf's heart's gore. Blood poured out in waves." (11. 2690-93)

This SWAT is not golden waves of fire

but the surge of Beowulf's mortal wound. But Beowulf is his killer's bane; a final blow to the dragon's vulnerable throat ends the battle. Victor by only a few minutes, Beowulf is able to look upon the gold of the treasure, miraculously uncontaminated by any trace of the dragon. Once again, gold imagery is used to suggest victory: a golden SEGN or standard flashes above the rest of the treasure -- a calm, golden beacon which seems to symbolize the victory of good over evil in this struggle.

But the victory is, paradoxically, a dark one. The dragon has been destroyed, but Beowulf has died killing it; and now Wiglaf can prophesy only destruction. "OFT SCEALL EORL MONIG PURH ANES WILLAN / WRAEC ADREOGAN", he tells the Geats. Often many people will suffer destruction because of one man's will. Only Beowulf's life has protected the Geats this long. Even this victory is fleeting in a mutable world; it will be the cause of future evil. The Geats bury the treasure Beowulf died to win with him; it has been too dearly bought. The poet comments that now the treasure lies as useless now as it was when it lay hidden in the barrow with only the dragon to know of it.

With the description of Beowulf's funeral pyre against the darkness, the poem ends elegiacally. Not just Beowulf, but an entire way of life seems to have died. For one brief passage, the poet even allows himself to regret the dragon. Lines 2832-2835 allow us for the last time a dragon's-eye view of life:

"Never again at midnight would he twist, revelling in the air, proud of his treasure, and show himself, but he was felled to earth by the warleader's might."

There can be no doubt that the dragon was evil and needed to be destroyed, but we feel loss at its death. A dragon too suffers in a mutable world; like mankind it must abandon its transitory life (though the life is immensely longer than ours), must leave its pleasures, whether in a hoard or in revelling in the midnight air, and put aside the delight of revealing itself to a terror-stricken world. The vision of the dragon, presented on its own terms, may be alien to us and our needs, but it is, nonetheless, one of fierce beauty.

When reading BEOWULF, we may read Beowulf's fight with the dragon as a form of the final conflict between good and evil, either as it appears in the Norse legend of Ragnarok or typologically within the Christian context of Revelation in which the

dragon, specifically equated with Satan, must be cast down and bound.(6) In either case, the dragon is destructive and evil. And yet, now that the world is safe and -- at least temporarily -- dragonless, we are free to regret that something so wild, so delighted by its own brilliant malice is gone. The desire of the worm is upon us, fallen as we are. As Tolkien remarks, "there are, in any case, many heroes, but very few good dragons."(7) Now there is one less. And, he adds, those myth-systems containing them "must ever call with a profound appeal -- until the dragon comes."(8)

Now let us turn to LeGuin's dragons. They too are WYRMAS, or worms: long, lithe, and malicious. In THE WIZARD OF EARTHSEA, Yevaud, the first dragon LeGuin describes, is wholly evil. He attempts to tempt Ged by promising to reveal his enemy's name; he is a killer, a thief, and a trickster. All LeGuin has added so far to the archetypal dragon is the language of true names. Since the name is the thing, and the true name, as LeGuin tells us repeatedly, is the true thing, to know true names is to control the things themselves. In Earthsea the dragon's physical power is augmented by the power of the word.(9)

But in THE WIZARD OF EARTHSEA, LeGuin has not wholly transformed the dragon into a symbol of her own. This transformation comes in THE FARTHEST SHORE. Now dragons cease to be only malevolent hoard-guardians. Ged, Archmage and Dragonlord, describes them best:

"The dragons! The dragons are avaricious, insatiable, treacherous; without pity, without remorse. But are they evil? Who am I, to judge the acts of dragons? . . . They are wiser than we. It is with them as with dreams, Arren. We men dream dreams, we work magic, we do good, we do evil. The dragons do not dream. They ARE dreams. They do not work magic; it is their substance, their being. They do not do; they are." (FARTHEST SHORE, pp. 36-37)

This passage transforms dragons from agents of evil to ineffable magic creatures. Like the most violent actions in dreams, which simply exist as phenomena in our subconscious and cannot be judged as good or evil, dragons are immune to conventional morality. That a dragon killed Erreth-Akbe, greatest of Earthsea's heroes, matters little since dragons, by speaking of him as if he too were a dragon, have given him a form of immortality through their use of words. In Earthsea, dragons are speakers, testimony to the power of

words to bind and to create.

Since LeGuin refuses to make her dragons personify evil, she is free to stress their great beauty. Seeing them is fulfillment. As Ged says,

"And though I came to forget or regret all I have ever done, yet would I remember that once I saw the dragons aloft on the wind at sunset above the western isles; and I would be content." (p. 37)

"At Arren's first sight of them his heart leapt up with them with joy, a joy of fulfillment, that was like pain. All the glory of mortality was in that flight. Their beauty was made up of terrible strength, utter wildness, and the grace of reason. For these were thinking creatures, with speech and ancient wisdom: in the patterns of their flight there was a fierce, willed concord.

Arren did not speak, but he thought: I do not care what comes after: I have seen the dragons on the wind of morning." (p. 147)

For Arren or Ged to confront dragons takes all the strength either can summon. Such a confrontation symbolizes a coming to face power, a willingness to take life in one's own hands. For in THE FARTHEST SHORE, dragons are synonymous with power and its testing. Ged's knowledge of dragons confirms his fitness to be Archmage; Arren's dealings with them attest his fitness to become High King.

Yet there is a difference in their

reactions. Arren, on a quest to attain manhood and kingship, is content to have seen the dragons "on the wind of morning." He is at the beginning of his life. In accepting dragons, he accepts power; in crossing the Mountains of Pain, he accepts the reality of death. Only then can he emerge with victory, having transcended his own fear, to mount the dragon who brings him back to his kingdom.

But Ged, who is old, speaks of having seen the dragons on the wind at sunset in the west. His use of "sunset" and "west" indicate that he knows his life nears its end; he has long accepted the fact of his own death, expressed in symbolic terms by his loss of power after he conquers the wizard Cob. He has told us that dragons do not do; they are. He too wishes to be done with doing. For human, to be done with action is to be done with life. And the dragon takes him home to Gont.

As in BEOWULF, the writer lets us see her world through the eye of the dragon. Free from human morality and concerns, free from all but magic, dragons are merry, as may be seen in this description of the eldest of dragons.

"The old dragon Kalessin looked at him from one long, awful golden eye. There were ages beyond ages in the depths of that eye; the morning of the world was deep in it. Though Arren did not look into it, he knew that it looked upon him with profound and mild hilarity." (p. 193)



Since dragons are power and fulfillment unto themselves, they watch human struggles with amusement. They are wiser than we and know it; to meet their eyes traps us. For they know us and our names, and in knowing, can control us. And that knowledge gives them pleasure. As Kalessin flies over Earthsea, Ged and Arren on his back, the people of Earthsea misinterpret his flight as a sign of the end of the world, but Kalessin is amused. He knows the truth: as he says (to those of us who have the power and strength to understand him), he has "brought the young king to his kingdom and the old man to his home" (p. 195). It is he who first gives Arren his full name in the speech of the making; not just LEBANNEN, but AGNI LEBANNEN. The King.(10) Having named him, Kalessin leaves Roke with Ged on his back. He has helped one man to attain secular power; now he aids another man in giving it up. The vision of the dragon and the man flying "between the sunlight and the sea" concludes the narrative. Ged has reached his farthest shore -- aided by the dragon: we do not really need to be told that he will not come to Arren's coronation.

In her collected essays, *THE LANGUAGE OF THE NIGHT*, LeGuin tells us that *THE FARTHEST SHORE* is a book about death -- the experience of accepting it as fact for Arren and the very fact of it for Ged. This book, she says, is about Ged's death.(11) As in *BEOWULF*, the dragon is linked to the hero's passing. No other symbol has power.

Both the Beowulf-poet and LeGuin link dragons with the death of the hero, but Beowulf's dragon is utterly evil, his last fight with it only an earthly reflection of the war in heaven against the powers of darkness. In a transitory world which grows ever worse as it wears on,(12) man and dragon are eternal enemies. But in *THE FARTHEST SHORE* Ged and the dragons work together to save Earthsea. Like the shadow that bears Ged's name in *THE WIZARD OF EARTHSEA*, man and dragon are one thing, light and darkness fused in the yin-yang symbol which is at the core of LeGuin's personal mythology. Describing herself as an "unconsistent Taoist and a consistent unChristian", (13) LeGuin sees dragons in terms that are not -- as they must be for Tolkien and the *BEOWULF*-poet -- apocalyptic. They do not challenge nature; they are part of it. For her, the man-dragon relationship is not a conflict between the powers of good and evil -- though it may include such elements. It is actually a synthesis of good and evil, power and renunciation: just such a

reconciliation, she claims, that all people must make within themselves in order to write, live, or die. The scene in *THE FARTHEST SHORE* in which Ged and Kalessin fly off between the sea and the sky presents just such a fusion. If there is a moral that arises from the profound beauty of the synthesis of humanity, power, and acceptance. For LeGuin, man and dragon together have esthetic rather than apocalyptic significance.

For both the *BEOWULF*-poet and LeGuin, the dragon is a *MONSTRUM*, (14) a showing forth. But in each work the revelation is different. For the *BEOWULF*-poet who works within the context of a Christian apocalyptic framework, the dragon is a symbol of revealed evil which must be fought. For LeGuin the dragon is a demonstration of creative power and acceptance.

Perhaps the best way to conclude any discussion of what dragons actually mean is to let a dragon have the final say. In John Gardner's *GRENDL*, the dragon, as proud of his wisdom as of his hoard, tells Grendel, "You are, so to speak, the brute existent by which (men) learn to define themselves. . . . Scare him to glory!" (15)

Dragons -- and dragons-lovers -- can ask for no better advice.

NOTES

(1) Ursula K. LeGuin, *THE FARTHEST SHORE* (New York: Bantam Books, 1972), p. 37. All references will be to this edition and indicated by parentheses in the text.

(2) J.R.R. Tolkien, "On Fairy Stories" in *THE TOLKIEN READER* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1966), p. 41.

(3) J.R.R. Tolkien, "BEOWULF: The Monsters and The Critics" in *AN ANTHOLOGY OF BEOWULF CRITICISM*, ed. L.E. Nicholson (Indiana: University of Notre Dame, 1963), p. 64.

(4) Ursula K. LeGuin, "Why Are Americans Afraid of Dragons?" in *THE LANGUAGE OF THE NIGHT*, ed. Susan Wood (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1979), pp. 39-45. Americans, she says, "are afraid of dragons because they are afraid of freedom."

(5) *BEOWULF*, ed. Fr. Klaeber (Boston: D.C. Heath and Co., 1950). All references will be to this edition and indicated by line numbers following the text. Translations are my own. We may compare with the dragon of *BEOWULF* its literary offspring, Smaug of Tolkien's *HOBBIT*. It too is a *WYRM* whose wrath at the

theft of a cup causes it to destroy a town.

(6) Ezekiel 29:3, in which the Vulgate rubric equates the dragon and Pharaoh; Revelation 12:9, "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world"; Revelation 20:3, "And cast him into the bottomless pit. . . ." Interpreted allegorically, any dragon fight becomes a type of this apocalyptic conflict.

(7) Tolkien, "BEOWULF: The Monsters and the Critics," p. 65.

(8) *Ibid.*, p. 88.

(9) *THE FARTHEST SHORE*. Here the wizard who has surrendered his power has also lost the power to say the words "wizard" or "mage". He substitutes for them the word "dragon", pp. 46-47.

(10) That AGNI is the name of the Hindu god who is master of fire is either spectacular coincidence or a felicitous pun. Given LeGuin's writing, either is possible.

(11) Ursula LeGuin, "Dragons Must Explain Themselves" in *LANGUAGE OF THE NIGHT*, pp. 55-56. "Ged . . . was determined to show me how his life must end, and why."

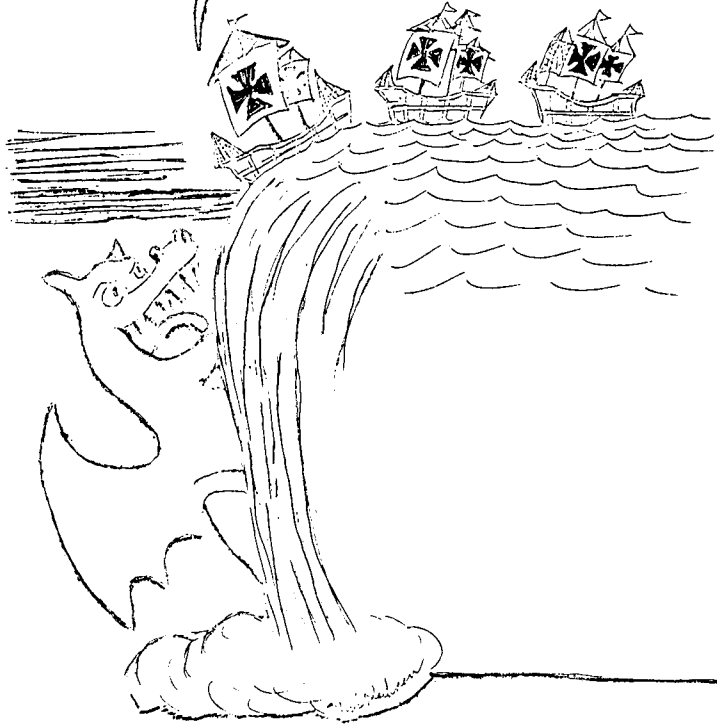
(12) Compare the entry for 793 in the Anglo-Saxon chronicle in which the Vikings' attack on Northumbria and the sight of a dragon are paired. Because of that sight, the chronicler implies, people expected calamity. Shortly thereafter, the great monastery at Lindesfarne was destroyed and, the chronicler feels, no wonder. For a description of the state of the world, consider Wulfstan's *SERMO LUPI AD ANGLOS*: "This world is in haste, and it nears its end; the longer it goes on, the worse it continually grows." Both chronicle and sermon partake of the same apocalyptic context as *BEOWULF*.

(13) *LANGUAGE OF THE NIGHT*, p. 13. LeGuin rejects the apocalypse. For a discussion of Yang-Yin, see *THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS* (New York: Ace Books, 1969) and *LANGUAGE OF THE NIGHT* again, pp. 49, 64-65, 79, 143, in which LeGuin stresses that people, in order to function, must accept the evil within them along with the good.

(14) *Monster*, from Latin *MONSTRARE*, to show forth. Dragon, from the Greek *DRAKO* and *DRAKEIN*, to see.

(15) John Gardner, *GRENDL* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1971), p. 73.

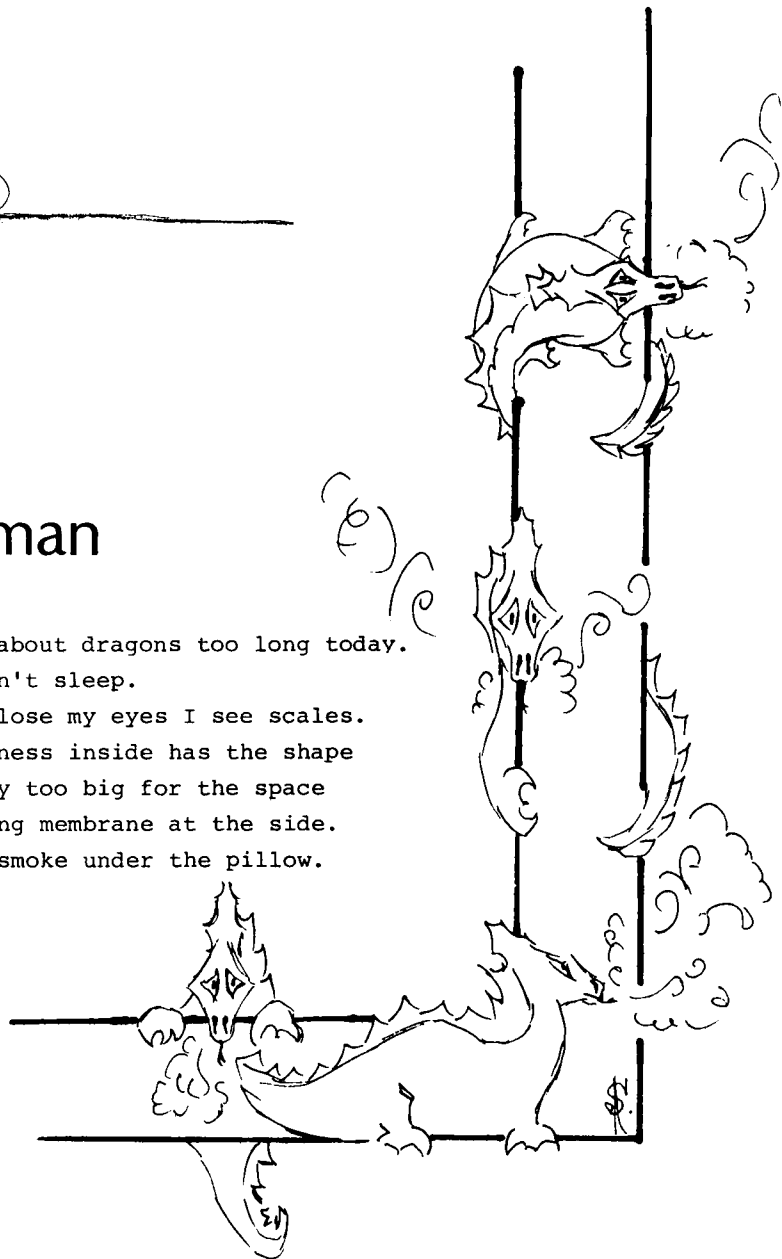
COLUMBUS, YOU IDIOT—THE WORLD IS FLAT!

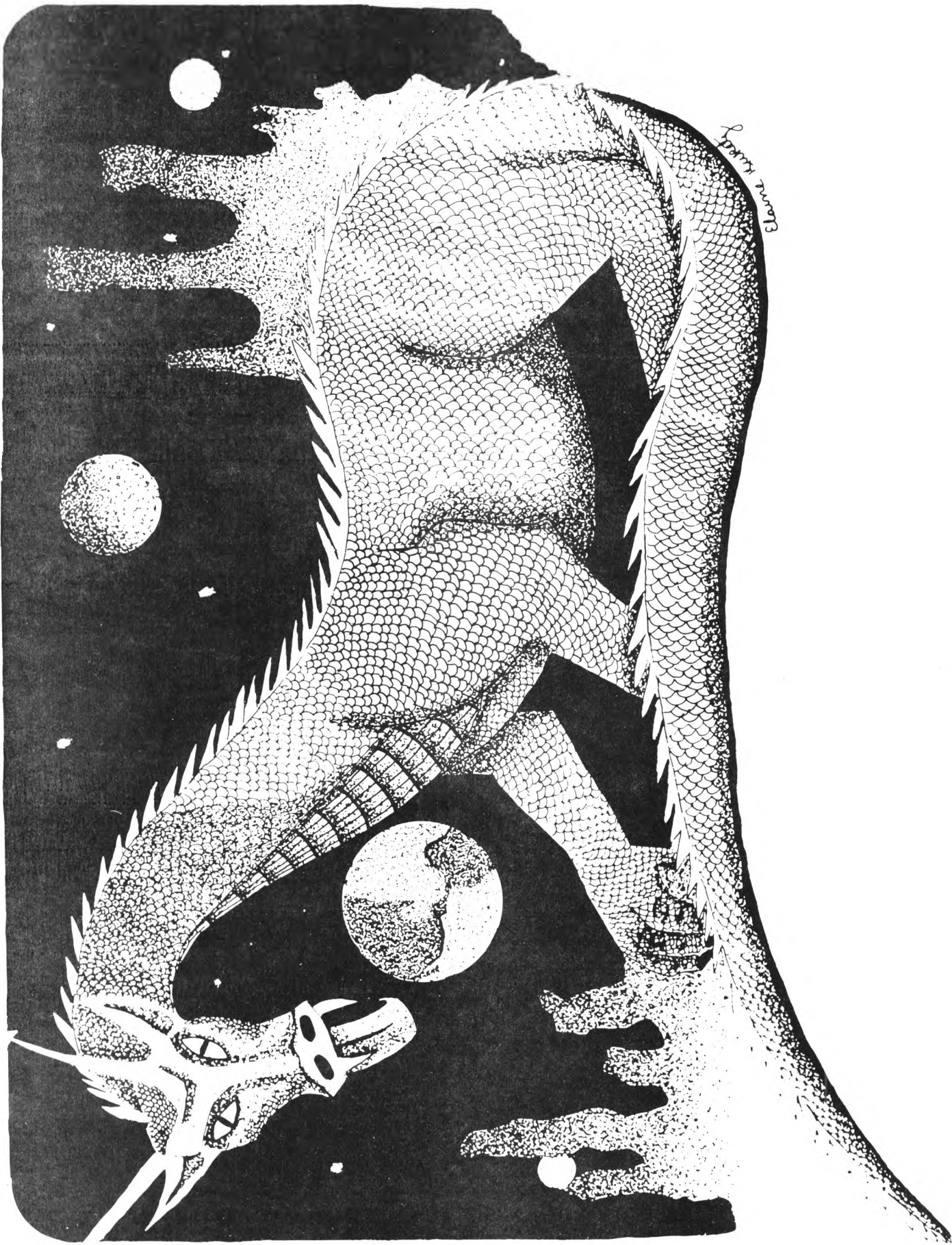


SHADOWSIGHT

by Ruth Berman

Thought about dragons too long today.
Now I can't sleep.
When I close my eyes I see scales.
The darkness inside has the shape
Of a body too big for the space
And a wing membrane at the side.
There's smoke under the pillow.

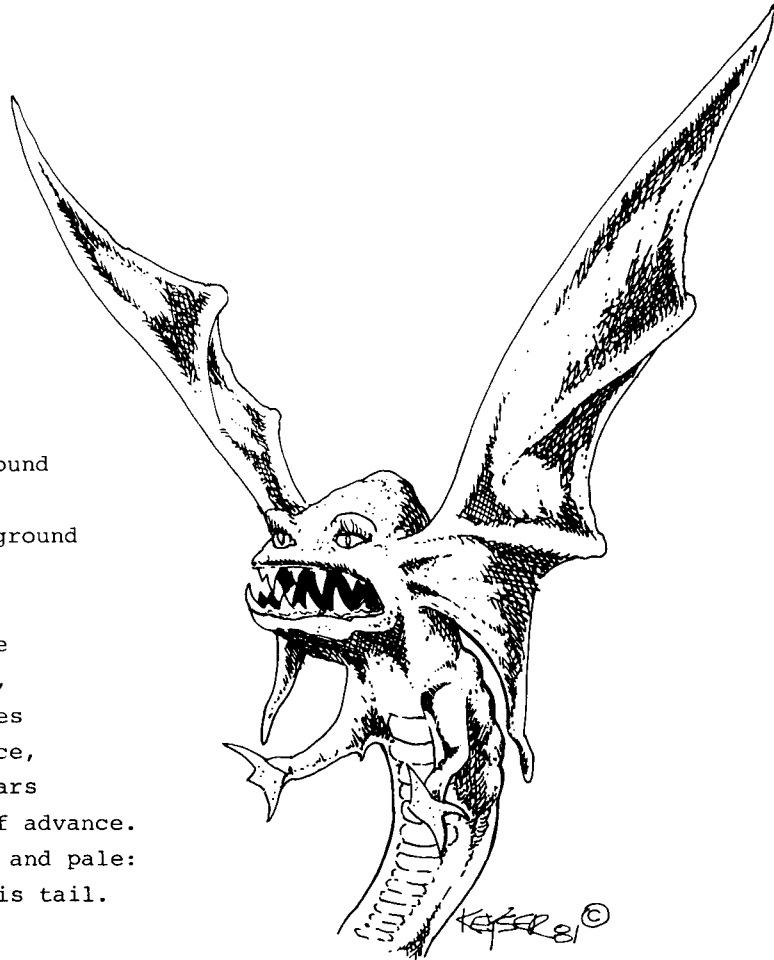




OUROBOROS

r.c. walker

How has this hill reality or these
Grey grasses and the great dark rocks around
That grove of shadowy and solemn trees
Which frame the sky? Our wide and solid ground
Dwindles to a particle, a speck among
The sparkling labyrinth that arcs above,
Beyond the power of eye to mark or tongue
To tell the all of it, the awe, the love,
The fear we feel of it. We circle, spheres
Within spheres, an endless universal dance,
An intricate weird, whose only goal appears
As revolving movement and years, eons, of advance.
But perhaps I perceive, far distant, dim and pale:
The Worm-O the Worm--He that eateth of His tail.



NOTES ON THE SONNET, "OUROBOROS"

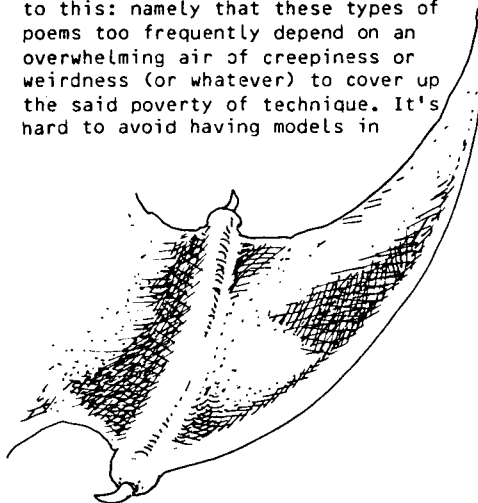
1. The worm Ouroboros is met, as a symbol, in the works of E.R. Eddison. But the symbol of a snake or dragon clutching its own tail in its mouth is an old one. It probably goes back to antiquity, perhaps to the Gnostics at least, although the only reference I've been able to find to it notes that it figured in mediaeval alchemical texts. At least one of these declares the Ouroboros was the father of the serpent that tempted Eve in the Garden of Eden. To the alchemists Ouroboros was a symbol of infinity, eternity, never-endingness. For the Gnostics, the "Serpent" was frequently portrayed as the bringer of GNOSIS (knowledge, revelation)...but not specifically as Ouroboros was portrayed. All of these symbolisms could attach to the "worm" of this poem.

2. "Ouroboros" is a sonnet, albeit a peculiar one. The reader who expects the usual iambic pentameter will be disappointed. There are five feet to the line, but the rhythm is a twisting, sinuous one, rather in keeping with the subject.

Those who have read "Whispers in Alcalá" in NIEKAS 27 will recall that I suggested a primary function of poetry was mythtelling and that a primary weakness of poetry these days was poor technique (either too little or too slavish an adherence to the simple things such as couplet rhyming, iambic meter, and so on). Fantasy and macabre poetry seem to me to have another problem that relates to this: namely that these types of poems too frequently depend on an overwhelming air of creepiness or weirdness (or whatever) to cover up the said poverty of technique. It's hard to avoid having models in

writing poetry, but in this genre I feel I read too many that sound too much like Poe, or Smith, or Lovecraft, or each other. There are exceptions, of course. But too often I see some excellent ideas which are let down by poverty in the poetry.

"Ouroboros" is an attempt to achieve a primarily musical effect in the poem. A sing-song feeling is avoided by the simple device of making the rhythm irregular (simple except that raggedness and awkwardness have to be avoided). The end-rhyme will of course create something of the effect of a song (and indeed SONNET and SONG are words of a common origin), but it is still primarily musical. The interior of the poem is therefore studded with sound patterns...not only alliteration but also sets of words that echo against and reinforce each other. One such sequence, for instance, is particle/speck/sparkling/arcs/mark; another is fear/feel/circle/spheres/universal/weird/appears/years. Some may find this sort of thing too gimmicky. But for me, an application of these musical effects in a mostly philosophical poem creates a balance that makes for strength in the poem.

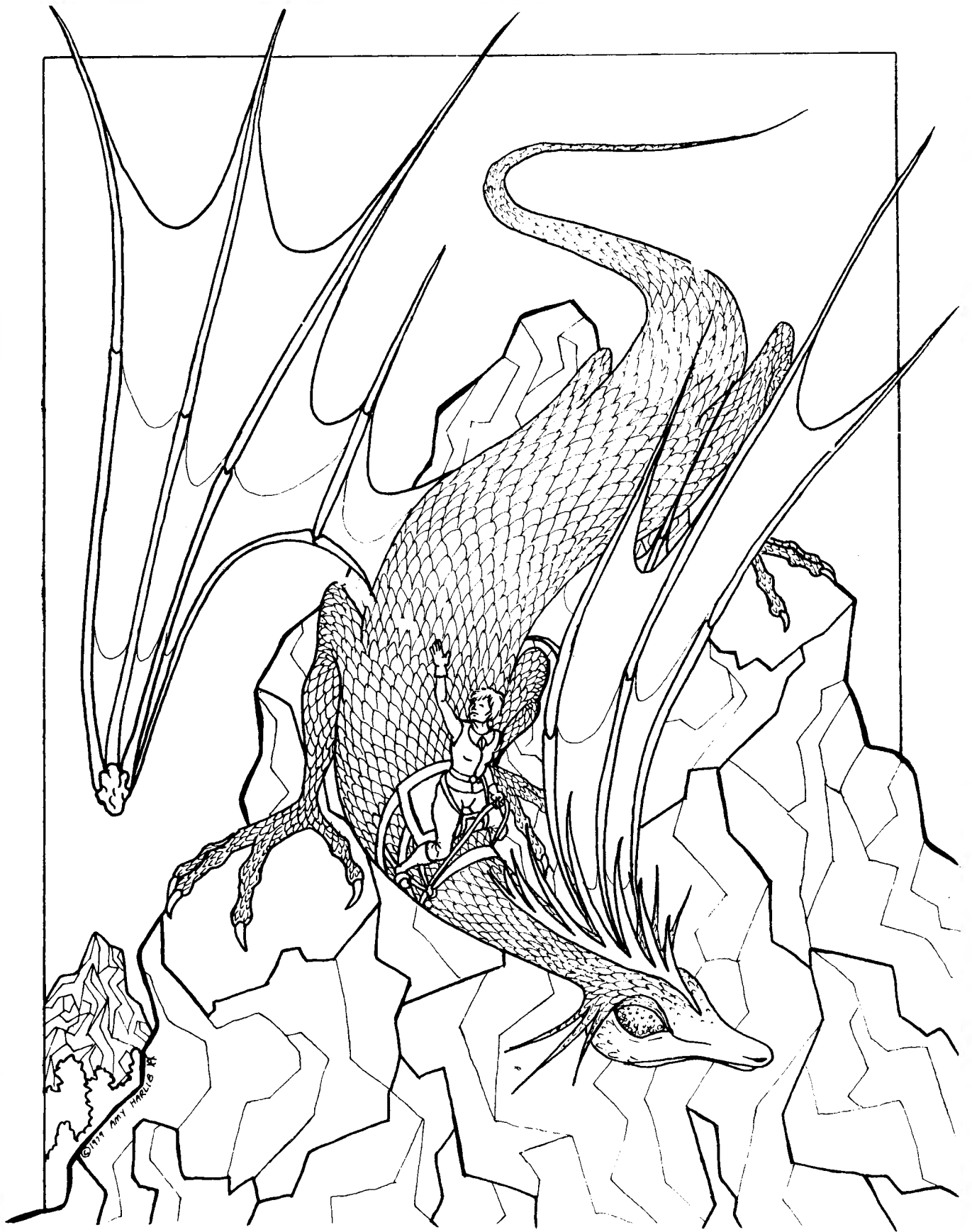


SMAUG OVER THE CITY

by Joe R. Christopher

The smoke presumes an inward fire: for breathe
This air (except a dragon) none with ease.
Each eye shall burn and yet, though burning, water.
(Alas! that ne'er the former's quenched by the latter.)
If belching smoke presumes a monster's fire.
Where is the scaly wurm of yesteryear?
Yea, where the ancient beasts? Within what lair?
No barrows for the old nightfliers here?
Not true: for multi-dragoned lairs are built
Of grey cement, where beasts each morn can bolt,
Then sleep the day; at night with glowing eyes,
The wryms come forth beneath the poisoned skies.
Well fed, the dragons gulp their liquid food,
Fart forth their fumes, and now devour their road.





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by Anne Braude

People have been writing and reading stories about dragons for as long as people have been able to read and write. The *ENUMA ELISH*, the Babylonian creation epic which is considered the oldest written work we have, tells the story of the sea-dragon Tiamut, slain by the hero-god Marduk, who made earth and sky out of her carcass; and Anne McCaffrey's tales of the dragons of Pern are among the most popular contemporary science fiction stories, with six books published and a large audience hungering for more. The classic tales, both ancient and modern, are covered pretty thoroughly elsewhere in this issue, so I shall mention here only a few items, a mixed bag of recent acquisitions.

Coloring books for grownups first appeared on the scene when I was a graduate student. They featured illustrations based on classics of art and archaeology rendered into line drawings, and proved a great boon to frustrated artists like myself. They are now all over the place, and I have even seen an X-rated coloring book listed in a catalogue. *TALES OF GREAT DRAGONS* by J.K. Anderson (Bellerophon Books, 1980, \$3.50) combines story and illustrations, including tales of dragons from throughout world myth and legend with appropriate pictures to color. It is more scholarly in its approach than the usual item of this type (the author is Professor of Classical Archaeology at the

University of California at Berkeley), containing not only all your favorite stories but also interesting dragonlore from Aristotle and Edward Topsell, the Elizabethan author of a *HISTORIE OF FOURE-FOOTED BEASTES*. This is definitely top of the line as coloring books go.

Of more contemporary interest is *THE OFFICIAL ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS COLORING ALBUM* by Gary Gygax, with illustrations by Greg Irons (Troubadour Press, 1979, \$3.50). It contains the story of a quest from beginning to end, with assorted adventurers and even more assorted monsters. The illustrations are attractive, though I object to the instructions as to which colors to

use. As a bonus, there is a specially designed game, *Adventures in the Dungeon*, with rules and a dungeon map game board -- an introduction on a simplified level to the D&D phenomenon for those who have somehow managed to escape so far.

THE DRAGON OWNER'S HANDBOOK by Kipling West (The Pendragon Gallery, 1980, n.p.) is a pamphlet in black and white which is suitable for coloring, though not described as so intended. It is a light-hearted set of rules, charmingly illustrated, for the novice dragon owner, including care and feeding, fire training, and safety precautions. It is the sort of book often (and accurately) described as being "for kids from six to sixty."

Pamela Wharton Blanpied's **DRAGONS: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE MODERN INFESTATION** (Warner Books, 1980, \$2.75) is a scholarly and scientific work, complete with graphs, diagrams, and an exhaustive bibliography, which treats of dragons today and the problems they have created for our society and economy. Here may be found full information on the Disaster, the devastation of Stewart Island, and the reasons for the imposition of the Worm Levy. Blanpied draws much of her material from the **DRAGON, NON-DRAGON INTERFACE** studies of the University of Khartoum and the Working Papers published by the New Zealand School of Dragon Studies. Much space is devoted to the work of pioneer verminologist Marta Froedlich and her remarkable student Philip Marsden, founder of the NZSDS. Although the author deprecates the emphasis placed by Marsden and his students on dragon language and their resulting conclusions about the beasts' intelligence as subjective and not value-free, the Marsden material is the most interesting in the book, especially the concluding excerpt from his conversations with the dragon Vlad, which makes such conclusions inescapable, to this reader at least. This is **THE** definitive scientific work on the subject -- at least until the dispute over the ownership of Froedlich's papers is resolved and they become available for publication -- and is not to be missed. This is, of course, a scientific spoof, one brilliant enough to be listed in the official publications of the American Association for the Advancement of Science; but it is also a perceptive look at the awe and mystery surrounding dragons and at what it would be like to contend with them for dominance in the real world. (Tactical nuclear weapons are NOT recommended.)

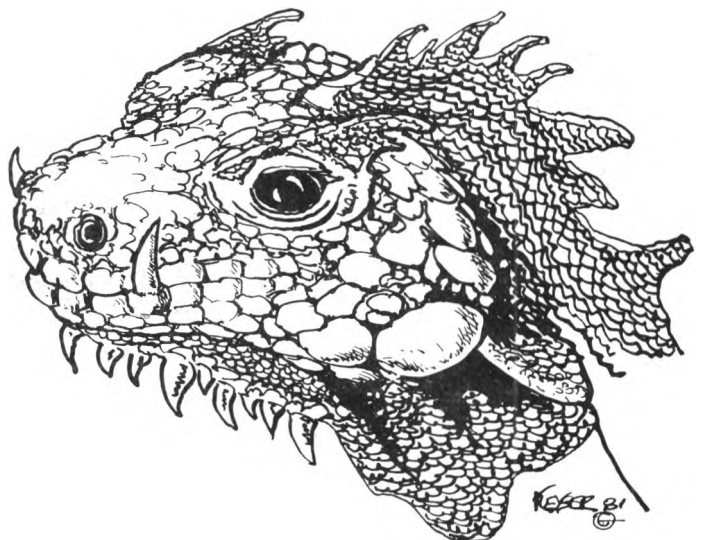
On the other hand, **DRAGONWORLD** by

Byron Preiss and J. Michael Reaves (Bantam, 1979, \$8.95 softbound) is a considerable disappointment; though billed as an epic fantasy, it smacks more of Poughkeepsie than of Elfland. The hero, Amsel, who is a cross between Leonardo da Vinci and a hobbit but less interesting than either, is falsely accused of murder and treason and driven out of Fandora, a land of stubborn peasants which mounts an invasion of neighboring Simbala in the mistaken belief they have been attacked. Amsel flees to Simbala in hopes of averting the war but fails, in part due to the intrigues of an ambitious princess. He then is sent off to find the last dragon, who can avert the attack of the coldrakes (a lesser sort of dragon) against both countires; a pointless and incompetent war is fought before he succeeds. Amsel isn't a very impressive hero because he spends too much time KVETCHING (so does the dragon); and the only really interesting characters in the rest of the cast are the wicked princess and the evil leader of the coldrakes. The political maneuverings are as boring as the last three Watergate books; the Borgias and the Medicis did these things much better, and fantasy writers who feel they must have them should, like E.R. Eddison, take the Italian Renaissance as model. Hardly any of the characters and motivations are believable. In a fantasy novel, a king who falls in love with a beautiful gypsy girl with psi powers ought to make her his queen; this one makes her his Minister of the Interior. Joseph Zucker's illustrations, especially of dragons and coldrakes, go a little way toward redeeming the book -- but it is ultimately a lost cause.

DRAGONS OF DARKNESS (Ace, 1981,

\$6.95, softbound), edited by Orson Scott Card, is much more satisfactory. It is an anthology of dragon stories, each illustrated by a different fantasy artist; there is a companion volume, **DRAGONS OF LIGHT**, which I haven't read. "Dragon" is a term used pretty loosely here, as in addition to the flame-throwing scaly reptiles we all know and love, there are elemental dragons, dragons of the mind, and dragons in name only. There are funny stories, like Ben Bova's account of a dragon who befriends a young MAFIOSO (illustrated by Tim Kirk); romantic stories, like Allan Bruton's "The Lady of the Purple Forest" (illustrated by George Barr): grim quests and terrifying accounts drawn from myth and legend. The few stories that I didn't care for were not bad, just of a type I dislike; all are well done, as is the artwork. This book belongs in every dragon fancier's hoard.

Rumer Godden's **THE DRAGON OF OG** (Viking, 1981, \$9.95) is a pleasant tale for younger children (about 8 to 12), based on a legend of the Scottish Lowlands. The dragon of the title has lived peacefully in the river for centuries, taking a bullock or two each month but not otherwise bothering the villagers; indeed, his presence is a deterrent to would-be invaders. But when the rouch Highlander Angus Og comes into possession of the castle, he decides that this has gone on long enough; the dragon must go. Fortunately, the dragon in distress is befriended by the Lady Matilda, wife to Angus and more than a match for him. The story is told with charm and humor, and the dragon fully engages our sympathies. Drawings and full-color paintings by Pauline Baynes almost make this 60-page book worth the ten bucks the publisher is asking for it.



HRINGBOGA

Anne Etkin

Time, the sleeping dragon, is so vast
That stretching infinitely towards her tail is Past,
And infinitely headwards Future lies.
Upon her creep the mites who cry, "Time flies!"

On the bulk
Of her hulk,
They cannot observe
The leaning towards the leaning towards a curve.

Forever bending inwards in a wreath,
With tail-tup neatly nipped between her teeth,
The dragon sleeps; and someday the last scale
Of lip they'll leave and step upon her tail,
Passing in front of Future at the last,
New-treading all unknowing on the Past!



DRAGON

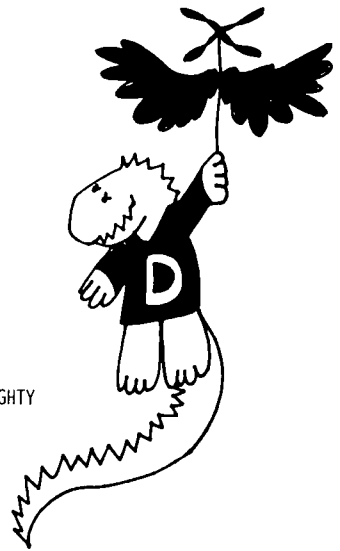
Thomas M. Egan

Scales tearing through the Lonely Mountain,
a living furnace for your breath,
armies of corpses for your throne;
a knight's courage is then proved for Court and Lady,
the Worm's apocalypse of death revealed -- his own.
What's left? Misery, and the stuff of legends.

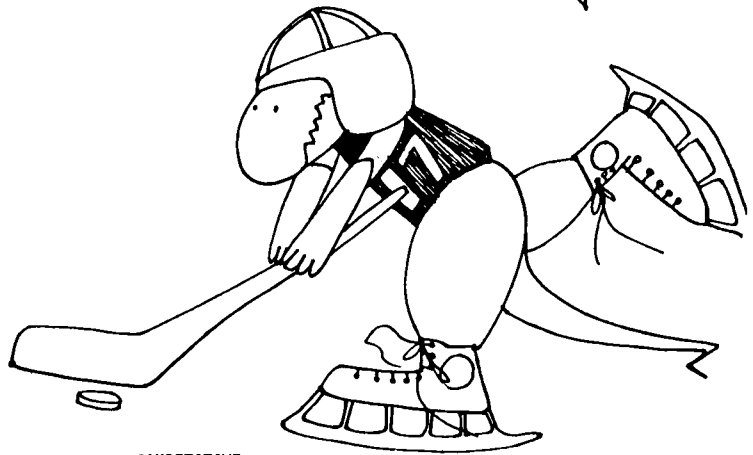
GALE'S DRAGONS ARE...

by Gale Turner

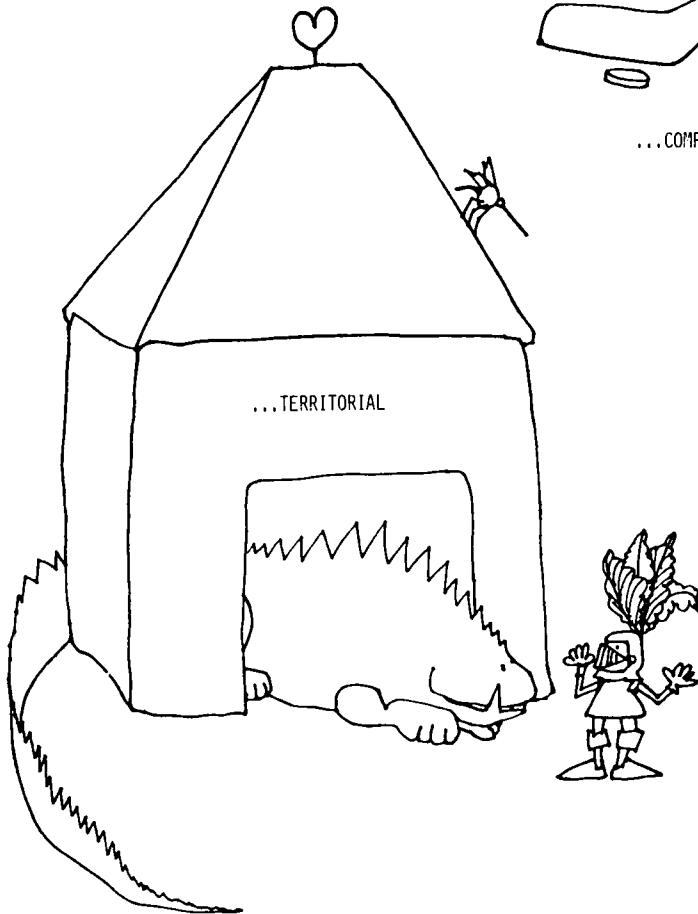
...FLIGHTY



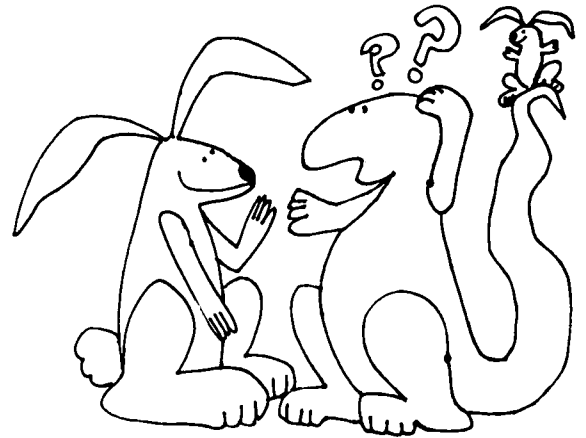
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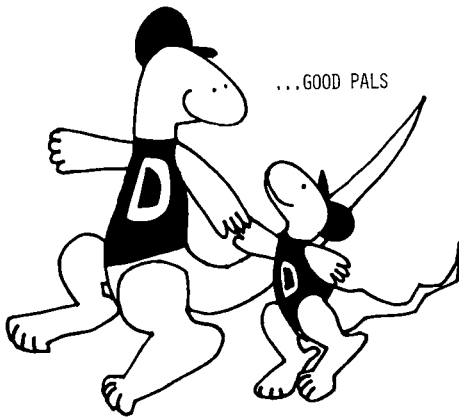
...GOOD SKATES



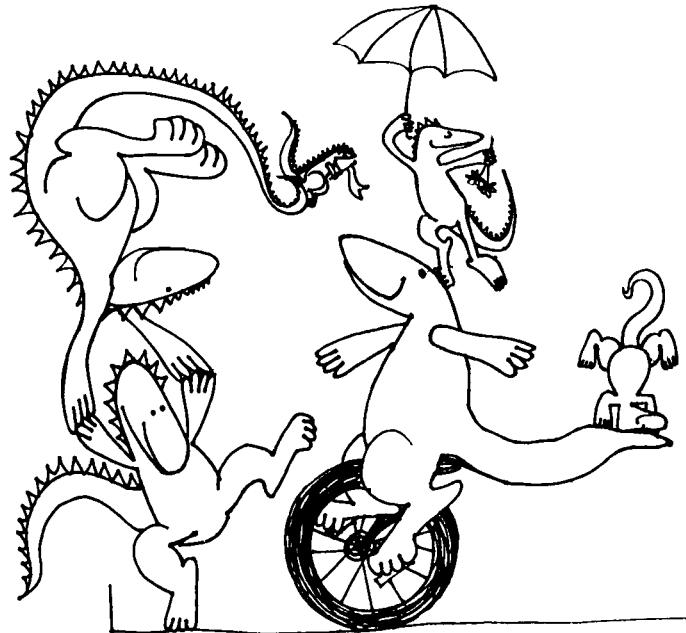
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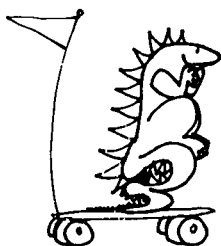
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...WELL-BALANCED

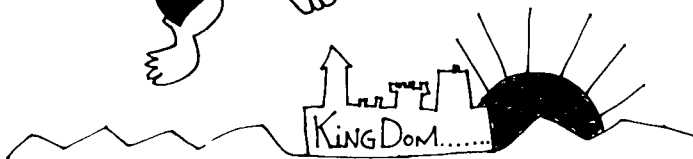
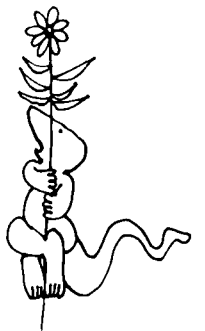
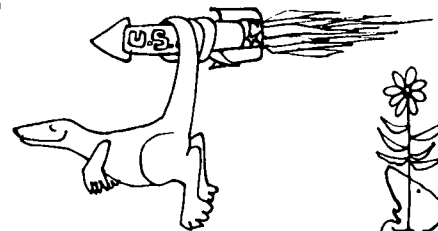
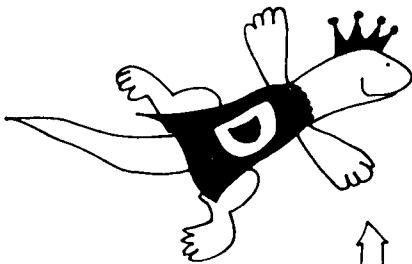
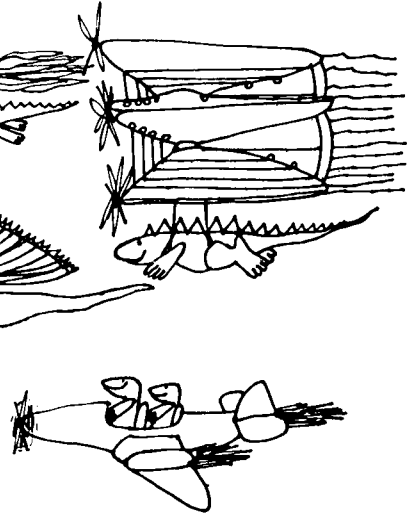
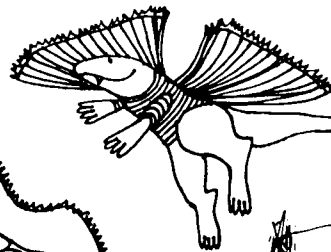
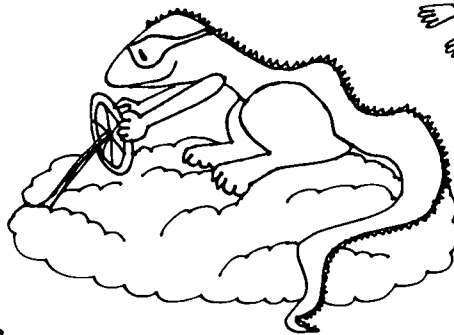
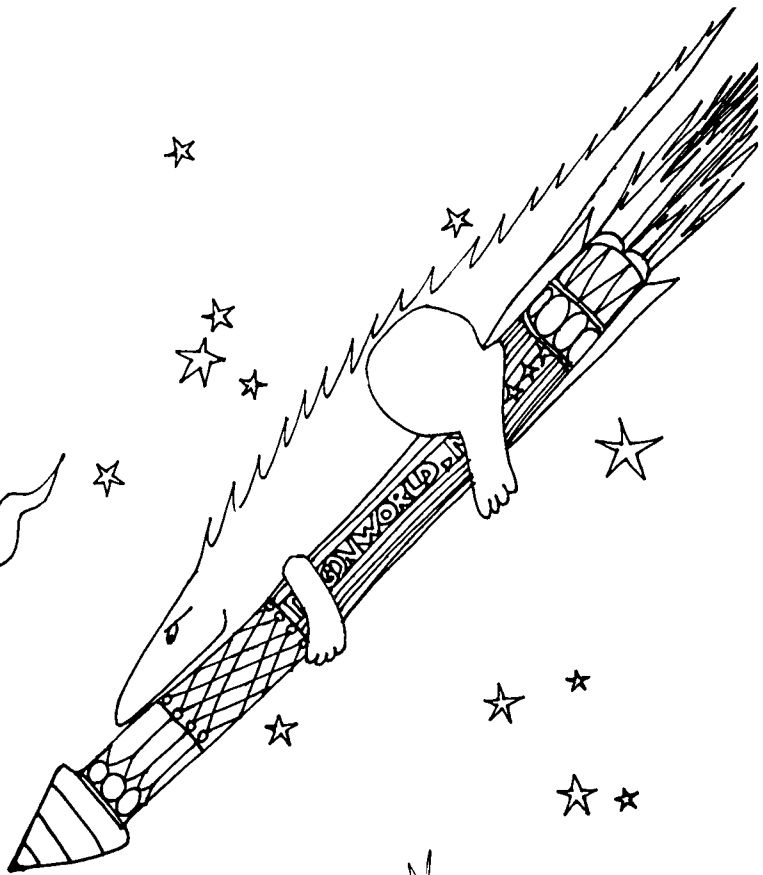
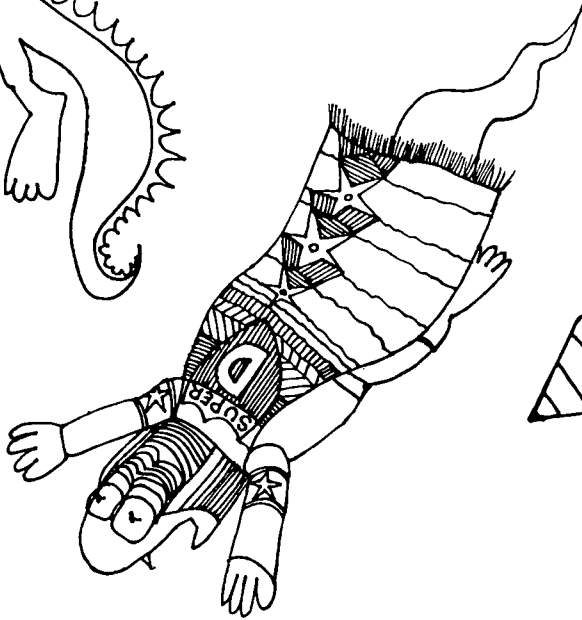


...RAVENOUS



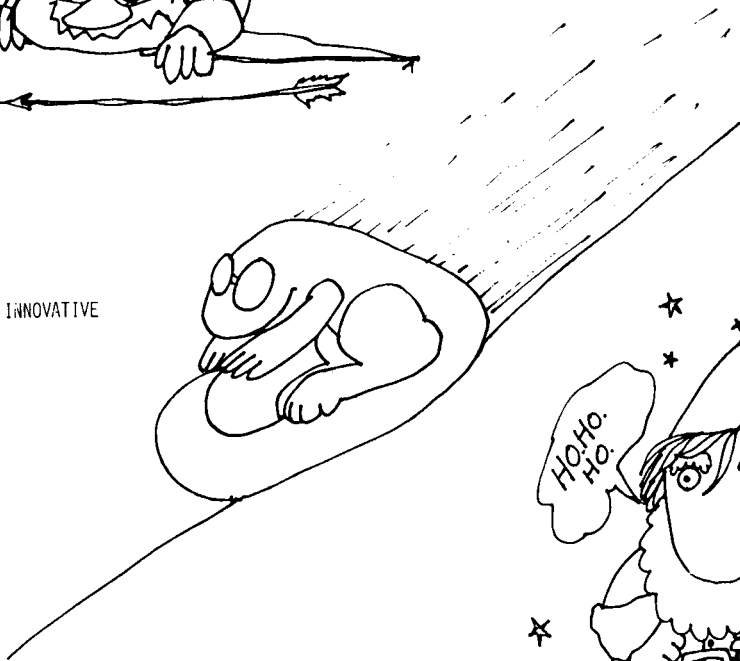
...MOBILE

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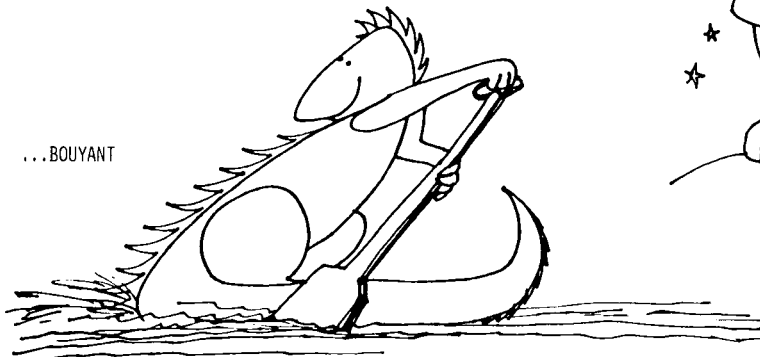


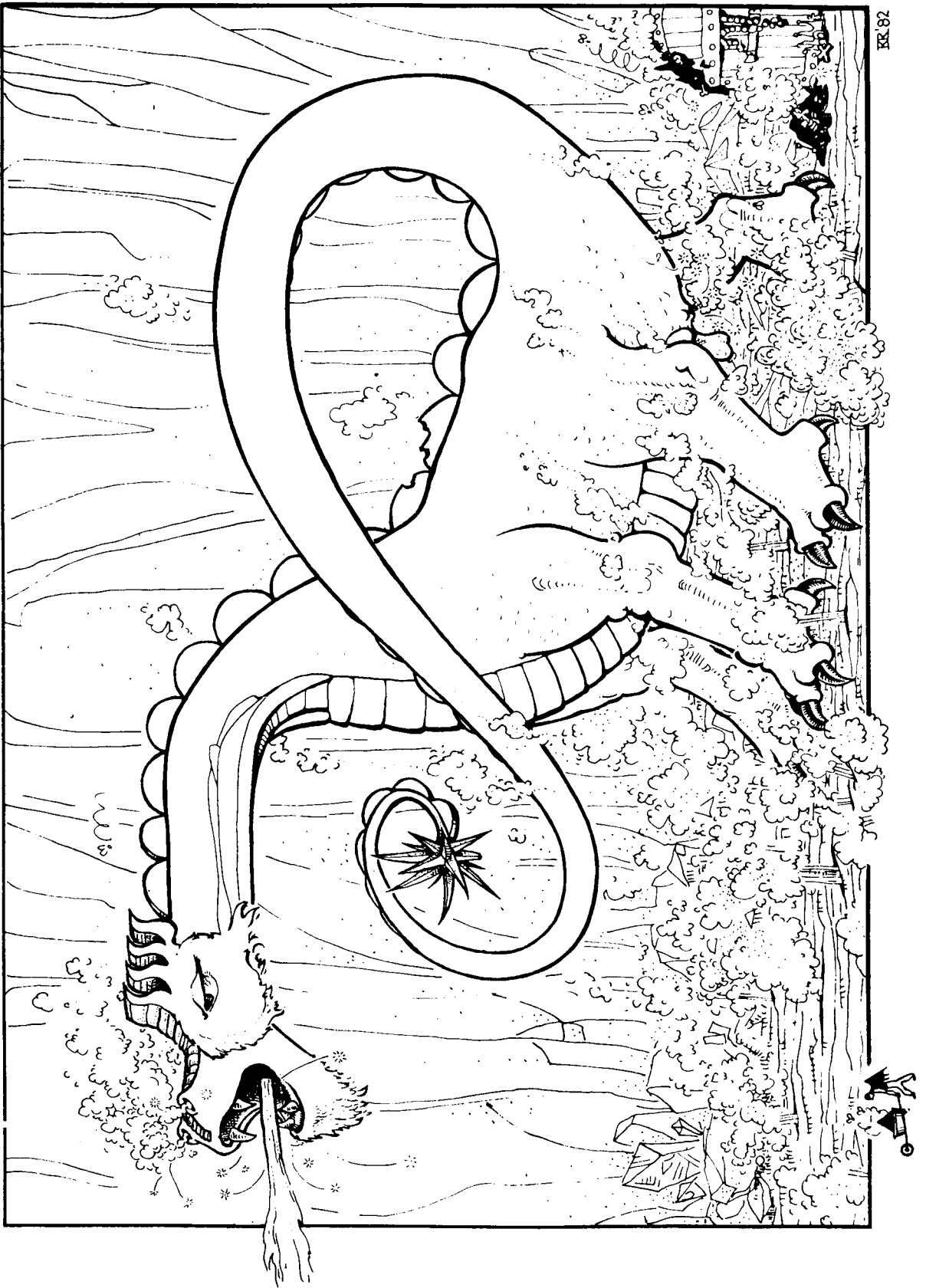


...INNOVATIVE



...BOUYANT

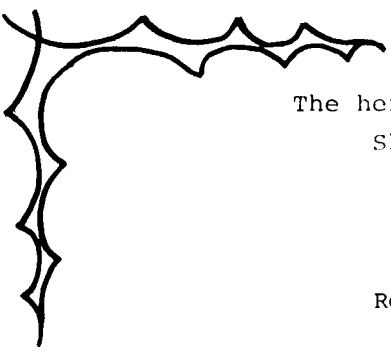






It's not that easy to get rid of dragons:

Before the sea-green corruptible earth
globed like a ripe fruit into the hand of God
the Great Dragon was there
 jaws grating on Michael's sword
 lashing a scaly tail
 sweeping a third of the stars from Heaven;
Then in the Garden of our beginning
grown small slithering sly
 serpentine
 telling us Death tastes good;
And in our glimpses of Last Things
the Beast with Seven Heads
the Worm that dieth not
 we sense him waiting.
It's not that easy to get rid of dragons.



The heroes tried:

Sharp swords and glittering mail
striding into stinking caves
shimmering in firebreath
slaking steel in burning blood;
Reeling forth dazed and triumphant
to claim the covenanted prize--
gold beyond the dreams of avarice
the hand of the obligatory rescued damsel
and half her father's kingdom.

One monster less to menace; but look there
that cave higher up the hill...
...a breath of smoke?

It's not that easy to get rid of dragons.

The scholars tried:

Learnedly peering through lenses
anatomizing trilobites
querying cold bones of stone;
Our ancient fearsome foe
explained away to nonexistence
fossil fretted into myth
a mere memento of the Mesozoic
Farewell, St. George; now Darwin be our shield!

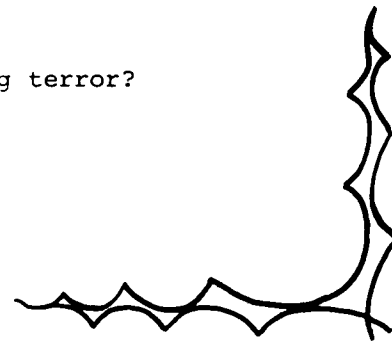
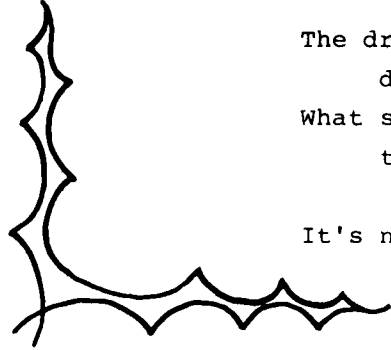
They thought it easy to get rid of dragons.

But then came wizards

Riddling out of very middle-earth--
screaming the soul in necromancer's glass
hunting the haunted mind of modern man
back through the deepest caverns where fear lurks
older than fire or wisdom
older than hope or heroes
sitting upon a heap of bones
making monsters.

The dragon lurks within us, and whose hand
dare lift the torch to light that living terror?
What sword so sharp shall slay
the beast in the bowels of the heart?

It's not that easy to get rid of dragons.





CONCERNING THE *inklings*...



by
JOE CHRISTOPHER

Actually, all I do is read books and essays and write about them. It's a simple life, but, as a hobbit feels about his six meals a day (when he can get them), I'm satisfied with it. More specifically, much of the time I read books and essays about the Inklings. The Inklings was a literary club which met in Oxford, England, essentially during World War II. The members were nineteen or twenty in number, although not all of them were of equal importance -- and never were all of them there at the same time.

The ones who are usually named are C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, and Charles Williams -- perhaps he should have used his middle initials, Charles W.S. Williams, since there are several twentieth-century authors of that name. Lewis wrote all sorts of books -- some fifty-odd volumes. If you read science fiction, you may know his Ransom Trilogy, beginning with *OUT OF THE SILENT PLANET*; if you have children young enough to be read to, you may know his *Chronicles of Narnia* -- the first of which, in order of publication, *THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE*, was a TV cartoon production a few seasons ago and was shown this fall at the Baptist Student Center here in Stephenville; if you read in the field of religious and ethical essays, you may know his *SCREWTAPE LETTERS*. Tolkien, if you know popular fiction at all, you have heard of. His *THE LORD OF THE RINGS* became (and still is) a campus bestseller; a cartoon movie has covered the first half of the three-volume tale, and a TV cartoon, *THE RETURN OF THE KING*, covered the last third. His child's story, *THE HOBBIT*, has also been made into a TV cartoon. Tolkien's *THE SILMARILLION* made the best-seller lists a few years ago, although that was due to *THE LORD OF THE RINGS*'s popularity, not *THE SILMARILLION* itself. Charles Williams' novels -- supernatural thrillers -- have not had the success of his fellow Inklings' fiction; they are, however, still in print. Williams also wrote essays, poetry, and Church dramas.

The Inklings began meeting sometime between 1933 and 1938 in Lewis's rooms in Magdalen College, Oxford; Tolkien referred to the group in a 1938 letter as "our literary club of practising poets." Early works which

were read aloud for criticism by members included Tolkien's *THE HOBBIT* and Lewis's *OUT OF THE SILENT PLANET*. But readings were not exclusively fiction or verse. Theological works were read, including Lewis's *THE PROBLEM OF PAIN* and Williams' *THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS*. (Williams joined the group in 1939, when the London branch of the Oxford University Press was moved to Oxford during the war.) Lord David Cecil read to the group from his literary biography, *TWO QUIET LIVES*, and W.H. Lewis (C.S. Lewis's brother) read from at least the first of his French histories, *THE SPLENDID CENTURY*. These Thursday evening meetings continued after Williams' death in 1945, but faded away in 1949; the last few years had seen the meetings become spent more on conversations than readings and criticism, so perhaps the original impulse was gone. Tolkien had not read the final portion of *THE LORD OF THE RINGS* to the group, nor had Lewis read any of Narnian children's stories. Of course, Tolkien disliked the Narnian stories, and another of the early members -- H.V.D. Dyson -- disliked *THE LORD OF THE RINGS*.

Approximately fifteen years, then; certainly for ten. It seems like a short time, but few literary groups have lasted as long. Probably part of the cohesiveness was due to the period: Oxford, during World War II. A Group of writers, too old to serve militarily (both Lewis and Tolkien had served in World War I), met in a room with black-out curtains to read their writings to each other. Humphrey Carpenter, in his chapter "The fox that isn't there" in his book *THE INKLINGS*, says that the cause of the club was Lewis's gift for friendship. (Perhaps one should also add his ability to point out flaws in a work while still praising what he could and still encouraging the author -- a rare gift.) But I find this chapter to be the most flawed part of the book: Carpenter asks all the right questions and then gives the wrong answers. He considers their Christianity, for example; but points out the differences: Tolkien was a highly traditional Roman Catholic, whose practice centered in Confession and Mass; Lewis, an Anglican, whose faith was built on a type of Chestertonian rationality; and Williams, another Anglican, whose Christianity included occult, Rosicrucian emphasis from his days as a member of the Temple of the Golden Dawn in London. Thus Carpenter rules out their Christianity as a major factor in their "movement,"

just as he refuses to accept the word *MOVEMENT* as appropriate. On the other hand, John Wain, who attended the meetings of the Inklings for two or three years after World War II, has written: "The group had a corporate mind, as all effective groups must.... Politically conservative, not to say reactionary; in religion, Anglo- or Roman Catholic; in art, frankly hostile to any manifestation of the 'modern' spirit" (from *SPRIGHTLY RUNNING: PART OF AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY*, Ch. V). Probably the latter hostility would not have been as prevalent if Williams had still been alive when Wain was a member -- Carpenter quotes Williams in a letter, "Better modern than minor." Wain adds, "I shall give a quite false picture of Lewis and his friends if I represent them as merely reactionary, putting all their energies into being *AGAINST* things. Far from it; this was a circle of instigators, almost of incendiaries, meeting to urge one another on in the task of redirecting the whole current of contemporary art and life. ...Tolkien concentrated on the writing of his colossal 'Lord of the Rings' trilogy. His readings of each successive installment were eagerly received, for 'romance' was a pillar of this whole structure. The literary household gods were George MacDonald, William Morris (selectively), and an almost forgotten writer named E.R. Eddison...." No doubt the truth about the Inklings lies somewhere between Carpenter's circle of Lewis's friends and Wain's incendiaries. Carpenter, as a historian, has used the views of those Inklings who were still alive when he started his book (and some of whom still are), such as R.E. Havard, a medical doctor. For these minor Inklings, the friendship was the important thing. But Wain came to the group a potential writer (albeit of a realistic kind), and he saw the literary side -- the "club of practising poets" of Tolkien's early letter.

There is nothing wrong (literarily, that is) with a group of writers being conservative in politics or religion. Probably the Scriblerus Club of the eighteenth century is the best example of such a conservative literary group in the English tradition. The Inklings were a group of conservative Romantics. No doubt that term is (for some) a paradox. But *THE LORD OF THE RINGS* is, in its way, a work of neo-medievalism like Keats' "The Eve of St. Agnes." Williams' last two books of poetry -- *TALIESIN IN LOGRES* and *THE REGION*

OF SUMMER STARS -- were based on the Arthurian legends of the Middle Ages. And Lewis's *THE GREAT DIVORCE* is an imitation in a lesser, episodic way of Dante's *DIVINE COMEDY* -- perhaps one could call it the Romantic medievalism as influenced by the Oxford movement of the later nineteenth century. I could also tie Lewis to German Romantic in his emphasis on *SEHNSUCHT*, the longing for the infinite, the mysterious, which is part of that period and a large part of his attitude. But this is enough to suggest the Romantic affinities.

I think a circle of writers generates a special type of interest. It is no longer a matter of "How good are his or her works?" (and, for the biographically interested) "What does he or she reveal of his or her inner self in the work?" Rather, after a reader decides that at least one member of the group is worth reading, then he wonders what the others are like: did they write as well as the first? do they reflect the same ideas or the same point of view? do they form a school? (and, biographically) did they influence each other? Thus, we have studies of the Pre-Raphaelites and of Bloomsbury, among many others.

Is at least one member of the Inklings worth reading? That's a difficult question to answer, because those readers who like fantasies and those who like realism often seem to not be talking to each other -- and through most of this century the realists have had much control of academic criticism of novels and (indeed) most of the reviewing of novels. (Notice I say "much control", not "total control".) The easiest answer is in terms of Northrop Frye's major piece of twentieth-century literary theorizing, *ANATOMY OF CRITICISM*: he says there are four types of prose fiction, and all are legitimate. I would say that C.S. Lewis's best work is *TILL WE HAVE FACES*, a retelling of the Cupid and Psyche myth -- in Frye's terms, a mixture of confession and romance. Charles Williams' best works (in my estimation -- some would pick his poetry) are his last two fictions, *DESCENT INTO HELL* and *ALL HALLOWS' EVE*. They are romances, but ones told in a metaphysical style (more like Crashaw than Herbert). As for Tolkien's *THE LORD OF THE RINGS*, what can one say? I rather agree with a critic who has suggested that too many of the "fellowship of the ring" survive -- victory should have had a heavier cost; but still it remains a major example of the pure romance, supported by Tolkien's interest in detailed world-building and written in the generalized style which was

inherited by such writers as William Morris from Sir Thomas Malory.

Of course, I am assuming that these are significant works: otherwise, I would hardly devote my professional career to them. I have published twenty-seven bibliographies as books or in journals -- all annotated enumerative checklists -- of which twenty have been on one or more of the Inklings; I have published sixty-two essays and notes on professional topics, of which twenty-eight have been on the Inklings. I am assuming the romance is a legitimate form, a literary form which speaks through what we would today call Jungian archetypes and symbols. I am also assuming, whatever the odds, that *TILL WE HAVE FACES* is one of the great literary works of the century.

This criticism and bibliographic work, at any rate, is the reason I was invited out to California last August to be the Co-Guest of Honor at the twelfth annual convention of the Mythopoeic Society. Although the invitation was an "in-house" thing to a degree, for I have published a number of essays and bibliographies in *MYTHLORE*, the journal of the Mythopoeic Society, still there was honor enough in the invitation, and a great amount of fun at the conference. But that fun is another story.

One thing more. So far my comments have sounded as if all the concerns in this field are restricted to praising dead authors, when it is appropriate, and keeping up with the tremendous flow of materials about them. This is quite true. However, the latter part of the task leads to interesting matters at times.

For example, Fr. Walter Hooper -- a priest in the Church of England, although American by birth -- is one of the two executors of the estate of C.S. Lewis's essays, poems, fiction, and letters. Included in some of these are fragments of Lewis's writings not published in Lewis's lifetime. In the preface to *"THE DARK TOWER" AND OTHER STORIES* (1977), Hooper explains how it happens he has these: in January 1964 -- after C.S. Lewis's death in November 1963 -- W.H. Lewis decided to move into a smaller house, and had a three-day bonfire of materials he could not move. Fred Paxford, the Lewis's gardener, saw C.S. Lewis's manuscript on some of the papers and asked W.H. Lewis if they could be saved and given to Hooper. W.H. said, yes, contingent on Hooper taking them away that day, which was the third of the bonfire. Luckily Hooper showed up, and he carried off a great load of

papers.

Kathryn Lindsakoog, a California writer who has done a biography of Lewis, in 1978 published an essay -- "Some Problems in C.S. Lewis's Scholarship" -- in which she reports what Paxford had to say in a letter about the matter. He simply denies it. He denies there was any three-day bonfire, that W.H. Lewis would have either given away or destroyed his brother's papers, or that he, Paxford, would have tried to save any papers for Hooper if there had been a bonfire. The editor of the *CANADIAN C.S. LEWIS JOURNAL* has rechecked with Paxford on this matter, and Paxford has reaffirmed his statement.

This is interesting because, if Fr. Hooper did not come by the papers as he says he did, then he presumably cannot account for the way he did get them. Hooper, I might explain, has refused to discuss the matter. If Hooper was not properly given the papers, then -- although Lindsakoog does not make he point -- they should have been part of W.H. Lewis's estate. All of the papers he owned went to the Wade Collection of Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois, at his death. The third possibility is that some or all of the unfinished works Hooper has published have been invented since Lewis's death, but that is probably less likely than the materials are authentic and their ownership is in question.

I could give a few other instances of this sort which add to the liveliness of being a biographer. For example, J.B. Phillips, the New Testament translator, has reported in a book how C.S. Lewis's spirit appeared to him twice after Lewis's death. Luckily, a biographer simply has to report the various statements and does not have to pass judgement on everything -- for, unless one is CERTAIN there is no spiritual realm (a position far to the right of agnosticism), how can one judge the authenticity of a ghost?

If, however, any of you have devised a litmus test for ghosts, I'll be happy to hear about it.

(This paper was given as a talk at a Faculty Luncheon, Tarleton State University, Stephenville, Texas, on 12 October 1981.

Paragraphs three, four, five, and six of this note appeared originally, in a slightly different form and a different order, as a part of a review of Humphrey Carpenter's *THE INKLINGS* in *THE NEW ORLEANS REVIEW*, 7:1 (n.d.), 91-93. Copyright 1980 by Loyola University, New Orleans. Reprinted by permission.)

GOODBYE GREAT LADY

One of the last proponents of the return to reason died this March. Ayn Rand is gone. She was an activist in the clearest sense of the word. She lived the life and ideals she put forth in her writings and detested the "middle way" as much as the "second hander".

I started reading her books when I was sixteen and do not regret a moment of the time spent. I managed to 'discover' her at a very critical time in my life, and heard in her books a confirmation of thoughts I'd had for years. Thoughts on "society", religion, and the politics of unreason which I had considered unclear or downright malicious were put forth in a clear light so that the full import was clear. She echoed feelings and thoughts I'd had for years and it was like seeing a light in a dark, dark tunnel.

She has left behind a legacy of characters that most consider "larger than life" only because in her writings they manage (as well as we all can) to control their own futures.

Yes, Ayn Rand is gone. Those of us



who knew her even a little bit will miss her greatly, the speaking engagements and the anticipation of another philosophy book or "fiction" novel. Her thoughts will live on as long as men and women dare to be real.

To those of you who say, "Where is John Galt now that we need him?", I answer only that we are John Galt or he died with Ayn Rand.

So goodbye Great Lady and thank you; for Dominique and Howard Roark for Hank and Ellis for Arthur Halley and Midas for Francisco Domingo Carlos Andres Sebastian d'Anconia and Dagny and John Galt. We thank you.

Margaret M. Shepard

GREAT EXPECTATIONS: CONAN--THE MOVIE

CATHERINE DE CAMP

Sprague and I have long been the most avid of Conan fans. We look forward to the movie CONAN THE BARBARIAN which is now scheduled for a May 26th, 1982 release. They have kept on moving it forward and they may move it forward again, but so far as I know, this is the date.

This may surprise those of you who know that Sprague and Lin Carter and I did the novelization of the movie, but the book is now at Bantam. It has been all copyedited. They have put it in their vault because they have to wait to print it until they are closer to the time the movie comes out.

We wrote the book, however, guided only by the third, not the fourth, movie script. It may also be, as you

know, that many changes will be made in the present movie. In fact, the editors may be snipping away right up to the last minute. Universal, the distributor, has decided that the movie was far too violent as it stood when John Milius, the director, was finished with it. "It needs more work" is the polite way that they said it in the newspapers when they did announce the delay.

Conan Properties and the movie have practically no contact with anyone in Hollywood. They just don't keep us informed. They don't want to deal with us. But this is something all authors have to put up with when they sell a property to Hollywood. We've seen lots of stills and about six minutes of the film. We finally extorted that bit of film so that it could be shown to possible buyers of toys and t-shirts.

The sets are elegant, very rich, ornate, and beautifully done. There is a misty quality to the scene we saw. It was an orgy scene and as such is better, I suppose, when you don't see everything explicitly. So you have a misty scene which is the "in" thing right now. You have mist or snow or sleet or something...dark of night.... According to Milius' third script, everything was done in the dark of night, even climbing a

waterfall, which Sprague and I thought was a bit much - even for Conan. But in the manner of EXCALIBUR and THE CLASH OF THE TITANS, if you liked those, the six minutes that we saw were in the Greek tradition.

We have no idea of how well the whole thing will hang together as a story. Whether Milius' image of Conan is the same as the image Robert Howard would have approved of or not, we do know that the script writers tend to think in a series of resting pictures, and they sometimes drop a plot element from a story in a way that no well-trained wordsmith would ever do. We're not trying to complain, but we had problems. For example, we have to make sure in writing the novelization, that each Enormous Jewel, every Magic Sword, "akk wu cjed nagucwabs", once introduced, continue to play a part in the story. This was not always done in the script from which we worked.

So we, like you, await the finished movie eagerly and keep our fingers crossed.

[Next issue will feature several Conan-related items including a Robert E. Howard retrospective by L. Sprague de Camp and a look at the military of Cinmeria courtesy of Al Noffe. ed.]



Yes, Virginia, there are poets in Science Fiction. It has come as a pleasant surprise to some and as a shock to others that poets are alive and active within The Genre.

Actually, there should be no surprise. The novel, the short story, the screenplay, the stage play, even the comic strip and comic book have all been used by SF writers as vehicles of their craft. Why should the poem in its many forms be any different? Apparently a growing number of editors and readers agree with this. AMAZING and ISAAC ASIMOV'S SCIENCE FICTION MAGAZINE have become major showcases for poetry. The editors of these magazines are hard-headed business people. They would not be buying poetry unless their readership expressed a demand for it -- even OMNI has run poetry. In years past, when poetry appeared in magazines and anthologies (with rare exception) it was viewed as filler to amuse, a quick tickle, but nothing more. Now in magazine

anthologies poetry is becoming featured; they are no longer literary sketches that take up the white space.

Why this turnaround in attitude took place is a matter of conjecture and other writers have written more thoroughly on this topic. However, I think the reason is two-fold.

One was the great boom in original anthologies during the 60's and 70's. Many of them became markets for poetry. Even now it is rare to see such a work that does not contain some poetry. Unfortunately for many poets the number of anthologies being published have dwindled greatly. However, by featuring poetry they gave it a legitimacy within the Science Fiction community.

The Science Fiction Poetry Association founded by Suzette H. Elgin in 1978 gave a structural voice to poets within this community. Its newsletter STARLINE acted as both a

i, poet

scott green

showcase and a meeting place for poets. Its membership now includes many leading writers such as Wolfe, Sturgeon, Bishop, and Virginia Kidd. Many poets who are now prominent within the field first became known through the SFPA. THE SFPA sponsors annual awards, the Rhyslings (named after Robert Heinlein's bawdy poet of the spaceways from "The Green Hills of Earth"), which gives a prestige that only an award can give. In the bio blurbs of Gene Wolfe's magazine stories, his Rhysling award is mentioned along with his other honors.

Where do the poets come from? Many of the leading SF poets today are such as Bob Frazier, Andrew Joron, and others who had no contact with the SF community but they were known as poets within the mainstream literary community. This is not unusual since many of the leading prose writers also had little contact with science fiction until they became professional in the field. The same is true for artists.

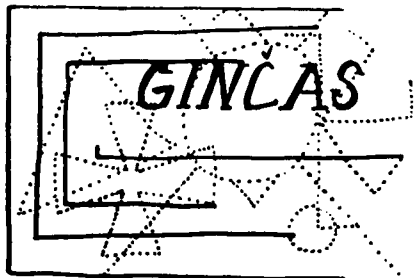
Also within the last five years there has been a proliferation of the small press or semi-pro magazine markets. True, many of them pay poorly but they do provide exposure. For a long period of time these tiny markets, whether publishers of magazines or books, were the only places where professional writers could get their poetry published. This is a problem that is reflected in the mainstream literary market as well. The small press has acquired prestige within the SF realm, they are no longer glorified fanzines. Poetry too now shares some of the new glory attached to the small press.

I have been active as a Science Fiction writer for the last three years. I am known for my poetry and not for my prose. This does not make me any less of a professional SF writer. At this point in time I cannot imagine supporting myself on just my poetry. However, its inability to support me is no reflection upon the fact that it is a means of expression for a writer equal to prose. Poetry can do things that prose cannot; it is equal but different. Its difference is what makes it a valid means to express the themes found in Science Fiction.



- (1st verse) O give me a clone
Of my own flesh and bone
With its Y-chromosome changed to X;
And when it is grown
Then my own little clone
Will be of the opposite sex.
- (chorus) Clone, clone of my own,
With its Y-chromosome changed to X;
And when I'm alone
With my own little clone
We will both think of nothing but sex.
- (2nd verse) O give me a clone,
Hear my sorrowful moan,
Just a clone that is wholly my own;
And if it's an X
Of the feminine sex
O what fun we will have when we're prone.
- (3rd verse) My heart's not of stone
As I've frequently shown
When alone with my dear little X;
And after we've dined,
I am sure we will find
Better incest than Oedipus Rex.
- (4th verse) Why should such sex vex
Or disturb or perplex
Or induce a disparaging tone?
After all, don't you see,
Since we're both of us me,
When we're making love I'm alone.
- (5th verse) And after I'm done
She will still have her fun,
For I'll clone myself twice ere I die.
And this time, without fail,
They'll be both of them male,
And they'll ravish her by-and-by.

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Doubleday & Company, Inc.)



PIERS' CANTINA

...I can see a barroom brawl brewing in Piers' Cantina so, wishing to avoid bloodshed (primarily my own A-positive), I'll have my cuppa coffee and fuckin' donut elsewhere. (Callahan's might be safer; those who know me know I have a strong tolerance level for puns.)

Mark Blackman

...Methinks Piers Anthony will have the bra-burners on his tail for the comments on female writers avoiding violence and lust. What gets me is that the rampant fringe demands freedom to do their own thing...and if you pick up a women-run, woman's magazine...it is chock full of the usual recipes for stuffed peanuts, clothes/fashions, love stories, and how to arrange three dandelions in a Japanese bowl. Oho...now they'll be after me as well.

Terry Jeeves

It appears obvious from the tenor of Piers Anthony's article "Piers' Cantina" in NIEKAS 29, that he wants to be attacked. I won't disappoint him. His absurd sexist belief that women writers are too prudish to deal with sex or violence does not concern me. Any reader of either gender can perceive that Mr. Anthony is making himself ridiculous in those remarks. (Has he read Two to Conquer by Marion Zimmer Bradley? There ought to be enough sex and violence to satisfy him there.) No, what bothered me was Anthony's comment about an obscure collaboration by MZB and a pseudonymous Juanita Coulson.

I think it's irresponsible to criticize any work in full knowledge that very few readers will know what you're talking about. Fans should be able to refer back to the story and judge for themselves whether Anthony is being just. If he wants to show that Juanita Coulson has difficulty with male characterization and he believes there is evidence for this, surely he could have found it among all the writings she chose to identify as hers. I happen to be one

of the small minority that knows the story he is referring to, and I don't see that the male characters are drawn incompetently in that story at all. One could criticize most of Piers Anthony's portrayals of women in his work with far more justice.

Actually, the issue at stake is Anthony's homophobia. I respect Juanita Coulson's right to use a pseudonym, but in order for the reader to understand the motivation behind this sneak attack, it's necessary for me to reveal that this was a pro-gay piece that appeared relatively early--at a time when it still took courage to write such a thing. I commend Ms. Coulson for even pseudonymous participation in such a project. It's a significant story that needed to be written. I have the utmost contempt for Anthony's cowardice in taking a pot shot at it when it has few defenders. That's a cheap target and he could easily have gotten away with it. I am convinced that the only reason that Anthony has for leveling a broadside at the characterization in the story is that the men turned to homosexuality. Since the only other alternative was immediate suicide, I scarcely think this was an unreasonable solution, though I'm sure the Reverend Falwell would be horrified with being faced with such a choice. I am not imposing my view on Anthony, or asking him to change his mind, but I do insist that if he's going to be homophobic he should have the guts to come out of the closet and be blatant.

Anthony was quite blatantly homophobic in his resolution of Blue Adept, an otherwise fine novel. I suppose he considers his portrayal of Red scrupulously fair, non-malicious and an accurate representation of what lesbians are all about. Well, because he was being so open about it, I am free to disagree. I think it's unfair, hateful, and inaccurate. I also think that anyone who reveals this

much misogyny is in a poor position to tell women writers that they don't know how to deal with the opposite sex. Marion Zimmer Bradley in particular has done extraordinarily well by her male characters. She has made them complex individuals, so human that some of her fans would swear they're real. I doubt anyone could pay Anthony the same compliment about any of his characters. Maybe next time he wants to know how women think and feel, he should go to the experts--women. Maybe if he faces his hatreds of women and gays, the way he writes about characters of both sexes will markedly improve. Honesty always helps. Bravery helps

even more.

Linda Frankel

...I know you expected me to jump all over Piers Anthony for his remark that female authors are notoriously unable to write well about sex and violence; but I won't, partly because I think he was writing with his typewriter in cheek but mostly because I find even harder to swallow the conclusion of his statement: that "combat and sex ...are in fact much of the stuff of effective genre narrative." How many of the sf and fantasy books that come to mind if we sit down and try to list the really great works of the genre have all that much sex and violence? The Lord of the Rings and Watership Down have no sex at all; books like Dune, The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress, and The Left Hand of Darkness may have either or both, but that is certainly not what makes them memorable. Sex and violence are part of reality; they should not be omitted when relevant to a story and should be well presented when they are needed; but of all the literary subgenres, they are least important to ours, which deals with so much more than human behavior. The authors who emphasize them most are probably those who assume a readership with dulled perceptions and callused sensibilities, who consume westerns or mysteries or romances or war stories like popcorn and need to be jolted out of intellectual torpor by strong sensationalism, just as movies became more "adult" as a response to competition from television. Piers, do you really think the typical sf/fantasy reader fits into that category?

Anne Braude

...I find it incredible that at this late date Piers Anthony can still say that "there are comparatively few really successful female writers in (the SF genre)." While this was certainly the case in earlier decades, recent years have seen an amazing profusion of marvellously good female writers making their appearances. Some of the more conspicuous of these would have to include C.J. Cherryh, Tanith Lee, Octavia Butler, Joan Vinge, Marion Zimmer Bradley (whose appearance admittedly is not recent --she's been with us for a while), Jo Clayton, Diane Duane (I'm including fantasy) and many others. There can be little question at this time that women are doing their part for SF these days.

David Palter

...If Piers Anthony thinks women write convoluted family histories

without immediate impact, and men write blood-and-guts action adventure that hits you in the face, he might like Carolyn Cherryh's Pride of Chanur. I found it impossible to put down once I opened it. The heroes are felinoids (leonine), but the action is triggered by an Earth-human. There are nasty villains and sleazy cowards and politics on all levels, as well as a good inside look at what it's like to be a lion and Captain Kirk at once--Pyanfar Chanur's attitude toward her ship and crew is extremely Kirkish--and have a clan to think of, too.

Pat Mathews

...I'd seen Piers' pages in advance. I was bemused, but I can well imagine some readers were outraged. I take my cues from older and wiser heads, who advise that any review can be a useful one--just as long as the reviewer makes sure to spell your name and the name of the book correctly and so forth. I have no complaints. Reviews are always a gamble, anyway. Piers' was gentler than many.

Juanita Coulson

...Piers Anthony's piece was interesting in that he mentioned a book which I might be reading some time, Vernon. This book would interest me for the reasons which Mr. Anthony brought up; that is, the parallels between this book and Walden. I first got into Thoreau's book when I was about eleven, I think. It struck me as being a particularly significant volume because, at the time, I was living in an extremely unrealistic manner, what with seeing every normal event as a doing of magic and having a constant, uneasy feeling that the world was filled with forces which could only be described as malignant and supernatural. In short, I figured I was just a little cracked.

But upon reading Walden, I realized that my attitude wasn't all that unusual. The knowledge that someone as obviously intelligent and advanced in attitude as Henry D. Thoreau also felt these matters gave me great comfort. Walden told me that there was sanity inside every feat of fantasy.

And now, there's another books of reminiscences of the same sort, only this time of a fannish sort. I'll be certain to be on the lookout for a cheap copy of it.

David Thiry

[You won't find it cheaper than \$6 postpaid which is what you can pick it up for by writing directly to Breaking Point, Inc., P.O. Box 328, Wharton, NJ 07885. ed.]

(Terry Jeeves is one of those sensible male readers I mentioned. David Palter should realize that naming a half a dozen decent female writers does not his case make; he needs to show that a really significant portion of the genre is female, such as, say, over 25% of the topselling or highest critically rated authors. Can he make this case? David Thiry should send the six bucks for the freshly published edition of Vernon, as that is the cheap copy; I think it would be nice if some publisher picked it up for paperback republication, but we have no certainty of this. I thank Pat Mathews for the suggestion that I read Cherryh's Pride of Chanur. I mean to devote a column to female writers, and wanted to read one of hers, but did not know which one to look for. I'll pick it up, if it's on sale. And maybe someone can tell me how Cherryh's name is pronounced; that has baffled me for years. Anne Braude, being smarter than the average woman, has avoided the trap, this time. I've been trying to bring her to bay so I can put her away, but she's elusive. But I'll answer her question about what I think of readers obliquely: my success in understanding my readership can best be judged by the success of my novels. (At the moment I type this, Blue Adept is the leading genre novel on the B. Dalton list, now on the way down after peaking at number 3, outselling the Heinlein collection.) Juanita Coulson: I confess, it was I who sent the advance copy of the review to Judy-Lynn del Rey, because I teased her therein. I normally do send copies to those referenced, if I am able to reach them, and have done so for the past decade or so; that's why I am more often refuted in the same issue I appear, than are others who do not extend this courtesy.

And Linda Frankel: I have this image of girls Linda, who have charms for the counting, because of a popular song of yore, but I get the impression this one doesn't fit the mold. She chastizes me much the way

I chastize Greg Benford in THE PATCHIN REVIEW, for his condemnation of fantasy as polluting science fiction. Well, that's the way it hoists, petardwise. Linda's letter is so full of fecal matter that it is hard to do justice to it, and I'll have to settle for a couple of questions. First, was Juanita Coulson's early story a pro-gay piece? I read it a long time ago, so my memory is fogged, but I recall it as a case where there were no women to go around, so the men converted half their number to women to they could reproduce the species. That's not my notion of homosexuality. I'd

like to have Jessica Salmonson's comment--and I'd like to have Juanita Coulson's. Do I misremember the story? Was it intended as a defense of homosexuality? I took it as a daring extrapolation, which I did not criticize; but I did think the characterization of men was inadequate. That was the extent of my criticism.

Next question: what gave Linda the notion that the Red Adept, in my novel, is a lesbian? Such a characterization never occurred to me, or, as far as I know, to any other person who has read the novel. I based the description on certain aspects of the personalities of certain women I have known--and these were married women with children. Could I have described a lesbian without knowing it? If I were to take Linda's word that Red is in fact homosexual, I would have to agree that my portrayal of her is unfair. Obviously.

Do I hate women and gays? This is the first I knew of it. Am I dishonest? As far as I know, no one alive today takes honesty more seriously than I do; make of that what you will. Am I a coward? I think it is safe to say that no one who knows me well would say so. But since the questions have been raised, I will try to clarify things somewhat: I am strongly heterosexually inclined, and while I defend the right of homosexuals of either sex to pursue their own lifestyles, I would not care to indulge in it myself. I infer from her attitude that Linda herself is lesbian, and I trust that others who read her letter will understand the manner her attitudes differ from mine. For one thing, the term "homophobia" as I interpret it means hatred of man, or alternately, hatred of the same. I don't know exactly what that would mean, but suspect Linda is closer to the description than I am.)

Piers Anthony



ACROSS THE RIVER

...the possibilities inherent in Lerner's railroading piece caught my interest...Hobbit layouts...

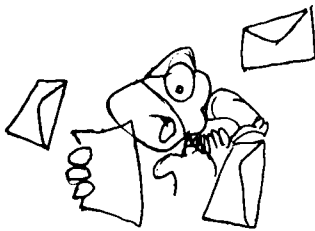
Riverworld tracks...Timescape trains
...what can't SF fen do with a
combination of model layout and
their favourite SF??

Terry Jeeves

...Fred Lerner's article on
railroads was very enjoyable. One of
my characters just built a railroad
through the Darkovan Hells in the
latest JUMEAUX, to the dismay of
some of the Comyn lords but the
delight of the starving locals. The
Hobbit-train sounds nice, with its
family cars and singles; dwarves, of
course would ride the subway.

Pat Mathews

...Fred Lerner's suggestion of a
railway system for the Shire
intrigues me, but I think Fred may
be putting the cart before the horse
(engine?). Unless the hobbits
decide to industrialize, railroads
would be unfeasible. (Consider the
metal needed.) And the hobbits are
almost militantly rural. A river-
based transportation system, perhaps
barges, would be a possibility if
the hobbits were not so hydrophobic.
Moving crops like pipeweed would be
easier and faster over water than
over land. A barge system would not
require the huge capital investment
of coal and iron (the latter would
certainly have to be imported from
the dwarves), nor technology beyond
the Shire's. I have wondered why



Tolkien did not mention a stagecoach
service. If the demand is so low or
the roads so bad that none exists,
I don't see how a railroad could fly.

Kathy Godfrey

...Fred's visualization of a
Middle-earth railway reminds me of
a cartoon I once did for APA-DuD of
a typical Tolkien rip-off crew
(dwarf, elf, wizard, man) in a
graffitied subway car, "the ancient
torture chamber of Ronan the
Barbarian." (William Ronan was a
transportation biggie in NY some
years ago.)

Mark Blackman

...a good piece of extrapolative
prose. Though I know little of
railroading and the economics of
such, I was somewhat taken aback by

the fact that there was no mention
of where the coal for the steam
engines would be drawn. I can't
recall any mention of such a fuel
source in the Ring books. Oh, I
know--maybe because a hobbit-run
train would be small and very clean,
they could stoke it with pipeweed...

David Thiry

ON THE SHOULDERS OF VANGUARD

...As for the U.S. space "effort",
politicians like Reagan are the
first to bask in the glory (of a
project started by someone else),
telephoning astronauts, saying "All
America is proud of you"--smile for
the cameras--even as they pull the
plug on space exploration. (Proxmire
has said the planets have been there
for billions of years and will still
be there years from now, so what's
the hurry? Hopefully, Prox the Lox
won't be in the Senate then.)

Mark Blackman

...I read Harry Andruschak's account
of how the space program will soon
be reduced to two men and a boy on
the same day the network news
carried the story of the final
performance of the D'Oyly Carte
Company. The two phenomena seem to
me to be related. The space program
appears to be losing out because it
doesn't pay off in immediately
measurable dollars and cents; it is
too much a pursuit of knowledge for
its own sake to satisfy the likes of
David Stockman. Likewise, there are
no cultural or aesthetic brownie
points to be gained from enjoying
Gilbert & Sullivan, as there are for
Shakespeare or Shaw; it is fun for
its own sake. Better we should all
build more and more expensive
weapons and join the Book-of-the-
Month Club in our spare time if we
want entertainment. However, since
the Reagan administration made such
a generous settlement with AT&T in
that antitrust suit, it's always
possible that Ma Bell may buy the
space programs with some of her
spare change; I wonder how Harry
will look fitted with a touch-tone
dialing system? If the worst happens,
he might consider subscribing to
the Sunday edition of the Arizona
REPUBLIC for the want ads, as
aerospace still seems to be a growth
industry out here.

Anne Braude

...The most interesting feature of
[NIEKAS 29] I found to be Harry
Andruschak's article. Harry presents
a most fascinating and informative
insider's view of what is happening
at JPL and in the field of space

science in general, and clearly
there is reason for all of us to be
concerned. It is also interesting to
observe, in this context, that the
space advocacy movement itself has
recently shown serious signs of
bifurcation into what might be
described as the pure science and
the applied science branches, which
might best be exemplified by The
Planetary Society and the L-5
Society respectively--a letter I
received from the L-5 Society
specifically mentions the possibility
that L-5 will be attacked by the
Planetary Society, and recent
Planetary publications comment
disparagingly upon some of the space
projects that L-5 has been fighting
for. So, at this bleak and
threatening moment in the struggle
for space, there is internal
dissension in addition to external
opposition by the shortsighted
budget cutters. Personally, I belong
to both of the space advocacy groups
I mentioned, and I used to think that
it would be feasible for me to
support both the pure and applied
branches of space science; now it
appears that I will have to chose
sides (and the side I pragmatically
choose is that of L-5.) Even so, it
now appears that both sides are
going to lose. I find it difficult
to be optimistic about our future in
space (or on Earth for that matter.)
I'm not giving up, though; better a
slim chance than none at all.

David Palter

...as a voting member of the
Libertarian Party, I would see NASA
completely dissolved, and the money
given back to the people who earned
it. And I figure that the space
movement would gain new force if its
funding were based on voluntary
submissions, and not the ability of
the government to coerce taxpayers
into paying for someone else's
games. It's not a popular thing to
say in an sf-oriented zine, but who
cares about being popular? What's
right is what counts, and freedom is
the only correct path. Selah.

David Thiry

...My favourite [item was] Harry
Andruschak's excellent breakdown on
what makes NASA tick...or not to
tick. Unhappily, I note that JPL
will not be giving me a conducted
tour of their facility.

Terry Jeeves

[Again, due to the length of this
issue, we will hold comments of The
Stand and run them along with an
excellent piece by Ben Indick on
same, next issue.]

PHILIP K. DICK

...there is a certain poignancy in reading Philip K. Dick's letter, the last of his that I expect to see. He has never been one of the more widely understood authors of SF, but certainly has been one of the best.

David Palter

...I can't help but be saddened by Phil Dick's letter. It is infused with all the hope and satisfaction of a man who spent a lifetime at his craft and at long last, sees his labors about to be rewarded, perhaps with both critical and commercial recognition far beyond any previous expectation. And then--

Granted, we're all vulnerable. I just wish fate could have stayed its hand a while longer, for his sake.

Regretfully--

Robert Bloch

With grief, I read of Phil Dick's stroke and subsequent death. I had met him in 1964 when he was living in East Oakland. I had run a piece in NIEKAS by Poul Anderson in which he compared Dick's Man in the High Castle with the much older Swastika Night. A mutual friend introduced us and I have him a copy of the issue and he wrote a reply which appeared in NIEKAS #8.

We slowly got to know each other, partly through Grania Davidson with whom he was living at the time, and partly because of a shared interest in a number of areas including Gilbert & Sullivan, religion, and opera. He and Grania separated shortly after that, but I had formed the habit of visiting him almost every week. He was only a half mile from an exit on the freeway on which I drove returning home to Livermore after Little Men's meetings or other activities. He was a night person and I would usually arrive after midnight and stay for an hour or two.

It was during this period that he wrote at least two other pieces for NIEKAS.

Crowds made him nervous and, while he enjoyed music and theater and film, he would not attend performances. He occasionally went to all-night movies when the theater was virtually empty and sat in the deserted balcony. One of the local classical music stations had little quizzes to which prizes were pairs of tickets to area theater events. He was very knowledgeable and when a question was particularly challenging he would phone in with his answer; but then he would give the tickets away to friends. I was very surprised when he did attend the 1964 Worldcon in Oakland.

At this time Terry Carr was working at either Ace or Scott Meredith and still publishing his fanzine, and started corresponding with Phil. I believe they met on a western trip Terry made and soon Phil started writing for Terry's zine too.

After I moved east, NIEKAS became irregular and eventually ceased publication. That point of mutual interest having dissolved our correspondence became erratic; also Phil moved several times. When I

returned for the 1968 Worldcon in Oakland he had moved north to Marin county and I was not able to get up there to visit.

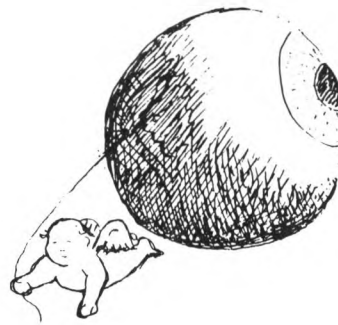
About a year after reviving NIEKAS, I was able to find a current address for Phil and resumed contact. You have seen some of the results in the past few NIEKU.

At Lunacon this year they had a panel in memory of Phil. One of the speakers mentioned that Phil had seen a rough cut of BLADE RUNNER, the movie based on his novel Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?, and was very satisfied with the results. It is ironic that he passed away just as he was beginning to reap the financial rewards of his Hollywood sale. I am glad to hear he was happy with the film and trust that it will be a fitting memorial to the man.

The Library of Congress has recorded on talking books only his novel Valis. Private Agencies for the blind have, however, recorded at least two of his other books (not to mention two of his best) Eye in the Sky and Man in the High Castle. These are available from the Northwest Foundation in Seattle.

Ed Meskys





Mike Bastraw
Dainis Bisenieks
Anne Braude
Don D'Amassa
Sherwood C. Frazier
Pat Mathews
Joyce Mott
Nan C.L. Scott
Margaret Shepard



R.I.P.
REISS SMART 1981

CHILDREN OF THE NIGHT, Michael Kring, Leisure Books, 1981, 192 pp., \$1.95

This is the second in the "Space Mavericks" series, a fairly routine space opera set in the familiar near feudal interstellar society that seems to be the standard for such stories. Fripp Enos and Kohn Tarkosz are enroute to a very inhospitable planet in the Vespers system, which is dominated by a totalitarian ruler. While staying temporarily within the area of control of Haiys, the dictator, they become involved with a race of genetically altered humans, the Children of the Night, bred to work the mines.

Revolution is brewing, as the miners wish to overthrow the tyrant, although there is considerable doubt as to the beneficence of their own choice. Throw in a handful of subplots, including an ancient starship found in one of the mineral veins, a ship somehow linked to the mysterious ring which Enos acquired in the first book of the series, and which reveals itself to have strange powers.

As space operas go, this really isn't bad, although it doesn't stand very well without its prequel. Kring is unambitious about his plot, but the narrative flows reasonably well, if somewhat predicably. I can't say I'm holding my breath waiting for the third adventure, but neither am I dreading it in advance.

dd

BLUE ADEPT, Piers Anthony, Ballantine, 1981, \$10.95

The sequel to SPLIT INFINITY is out, and proves to be the second volume of a trilogy, perhaps the hardest sort of book to bring off, as its beginning and end must be subordinated to those of the sequence of the whole. This tends to result in the book-length equivalent of a sentence ending with a comma. Anthony pretty well avoids that trap, as BLUE ADEPT, like its predecessor, has two other structural principles going for it besides the usual story-line sequence. One is the alternation of science fiction and fantasy episodes as Stile, the hero, moves between the world of Proton, in which he is a serf and master Gamesman, and its alternate Phaze, in which he is a powerful magician. The conclusion of the last book left him with challenges in both worlds: in Phaze, to win the Lady Blue, widow of his murdered alternate self; in Proton, to compete in the annual Tourney, in which the prize is Proton Citizenship with its unlimited power and wealth; and in both, to discover and destroy

the enemy who is trying to kill him. The other structural device is that of a series of contests -- Tourney Games in Proton, magical combat in Phaze -- which allows for a series of ascending climaxes, satisfying the reader's desire for successful resolutions while keeping the conclusion of the main story line in abeyance. At the end of the book, Stile has won his love and destroyed his enemy, but more unanswered questions have arisen: who has been manipulating both Stile and his would-be murderer, and what is the impending crisis in the affairs of Phaze, in which the Foreordained, the player of the Platinum Flute, will play a savior's role?

The virtues of this book are much the same as those of SPLIT INFINITY: interesting and likeable characters, exciting action, good plotting, and the development of an intricate and well-conceived secondary world -- two worlds, in fact. Highly recommended.

(Note: I have just received from Ballantine a notice of the hardcover publication, at \$13.50, of the concluding volume of the trilogy, JUXTAPOSITION. Included is a review which gives away most of the plot -- a crime which I will avoid committing.)

ajb

NO FRILLS SCIENCE FICTION, (author unidentified), Jove, 1981, \$1.50

It's rather hard to believe it took an hour to read this oversized pamphlet. An attempt at a serious review would be an abject folly but it comes across like a turned-down STAR TREK script. A longer comment would be larger than the book. I really should sign this review No Name but I can't stoop to that.

mms

EXPANDED UNIVERSE, Robert A. Heinlein, Ace, 1980, 582 pp., \$3.50

Parts of this book were excerpted in DESTINIES, which I reviewed for the Winter, 1980 SFR. The review turned into a wrangle over Spider Robinson's adulatory, highly defensive, answer to Heinlein's critics; what Heinlein himself had to say was reserved for a later time. This is the time.

So. Is Heinlein an infallible god? No, but he is a human being, born in a time long gone, who has lived through more cultural changes than most of us have lived through presidents. It shows; more later.

I cannot agree with him on military matters, even knowing that he has

military training and I have none. He seems to be committing the same fault he accuses other old soldiers of: preparing for the next war with the last war's weapons. Or civil defense. When he suggests finding a hideout fifty miles from town, the distance seems pitifully small. When he suggests moving to a small town, I wonder how long he expects us to live after moving. Can both spouses find a job at a living wage? Are the schools any good? Have the kids anything to do but drink and get into trouble?

Because we could have been living in fear of the next war for THIRTY-SIX YEARS, and some of us have. That's not preparation; that's a lifetime. Our latest wars have followed a totally different pattern, and it's the Poor Bloody Infantry who bore the brunt of it. Armageddon? The last war looked more like WWI's man-killing trenches, in which an entire generation was devastated. Read the poets of the era; Robert Graves is still alive.

Patriotism. Who can disagree with him on that? It is a necessity of collective life, or the collective is dead. But when our boys were fleeing en masse from being conscripted for what I still say was a senseless foreign adventure that did us as a nation no good, Heinlein does not improve matters by saying that they lacked patriotism. Because then they look at what they are being asked to do, and think, "So, this is patriotism, is it? In that case, he's right; I want no more of it." This same kid would certainly enlist if the enemy were at the gates -- the vets I've met are cynical, not suicidal -- but he'd first have to be brought to believe it.

But these are disagreements of tactics, not disagreements on ultimates. Ultimately, Heinlein makes a good deal of sense. His indictments of the public schools, for example. If I didn't think there was a renewed trend toward the drive for competence, it would be material for despair indeed. However, both of my daughters are bright, gifted, and/or talented; I daily thank God they are in today's schools and not of those thirty years ago, where they would have been in a hellishly hostile environment. There is hope.

His predictions are not only fascinating, but so far have made total good sense. So he blew the one about life on Mars through wishful thinking. Who among us wouldn't have?

The cultural gap shows in some very strange ways; let me describe one in which he is firmly on the side of today's mores, but in the manner of his times, and most unpredictably.

The scenario is an election year in which a black woman, once an actress, picked to balance the ticket, is thrown into the presidency by the death of her successor. Nobody thinks she's qualified to hold the office; after all, it's well-known that actors in politics are terminal lightweights. She's in an extremely high level meeting in which one of her advisors, who had been verbally patting her on the head in a caricature of sexist condescension, suddenly explodes in a fit of the most crudely expressed racial bigotry at the top of his lungs.

And the others restrain him and behave as if he had offered her a deliberate and calculated insult -- with anger, extreme anger.

This rings very strangely to a modern ear. Rerunning the scenario to the point where they restrain him, what do they do? Apologize, with deep shame, and say "Old Joe must have popped his cork." Because in today's world, such behavior in that context could only mean that Old Joe really had popped his cork! It would be an exact analog to the climactic scene in "The Roads Must Roll", where the trade-school technician suddenly starts screaming about "all you college boys in your fancy little hats."

In today's world, Old Joe might well hold the sentiments he does, and express them in safe places. Not in public in a business context where anything important was at stake.

Today, Old Joe would simply talk earnestly about "unqualified people".

Incidentally, I think I recognize Heinlein's model for Madame President and I sincerely hope he sent Miss Horne a copy of the book. I think she'd be very amused by some of the things he put in her mouth, as well as the fact that an author in his eighties sees her as young and beautiful. (Right on, Robert!)

Some of the comments she makes and sentiments she expresses are simply out of character. I don't mean the fact that she's plainly a political and economic Old Right believer; stranger things can happen. Or even that she does not tie these beliefs to a buttoned-up personal style halfway between Phyllis Schaflay and Thomas Sowell; it is always possible to be miles ahead of whatever else is going your way. But when she climbs all over a self-styled black leader for making the claim when he's too light-skinned to back it up -- does Heinlein really understand the once-prevalent caste system he's invoking there or its modern

inversion? The man has proved himself by his activism; she's the one who'd be dumped on, and as an "Aunt Tom", which would be a very easy assumption for the uninformed to make. If he's trying to have her say that such things no longer matter, which I think he is, and again, right on!, he'd better listen to how she would really phrase it. It sounds like Robert Heinlein coming out of the lady's mouth, and about as plausible as me trying to put words in the mouth of a submarine captain.

You only bother to debate either those you love, or those whose ideas you want to bury six feet under, fast. For all the slicing out today, strangely enough, this is a love letter to that crochety old man and 90% prophet, God bless you. But send a copy of your book to the lady, please, Admiral?

pm

MOONBLAZE, Milan Chiba, Leisure Books, 1981, 284 pp., \$2.95

In appearance, this is a disaster novel. An unknown power has launched a laser satellite into orbit, a device capable of emitting a beam so diffuse and powerful that it lights up the sky over the entire North American continent every night, blinding any who venture out of doors without protective goggles. At the same time, it is destroying crops and threatening the veritable existence of the United States.

That's the appearance, but except in the most superficial way, that is not the substance. The novel confines its focus to the interface between the government and the press corps, particularly the White House press corps and the military. From the outset, government agencies play down the existence of the satellite, then squabble over the proper means of dealing with it. Political considerations are given precedence over life and death, economic decisions dictate methods and timing. It is even apparent eventually that the government knows the identity of the hostile nation but is suppressing the knowledge for political reasons.

Chiba's portrayal is probably essentially accurate in its implication about the objectivity and selflessness of public officials. The properties of the mystery satellite strike me as more than slightly plausible, but they are a plot device rather than the central theme. This is not a melodramatic novel, particularly, and the hardships and disasters all occur offstage. It's for fans of the political thriller rather than the reader of science

fiction, and a fair but very forgettable example of either genre.
dd

CUJO, Stephen King, Viking Press

An odd book, but all of his are. Stephen seems to be getting out of the realm of the unnatural and into the Alfred Hitchcock-type fear stories. Unfortunately he doesn't quite come up to Hitchcock yet. Fair, but not up to his usual standards.

mms

THE RING OF ALLAIRE, Susan Dexter, Ballantine, \$2.50

Not bad at all. A fantasy quest with magicians, a sleeping princess, and a "mere apprentice" in charge of it all. The book had a VERY GOOD twist in it not totally expected. Delightful.

mms

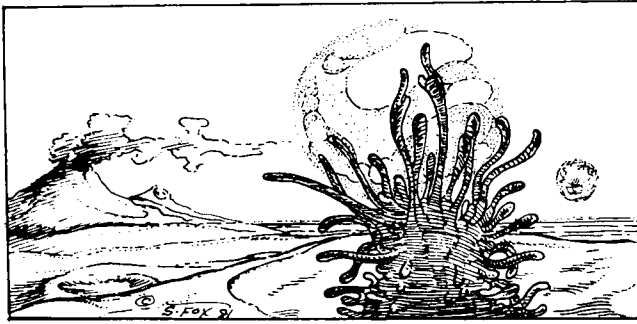
SOUL-SINGER OF TYRNOS, Ardath Mayhar, Atheneum, 1981, \$9.95

In the land of Tyrnos, there is no need for conventional military and civil enforcement of law, for Tyrnos has its Singers, who can look at any living creature and sing its soul, which is then projected as a visible pattern for all to see. One Singer in each generation is chosen by the gods for some great and terrible task; and this novel tells of one such, the newest and youngest graduate of the School for Singers, who must root out corruption in the very heart of the realm. She is aided by gods and godlike beings as well as by Lisaux, a brave warrior whom she rescues from an alien snare, and the Winter Beast, a magical and powerful creature who rescues her. This is more a quest-story, with emphasis on enduring hardship and acquiring wisdom, than the traditional action-orientated sword and sorcery tale, though there are scenes of violence. Recommended to fantasy fans, especially lovers of Norton's Witch World stories, to which SOUL-SINGER OF TYRNOS bears a strong family resemblance.

ajb

TITAN'S DAUGHTER, James Blish, Avon Books, 1981, 143 pp., \$1.95 (reprint of 1961 Berkley Book)

This was not one of the late James Blish's more significant novels, but it still compares favorably with much that is published new each year. Sena is, apparently, a tetraploid mutant, artificially induced to further human evolution. She is one of many such



mutants, larger in stature than normal diploid humans, but feared by the majority because of their physical superiority.

Victims of prejudice throughout their lives, the tetras are further divided internally, chiefly because of the meglomaniac plotting of one of their own number, a brilliant but warped man who sees destiny in terms of the supplanting of the human race with his own descendants. To this end, he is willing to commit murder, frame his friends, imprison Sena, and cause a major conflict among the mutants themselves.

The novel is predictable throughout, with flat characterization and grossly oversimplified situations. That may be part of its charm, however, for the issues are presented in clear cut terms, and there is never any doubt as to the leanings of the author. Fun, but awfully slight.

dd

PLANET OF THE DAMNED, Harry Harrison, Tor Books, 1981, 250 pp., \$2.50 (reprint of 1962 Bantam Book)

It has been almost twenty years since I first read this novel, and I must say it ages well. Brion Brandd is a survivor, a virtual superman, winner of a planet wide elimination contest that draws upon all of his mental and physical resources. He is recruited for an emergency mission to the planet Dis, whose barbaric rulers are threatening to launch nuclear missiles at a neighboring peaceful world. Brandd's mission is to stop the confrontation before it is necessary to wipe out the entire population of Dis in order to safeguard the other population.

Easier said than done. The Disans seem to have mutated into two separate forms, one still recognizably human, the other totally devoid of emotions. His attempts to open a dialogue result in his near

murder at the hands of the mageter, the Discan ruling class. As the final days tick off, he begins to despair of saving the situation, even though the reader is certain throughout that he will somehow save the day.

In a sense, this is a pretty simpleminded story. There is virtually nothing in the way of subplot, and the ultimate resolution is uncertain only in detail, not in overall terms. We know Brandd will emerge triumphant. The mageter are as repellent a bunch as one could imagine, and we experience little regret as they are variously shot, stabbed, or otherwise maimed. One hesitates to call it good, clean fun, but nonetheless the novel does reflect times that seemed simpler, even though they were not. As such, it is fun to escape back to them once in a while, and Harrison provides a pretty good route.

dd

THE BEST OF ALL POSSIBLE WORLDS, Spider Robinson (with some help from his friends), Ace, 1980, \$2.25

Spider is the editor of this collection. It was a real treat to read thru his magnificent "obsession". He made real a dream of publishing some of his favorite stories and their author's favorite stories and I must confess that I was really pleased to have discovered this book. A good deal of these stories were new to me (that's the fun part), but some came back to me like the smell of good chocolate. "The Man Who Traveled in Elephants" was one such. It is quite safe to say that for me, Spider joins a list of writers who would have to go on in an impossible direction to disappoint me -- it may happen but I seriously doubt it. "Duel Scene" from THE PRINCESS BRIDE also brought back great memories and "Need" was about people you'd find hiding out at Callahan's on a windy night. Great

SOMEONE IN THE HOUSE, Barbara Michaels, Dodd, Mead, 1981, \$10.95

The newest Barbara Michaels is, like the majority of the titles published under that pseudonym, a superior haunted-house Gothic. The house is an ancient English manor house, Greyhaven, which has been transplanted stone by stone to rural Pennsylvania by an American robber baron of the 1920's; the deal included the family crypt and its residents. The heroine, Anne (good choice, that), is a college English teacher spending the summer there to write a textbook with her friend Kevin, whose newly-rich parents have just purchased the place. Once the supernatural manifestations start, a variety of people try to investigate them, with a variety of approaches: Kevin's aunt, a spiritualist; her admirer, an amateur parapsychologist; the local clergyman, who urges exorcism; and Anne herself, everyone else's Watson. The horror scenes are genuinely scary by my standards (of course, I have a very low fear threshold), the plotting suspenseful, and the solution authentically surprising. Anne is a truly liberated heroine, and there is no conventional romantic resolution. The author has done this before, in her Elizabeth Peters avatar, with an unusual aftermath for the genre: the heroine of BORROWER OF THE NIGHT was recycled in STREET OF THE FIVE MOONS, in which the hero was the likeable lesser villain of THE CAMELOT CAPER. I hope this means that we will see Anne again; I liked her very much. Michaels/Peters's heroines are far from the naive idiots traditional in the Had-I-But-Known school (or else their stupidity is worked into the plot, as in THE WIZARD'S DAUGHTER, as a necessary character flaw), and her plots feature suspense and ingenuity rather than one FRISSEON of horror after another. I can recommend this book even to readers normally disdainful of the Gothic.

ajb

THE VAMPIRE TAPESTRY, Suzy McKee Charnas, Pocket Books, 1981, 294 pp., \$2.75

The vampire has enjoyed a renaissance in fiction lately, and not only in his conventional role as the black caped personification of lust and death. Writers within the genre and from without have wrung various changes with his image, ranging from making him a detective in several novels by Fred Saberhagen, through the historical novels of Chelsea

Quinn Yarbro, to the tragic figure presented by Anne Rice in INTERVIEW WITH A VAMPIRE. Suzy McKee Charnas has provided another variation in this novel, which is in form actually five shorter pieces closely linked chronologically.

Dr. Edward Weyland is a vampire, to be sure, and there is no doubt that he has killed innocent people in the support of his habit, although generally he seeks to avoid the notoriety that killings would lead to and drinks only sparingly. Neither is he a supernatural entity but rather an exceedingly long lived natural predator, perhaps only one of his kind. "I am not a communicable disease," he asserts; his victims do not become vampires in turn. In many ways, the novel is as much science fiction as supernatural, as Charnas provides at least the trappings of logic to explain each of his attributes.

It is also an exceedingly well done book, particularly the central section, "The Unicorn Tapestry". Weyland experiences setbacks, is at one point held captive by cultists, undergoes psychoanalysis, and ultimately is revealed as at least a partially sympathetic character. The unravelling of his personality is a complex and richly rewarding experience.

dd

THE FIRELINGS, Carol Kendall,
Atheneum, 252 pp., \$10.95

Readers who loved Carol Kendall's THE GAMMAGE CUP and THE WHISPER OF GLOCKEN have had to wait a long time for her new fantasy THE FIRELINGS (discussed while still in progress as "the volcano book," in an interview in NIEKAS 21); but while they may be surprised by some differences from her earlier books, they will almost certainly NOT be disappointed.

Those who hope to find more of what delighted them in the Minnypins fantasies will be pleased that certain familiar elements are here: once again, we have little people in an enclosed, carefully particularized society (complete with a satisfying detailed two-page map), people facing both an external threat and internal resistance to change (like Walt Kelly's Pogo, Mrs. Kendall's people might well say, "We have met the enemy, and he is us"). But while the plot follows a pattern we have seen before (small intrepid band of villagers with more flexible and inquiring minds leads the society out of danger), this is no formula book.

Much darker and more intense than

anything Mrs. Kendall has written before, THE FIRELINGS sets us down on the slope of a volcano and invites us to look at half-understood, half-forgotten superstition and folklore, indeed perhaps at religion, and to understand what unexamined acceptance of belief can lead us to, especially if (and this is familiar from THE GAMMAGE CUP) we are afraid of the opinions of our neighbors or of being different.

In the case of THE FIRELINGS, fear and superstition can lead to scapegoating and even human sacrifice ("But Overshot shouted above them all. 'It's only one small life for all your lives!'"). When Jacky-obbie and Life and Hulin Blue are in hiding, their struggles are much more intense than those of the Outlaws in THE GAMMAGE CUP, because we know that theirs is truly a life-or-death situation. And yet Mrs. Kendall has not given us an easy out by over-simplifying her villains; the frightened villagers who react as the volcano begins to wake again and earthquakes roll beneath their feet in vivid and powerful scenes might well be refugees from any city where disaster -- natural or man made in war -- has torn the fabric of life apart. They might be us.

There is less sense of play here than in Mrs. Kendall's earlier fantasies, but it still surfaces occasionally with character idiosyncracies and interaction among her heroes, who are anything but heroic in a traditional sense. It is present too in her inventive use of language, her nomenclature has always been highly individual and remains so; either you will like it or you will not. But this time she has gone beyond it to suggest a strange and new society which has grown up different from ours, so that we have DAR and DOMMA as father and mother (or matron) and DAR-DOMMAS as parents, for instance: just enough new terms to emphasize the uniqueness of the Firelings' world but few enough that we can assimilate them quickly as we read.

Mrs. Kendall has always been able to produce excitement and adventure and action; here they reach a new pitch of intensity and finally in an epilogue a stunning eucastrophe that may bring tears to the readers' eyes. THE FIRELINGS has been well worth the long wait.

ncls

ARTHUR C. CLARKE'S MYSTERIOUS WORLD,
A&W Publishers, Inc., 1980, hc

Text by A.C. Clarke, Simon Welfare,
and John Fairly. Discusses the last
mysteries of our known world from the

Yeti to Stonehenge in as logical a manner as possible. Clarke's comments come at the end of each section and are not conclusions but discussions of logical possibilities. He and the other two writers bring these "incredible items" back to the world of the credible. Very interesting.

mms

THE HOMEWARD BOUNDERS, Diana Wynne Jones,
Greenwillow Books, 1981, \$8.95

Like the author's earlier books, this one mixes science fiction, fantasy, and myth; but this time a new element is added -- war gaming. Jamie, a twelve-year-old boy in Victorian England, stumbles upon THEM, aliens who are playing a game with our world as the board and us as pieces. When THEY catch him, he is discarded to the Boundaries -- fated to wander from world to world, moved on whenever there is a chance that he might enter play, but promised that if he can find his home again, he can stay. Some of the Homeward Bounders he meets have surrendered, like the Flying Dutchman and the Wandering Jew, to madness or despair; but Jamie is fired by a fierce determination to get home and a bitter hatred of THEM, which is intensified when he meets the man chained to the rock, whom even THEY seem to fear. He joins forces with Helen, who has paranormal



abilities, and Joris the demon hunter, who share his feelings. After numerous perils -- and no few quarrels -- they land in our own world, where they meet Adam, who knows all about war gaming. Once Konstam, Joris's master, shows up, they prepare to reenter play with a vengeance (literally). The Homeward Bounders gather to take on THEM at THEIR own game, resulting in a victory with a final ironic twist.

Plenty of action, humor, and effective characterization -- very highly recommended.

ajb

GILA!, Les Simons, Signet Books, 1981, 166 pp., \$1.95

I have confessed on more than one occasion to a fondness for monsters. I watch for all of those horrible films that give science fiction such a bad name in some quarters, slimy creatures, giant ants, octopii, rats, snakes, spiders, preying mantises, etc. So I was looking forward somewhat guiltily to this novel as well.

I was disappointed. Oh, there are any number of monstrous events, with giant gila monsters (mutated as the result of atomic testing of course) attacking people, towns, and eventually cities. The surprise ending is even stolen (perhaps unknowingly) from the film GORG0. As each sequence unravels, the reader can almost see the events taking place on a twelve inch television screen.

So why was I disappointed? Simply because the novel is nothing more than the novelization of a movie not yet made. Simons captures the movie ambience so well that it never seems to be a real novel. The characters are introduced almost exclusively in order to be gobbled up, and the heroine has about as much reality as Little Orphan Annie. There's no suspense where there is no empathy, and a novel of this nature cannot succeed if there's no suspense.

dd

LILITH: A SNAKE IN THE GRASS, Jack L. Chalker, Ballantine, \$2.50

The book started with an interesting concept. It's the first volume of The Four Lords of the Diamond and deals with a world where an organism invades everything on it. The world is part of a prison colony of 3 other planets. It's hard to say enough about the book without giving away the plot. The major character is an agent from earth sent to the diamond

in four other bodies to deal with the possibilities of alien invasion. Once on the colonies of the diamond, the body of Cal Tremon is invaded by Warden organisms which will kill the host if he ever leaves -- thus four bodies for four worlds.

The story got a bit tedious at times but did seem to hold together thru the first volume of the series. It's OK but no raves yet.

mms

MORE WANDERING STARS: AN ANTHOLOGY OF JEWISH FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION, ed. Jack Dann. Doubleday, 1981, \$10.95

I don't know if anyone has ever done a statistical study on how many successful authors, in all fields of literature, are Jewish; but the proportion ought to be pretty high, which is fitting enough for the People of the Book. It is the Hebraic strain in western culture that has given it its emphasis on the written word, on authority and law, just as it is the Hellenic strain from which derive the values of rhetoric (in the widest and least pejorative sense), or democracy, and of political questioning and debate. This cultural divergence may arise from nothing more than the fact the the peoples of the Fertile Crescent had relatively imperishable writing materials -- stone and clay and metal tablets -- while the Greeks used papyrus, which is by comparison almost as ephemeral as the spoken word. Whatever the reason, Jews seem to take to writing like a duck to water -- or a chicken to soup.

I haven't read WANDERING STARS, the anthology to which this is a sequel (it was mentioned more than once in the Religion & SF discussion), so I can't compare the two; this one will have to stand or fall on its own merits. The theme of the book might seem at first glance to be limiting, but the diversity of the contents belies this. The stories range from the farcical (Woody Allen's "The Scrolls") to the horrifying (Jack Dann's "Camps"); from a space-entrepreneur story like Joe Haldeman's "The Mazel Tov Revolution," in which the protagonists's Jewishness is more or less incidental to the plot, to Barry Malzberg's "Leviticus: In the Ark," a terrifying view of what Judaic ritual might become in the far future; from pure myth (Howard Schwartz's "The Celestial Orchestra") to a Middle East almost indistinguishable from the present (Hugh Nissenson's "Forcing the End"). Two stories, Malzberg's "Isaiah" and Gardner Dozois's "Disciples," deal with the

same theme, the coming of the Messiah, but they are as different as can be. The most memorable are Phyllis Gotlieb's "Tauf Aleph," about the last Jew in the universe, his robot golem, and some aliens who want to be Jews; Harlan Ellison's "Mom," the tale of a man haunted by the ghost of a Jewish mother -- talk about your horror stories! -- with an ending nobody but Harlan would have DARED to try; and Cynthia Ozick's haunting "The Pagan Rabbi," which I can't possibly do justice to in a summary. Oddly enough, since Judaism is considered, rightly or wrongly, a bastion of male chavinism, it is the two women contributors, Gotlieb and Ozick, who provide the most searching considerations of the essence of what it means to be a Jew. Even more oddly, there is no story by Isaac Asimov, whose sole story with a Jewish theme appeared in the earlier anthology; he does, however supply one of his terminally coy introductions, demonstrating that the Old Testament is actually a compendium of sf and fantasy. MORE WANDERING STARS will of course be of special interest to the sf & religion MAVENS among us; considered purely as sf and fantasy fiction, I'd call it above average.

ajb

STEPHEN KING'S DANSE MACABRE, Stephen King, Everest House, \$13.95

Stephen King has made a career from literally trying to scare the hell out of us. Through a string of novels such as CARRIE, THE SHINING, FIRESTARTER, and CUJO, he has gone from high school English teacher to best selling novelist in the genre of horror and the supernatural. Now in this work he tries to explain and define what horror is and why we want to read and view it as entertainment.

King explains horror through the metaphor of a locked door which, because of its forbidden nature, is one we naturally feel some strange desire to open. This, he says, is because "the human imagination is not content with locked doors." With his novels, King has unlocked that door for us many times before and, in his words, "tried to push us through it." In DANSE MACABRE he tells us why he (as well as others before him) has done it and why, just maybe, we often want him to do it.

DANSE MACABRE is not a stuffy lecture on the machinery of fear. It is that quiet reasoning voice that convinces us that we actually want not only to open the door, but to touch whatever may be behind it.

The book is not a complete history of

the genre, although King often touches upon the field's grand masters and dames and their works, such as Henry James's *TURN OF THE SCREW*, Bram Stoker's *DRACULA*, and Mary Shelley's *FRANKENSTEIN*. Instead he tries to give us a view of the present field, from 1950 to 1980, as related to some of those earlier classics.

King says there are three main incarnations in horror, *The Thing Without a Name*, *The Vampire*, and *The Werewolf*. These three represent what he calls the "lusher concepts of evil." These are the basic forms in which most horror takes shape, according to King.

King presents the book as what he says is an "informal overview of where the horror genre has been over the last thirty years." What he has written are not lectures, but a series of talks on the types of books and movies that have succeeded in frightening us, and others which have failed and why.

In his chapter "The Modern American Horror Movie -- Text and Subtext," he deals with the horror movie as art, with films such as *PSYCHO* and *THE EXORCIST*, and the horror movie as junk food with such films as *THE HORROR OF PARTY BEACH* and *WEREWOLF IN A GIRLS' DORMITORY*. The difference, King states, between bad movies and good is talent, and the inventive utilization of that talent.

In addition to the two lengthy chapters on the horror movie, King has listed in an appendix what he considers the best films of the past thirty years and his personal favorites among those. He does the same with books for that time period.

His definition of horror film in *DANSE MACABRE* is as follows: "The horror film is an invitation to indulge in deviant, antisocial behavior by proxy -- to commit gratuitous acts of violence, indulge our puerile dreams of power, to give in to our most craven fears."

This definition brings one to wonder what kind of people King thinks we are. If the horror film gives us opportunity to vent these "deviant" feelings, are we any different from the monsters we read about and watch? King's statement is a bit strong, but the question as to why we do watch these films and read these books remains. It is certainly not one easily answered.

The larger section of *DANSE MACABRE* is dedicated to exploring horror in fictional literature, some of which is very questionable as to whether it is literature. This is where King is at his best -- other than when he is writing fiction. His background in literature and the English language comes through at this point. His chapters and ideas on the subject become clearer and more defined.

DANSE MACABRE is indeed a waltz with the otherside of the human imagination. Although his understanding of why we are drawn to horror as a means of escape is at times a bit faulty, his attempt at defining the genre and delineating between good and bad horror is excellent. He may not always know why we want to read and view it, but he does know how it should be written.

jm

THE JONAH, James Herbert, Signet Books, 1981, 251 pp., \$2.95

This is, I believe, the eighth novel of James Herbert's to appear in this country. With one exception, they have all been horror novels, although in at least some cases the horror is derived from science fictional rather than supernatural sources. Herbert's approach has been and continues to be a series of increasingly violent incidents, leading to a conclusive struggle. It's basically a formula story, but a very successful formula for Herbert and others.

This novel is no exception, although this time Herbert seems to have pulled his punches somewhat. The incidents are more restrained, less overtly horrifying, suggesting more than they show. Jim Kelso is an orphan whose origin was in some way repugnant. As an adult, he joins the

police force where he functions as a dedicated and successful undercover agent, but he is disliked, perhaps feared, by his fellow officers because of the frequency of serious -- often fatal -- accidents to those who work with him. His last lover died under peculiar circumstances as well.

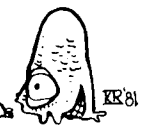
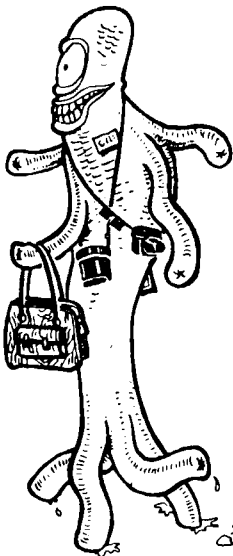
When Kelso falls in love, we know what has colored his life is finally revealed in a conclusion that is, however, anticlimactic and in some ways almost funny, destroying the momentum of the novel. It's still a competent horror novel, generally well written, but seems to lack the sense of urgent pacing that marked many of his other books.

dd

THE MEDUSA AND THE SNAIL: MORE NOTES OF A BIOLOGY WATCHER, Lewis Thomas, Bantam, 1979, \$2.95

The common or garden reader tends to assume that all writing about science resembles technical writing or textbook prose -- dry, fact-orientated, and on the whole dull. When, therefore, someone comes along who can write about scientific subjects with wit, poetry, and unfettered imagination -- a Carl Sagan, a Loren Eiseley, a Lew Thomas -- he is hailed with cries of glee and showered with literary awards. And deservedly so. Science, which is reshaping our world and redefining our future, has been locked up in the laboratory too long, accessible to the c. or g. reader only in the slightly disreputable form of science fiction. And we, the sf readers, are all too ready to close the door against the mundanes ourselves. If the human race is going to survive, popular awareness of science is somehow going to have to rise above the present level of ignorance tempered by fear.

THE MEDUSA AND THE SNAIL is a collection of essays, serious and comic, about science, medicine, language, imagination, evolution, knowledge, and anything else that comes to the author's mind. They are filled with constant amazement, delight, challenge, and wisdom; Thomas is a connoisseur of what Christopher Morley called "the unplumbed preposterousness of life," including warts, Transcendental Metaworry, and the coming invasion of New York City by mutant goldfish with



tiny little feet. In a more serious mood, he discusses death, the current American preoccupation with health and hygiene, and a proposed radical revision of the premedical curriculum to emphasize the liberal arts. I am ashamed to say that I passed this book up all the time it was on the best-seller list, and only got hold of it after strong persuasion by Ed. Having devoured the library copy in one gulp, I promptly went out and bought it in paperback (also Thomas's previous anthology, *THE LIVES OF A CELL*). Go thou and do likewise.

ajb

THE GRAND TOUR, Ron Miller & William K. Hartmann, Workman Publishing, 1981, 192 pp., \$19.95 hc, \$9.95 pb

This appears to be one of the best buys in astronomical art around. From the well-conceived front cover to the parting shots of comets, this is first class art and layout. Ron Miller is responsible for the art, William K. Hartmann, the text, and NASA some outstanding photography.

I found it very interesting that they decided to conduct this tour by size of planet or moon rather than by proximity to the sun which is traditional. It is the authors' feelings that the traditional way of presenting such an excursion is a "chaotic hodgepodge". This they say occurs because "scenery is controlled by the evolutionary state of a world, and evolutionary state is controlled largely by size". Hence the first stop is Jupiter, the largest and most massive planet. Next is Saturn and so on.... The authors say "this approach allows us to progress from energetic, massive, active, evolved worlds to dormant, small, primitive worlds with empty craters that seem to echo with the explosions of meteorite impacts billions of years old".

There is, according to Miller and Hartmann, a second advantage to touring our solar system in this manner and that becomes clear by just thumbing through the book. Our solar system does not consist of just nine planets and a number of insignificant moons. There are twenty-five worlds that are at least a thousand kilometers in diameter, of which 18 are bigger than Pluto. It is very easy to see that each of these worlds has its own terms that we must learn to deal with. Voyager has given us a new perspective with which to view our solar system. They have tried to organize this new perspective from an artist-scientist point of view.

I have one complaint about the book that I feel I must say something about. The major energy source and

the most massive object of our solar system is not mentioned: the sun. In fact, the sun is 745 times the mass of the rest of the solar system put together, at almost 900,000 miles across it is a rather significant part of our solar system.

I would very much like to have seen Mr. Miller's renderings of that giant gas ball. I do feel that no tour of a solar system is complete without a mention of the star that makes it all possible.

I must still recommend this book very highly, William K. Hartmann is as able a writer as Ron Miller is an artist. Mr. Miller commands some pretty hefty prices for his art so for those of us who cannot afford to buy a Miller original this book might help to fill the void.

scf

THE SUNSET WARRIOR, SHALLOWS OF NIGHT, DAI-SAN, Eric Van Lustbader, Berkley Books, \$2.50 each

We seem to be coming into a time of "sets of books"! This trilogy held up thru all three books even though it is a very strange blend of western and oriental culture. It's also a very interesting play between an underground culture and arctic conditions after a WWII-type confrontation. The author has managed to take a little warrior/eastern philosophy plus a subterranean existence mixture to write a revelation of "there's still an outside", then add some magic and evil forces and still come up with an acceptable set of stories that keep you reading through to the end -- or is it the beginning? I realize that last comment is a bit odd but so is the trilogy, like going from *SHOGUN* to *ICE STATION ZEBRA* to *THE LORD OF THE RINGS*. Definitely interesting.

mms

THE LOST AND THE LURKING, Manly Wade Wellman, Doubleday, 1981, 179 pp., \$10.95

I believe this is Wellman's third novel about the wandering minstrel and foe of the supernatural, Silver John. Silver John is a sort of nexus point for good magic, a man whose glib tongue, ready songs and ready fists, and arcane knowledge result in his involvement with various menaces from the dark side of reality. In this latest, he is recruited by the federal government to investigate a small town where communications are primitive and the populace seems to have crawled into a hole and drawn the hole in upon themselves.



It isn't long before John realizes that devil worship has taken hold of the entire village, channeled through the domineering mistress, Tiphaine, and augmented by various magical charms. John has charms of his own, however, and his evident power lead the satanists to seek his recruitment rather than his destruction. From that point, the plot unravels in fairly predictable fashion.

This really isn't a horror novel, though its basis is the supernatural. Very little of what takes place could not be explained away in rational terms. Wellman keeps everything on a very low key, understated fashion, narrating in dialect a folksy story. For this reader, there was basically an average short story here, not a full novel. Silver John was not for me a fascinating enough character to carry this story on his own, and the story itself was too slight to matter.

dd

The third Silver John novel is worse than the other two, which were not as good as the short stories. This time out, John is involved with a witch cult with overtones of ritual magic, international politics, and worship of the Earth-Mother. It never quite comes together. John is a wandering minstrel of the Appalachians; what is he doing having secret meetings with government agents and debating a witch queen who quotes Aleister Crowley? At their best, the Silver John short stories have the unity, simplicity, and intensity of the best folktales, all of which virtues get lost at novel length. I really can't recommend this one except to diehard completists.

ajb

THE STOLEN LAKE, Joan Aiken, Delacorte Press, 291 pp.

The Children of Silence.

They are the mountains -- volcanic

peaks -- that lie between New Cumoria and Lyonesse: Ambage and Arrabe, Entayne and Elamee, Arryke, Damask, Damyake, Pounce, Pampoye, Garesse, Galee, Calabe, and Catelonde.

After their defeat by the Saxons, you see, the Britons fled over sea to Hy Brasil, taking with them certain sacred objects both natural and works of craft (though relations with the old country were re-established). Therefore the present work is an entry in the year's Arthurian sweepstakes; but principally it is a further adventure of one of my favorite literary characters, Dido Twite. It comes between NIGHTBIRDS ON NANTUCKET and THE CUCKOO TREE, which seemingly concludes the series with an imminent reunion between Dido and Simon: the homeward voyage aboard a British warship was interrupted by an important diplomatic mission.

I will say nothing about the plot; and to characterize the book will be to characterize the series which began with THE WOLVES OF WILLOUGHBY CHASE. These are adventures in which melodrama is carried somewhat to the point of parody and the baddies are satisfyingly defeated at the end by a combination of enterprise and very neat confidence. History is not as we know it, either: contrivances work, when needed for the plot, with preternatural ease and accuracy, and not all of them are of a kind which our natural history allows. For example, the cannon in NIGHTBIRDS...and its feared effect on the island, the balloon in BLACK HEARTS IN BATTERSEA, and the flying machine here.

But I believe in Dido Twite, a disarmingly candid and enterprising Cockney. Treat yourself to this book and to the others.

db

FUZZY BONES, William Tuning, Ace, 1981, 375 pp., \$2.50

William Tuning has done an excellent job of capturing the flavor of H. Beam Piper's memorable "Fuzzy" novels in this very long new book. The human race has conceded that the fuzzies are in fact a sapient species, entitled to freedom and certain other rights, and establishes a governmental structure on the colony world of Zarathustra to protect the natives from exploitation.

Using many of the same characters who appeared in the earlier novels, Tuning introduces new conflicts as the colony slides into an economic recession, aggravated by rumors of a major find of precious gems within the borders of the lands reserved for

use by the fuzzies. In fact, the discovery of the gemstones is incidental to the carefully concealed wreck of an ancient, non-human starship.

While the novel preserves much of the tone of Piper's work, I was less satisfied with the plot. The ancient spaceship and the "surprise" revelation of the origin of the fuzzies are such standard devices that they are virtually cliches. Nevertheless, those who enjoyed LITTLE FUZZY and THE OTHER HUMAN RACE will doubtless find much to amuse them in FUZZY BONES.

dd

THE SNOUTERS: FORM AND LIFE OF THE RHINOGRAPES, University of Chicago Phoenix, xxiv + 92 pp., \$4.95

"A definitive work," said G.G. Simpson of the book when it first appeared in 1967. Indeed it is. The temptation is to play along with the joke, but I'd rather give a straightforward account.

In the beginning was Christian Morgenstern, a whimsical German poet. He revealed to us the tuelephant, from which came, by devolution, the elephant. And the moonsheep; and the nasobeme, which strides along on its snouts. Hence the order RHINOGRADENTIA, comprising 189 highly diverse species peculiar to a Pacific archipelago which has, alas, been catastrophically sunk -- something to do with nearby H-bomb tests. But Gerolf Steiner, a German zoologist, has preserved for us the data which are the basis of this monograph.

It is not a parody of scientific prose. It IS scientific prose, exactly what would be written if these critters actually existed. It would be less funny if it weren't. It is complete with references to scholarly controversy and a remarkably convincing bibliography comprising books in half a dozen languages. Only the geographical and personal names are facetious. Professor Steiner has provided some excellent drawings. If you can't afford Dougal Dixon's AFTER MAN, by all means get this one. It is a pity, by the way, that Bonnie Dalzell has not yet come out with a book.

Not all of the Rhinogrades actually WALK: they are so diverse as to illustrate a great many forms of locomotion or the absence of it. But the principal organ in almost all cases is the highly developed nose: the sessile varieties, for example, perch upon it. Others hop like jerboas, and of those one kind additionally flies -- with its ears.

An exception to the rule is EMUNICTATOR SURBENS, which merely fishes for its food in streams by means of a string of nasal mucus.

db

HECATE'S CAULDRON, ed. Susan Shwartz, DAW, 1982, \$2.95

I've picked up several good fantasy theme anthologies in the past couple of years; this is the most recent and one of the best. The theme, of course, is witchcraft: a term which covers a multitude of sins and -- at least here -- quite a few virtues, too. Most of the top women fantasy writers are represented -- Tanith Lee, C.J. Cherryh, Andre Norton, and Diana Wynne Jones, to list only the brightest lights, and a couple of far-from-token males. The stories range from Jane Yolen's lighthearted addition to the lore of Baba Yaga of Russian folktale fame (here brought into the space age) to Galad Elflandsson's terrifying account of an incident in Olaf Tryggvason's bloody conversion of Norway to Christianity. The most common theme is the witch as devotee or manifestation of the Triple Goddess; the one which cuts nearest to the bone is Diana L. Paxson's "The Riddle of Hekaite." Fortunately a reviewer is not obliged by law to name the best story in the book, as I have difficulty deciding even on a favorite. However, in view of my current preoccupation with the subject of romance, I'll give special mention to Jean Lorrah's "Witch Fulfillment," the slyly perceptive account of the adventures of an addict of romantic fiction who makes a deal with the Devil. Highly recommended.

ajb

Under Heaven's Bridge, Michael Bishop & Ian Watson, Ace, 1981, \$2.50

You haven't seen alien ~~in~~ passivity like this since Heinlein's Martians in Red Planet. One of the Kybers' binary suns is getting ready to go nova. The Earth expedition to their planet is mystified by their apparent indifference to the coming catastrophe.

Questions such as "What is life?" are posed, mulled, and basically left up to the reader's own judgement from data supplied by this (dare he say it?) allegorical tale.

On the surface, expect a nice moody yarn with lots of (N.P) alien atmosphere.

mb

ON NIEKAS 23

Dainis Bisenieks
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Joe Christopher's poem is just in fun, so I can't seriously speak of cheap shots; but there is a matter that has needed saying, but not at length. Namely: it is well known that human beings, as well as Elves, Hobbits, and Orcs, must excrete as well as eat. Why, then, do we make jokes about the matter, and why is there no mention of it in Lord of the Rings nor in the vast majority of works of high (in the technical sense) literature? Well, because we joke; and because it is inescapable; there is no reason to mention it unless it were to (a) advance the story or (b) show us how we are to take it. Writers like Alfred Duggan and Mary Renault have written compassionately of dysentery; and if we think of what Sam had to do for Frodo during his illness, we know without needing to be told.

As for the paucity of women in the tale: well, I have a handy quotation here, Marion Zimmer Bradley at the World Fantasy Convention: "A woman would have too much brains to go on a heroic quest." There are, of course, some high matters of love: Arwen, Eowyn; also Sam and Rosie. Tolkien does not follow anyone into the bedroom for a reason that can be stated in a word: propriety. Also, the high matters proper to the story cease at the threshold. Indeed, if one believes in the marriage vows, all story ceases. And they lived happily together to the end of their days, which were extraordinarily long. Period.

I learn from the report in LOCUS that at the Fantasy Convention there was a panel on Food, Clothing, and Shelter, and "Elizabeth Lynn defended a more idealistic view allowing... Tolkien to neglect realistic social underpinnings while in pursuit of the inner truths..." I don't think he did. I learn from the recently published Letters that he confessed an inability to imagine many kinds of details, but allowed that there was enough room for agriculture, industry, all the necessary things. And he is very attentive to logistics in the journeys of the Fellowship, except that Iembas is an invention that in part obviates such problems.

It's Eddison who is shockingly bad on logistics. I never could figure out what the Demons subsisted on in Impland.

I have Duncton Wood to try but gave up before I'd read a hundred pages.



Apart from anything else, it is not a work of style: as, for example, Watership Down is. And after reading John Crowley's Little, Big, beautifully written, I have less tolerance for tin ear than ever. Oh, Horwood is not bad, just undistinguished. Now Crowley, he made me gasp with admiration. I have been spreading the word where I can. "He understands about childhood, about dreams, about gifts; and he writes beautifully" usually does the job.

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Diane Gallagher is from Florida, not California.

Hmm. After coming on finding Cabell books in the midst of the Mills & Boon section of the bookstore, Marsha says that "no one but Mills and Boon fans ever look at those shelves." Do we deduce from that that Marsha is a fan of Mills & Boon slushy romances? Incidentally, we have a Cole's (Canadian chain) bookstore within driving distance, and they often sell British pbs at a discount, so I've seen their romance books. What intrigues me is the remarkable ugliness of most of the people on their covers. Hero may be described as tall and rugged and handsome and all that, but on the cover he looks like a halfwitted wimp. Heroines don't fare much better. I keep wondering if it's a subtle commentary by the artists, or if British standards of beauty are that different from ours.

If the state paid for education but didn't run the schools, one of the first things we'd see would be an increase in the cost of education, since I have doubts that schools officials and teachers are any less reluctant to gouge the public than are doctors. The civil-service mentality that Fred complains of would be replaced by a union

mentality--which is already present in Indiana, the ISTA being a very powerful union. (On the other hand, Indiana does not rely exclusively on property tax to pay for schools, thus eliminating the need for some of the zoning restrictions Fred mentions. Not too surprisingly, however, it hasn't eliminated "urban sprawl"....)

Regency Buck is "the one Heyer novel that does in fact have a ruthless and domineering hero"? One? That means that the heroes of These Old Shades, Devil's Cub, Simon the Coldheart, and Lady of Quality aren't ruthless and domineering? I learn something new every day. Major differences between Heyer and Cartland is that Heyer is intentionally humorous and Cartland is unintentionally humorous. I should think that anyone who can recite the plot of Tristan and Iseult with a straight face would have no difficulty in understanding the appeal of Gone with the Wind; Margaret Mitchell had to make her plot a trifle less ridiculous but that's not an insuperable barrier to enjoyment.

ON NIEKAS 29

Terry Jeeves
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U.K.

Sorry, but my word processor is right out of superlatives..And what else can I use to describe this issue? A terrific range of illustrations and ALL good to very good. Naturally, the production side gave them complete support...being its usual impeccable and superb self.

Anent the fillo on mailing cassettes ...I have been exchanging tapes..and when they came in, cassettes with Alan Burns for more years than I can remember..at least 20 anyway. To

simplify the job..and protect the cassettes, I flanged up a two part case..the inner part holds a cassette in its plastic case..and bears my address on one side, and Alan's on the other. This slides into an outer case bearing a 'window' protected by a sheet of plastic film. I put the insert in to show Alan's address and mail it off fastened by a single piece of Sellotape. He reverses the insert when returning it to me. The cassette is protected by its own case..plus two consecutive card-board cases..even so, we have had one or two of the plastic boxes smashed by the P.O.

Val and I fly out to Los Angeles on August 3rd, and will be touring... Palm Springs, Phoenix, Grand Canyon, Yosemite, Reno, San Francisco, and back to L.A. for a final three days ...I'd appreciate a mention so that if anyone cares to arrange a meeting....?

Kathy Godfrey
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I enjoyed the Steven Fox portfolio.
The eyes have it!

The letter from David Palter on the abolition of public education puzzles me a little. The old argument that public education is necessary to support a universal franchise is still a valid one. It's bad enough that many pupils meander through school without learning to read beyond a minimal level. If children abandon school in droves, I don't want them standing in the ballot box as adults trying to decipher candidates names, and depriving them of their voting rights ins not a fair solution. I also can't see large numbers of these children as adults, now wanting to learn, becoming highly literate. Language skills come much more easily to children than adults. How is a technological, information-oriented society like ours going to survive if a large portion of the population can't function in it at all? Do we want a technocracy of knows and know-nots? Besides, what else are the children going to do if they're not in school? Nothing useful. We have no other niche for children during the day.

How did you all like Boskone this year? Ned looked a bit harried when I saw him. I did not find much of interest in the programming, and the hotel's overeager heating system gave me a cold, but the bidding parties were a fine way to pass Saturday evening. The Atlanta bid for 1986 is promising, although I

must confess I'd be tempted to boost New York City on the basis of its proximity to me and the good people on the committee. The Park Plaza in Boston was too cramped for Boskone's 2000+ attendance, and many attendees could be seen roaming along the crowded hotel mazzanine. The cutback in the film programming drew a lot of complaints. Personally, I'd rather NESFA worried less about how many hours of movies they project and more about the content. Once again, Boskone offered the same old thing for the most part.

And now for a few words about Lunacon 25. This was my first Lunacon, and I enjoyed myself a great deal. The general feel of the con was quite fannish, both in programming and attendees. As if to make up for Boskone, the con hotel in New Jersey was over-airconditioned. This was less uncomfortable than the Boston hotel, but I managed to catch a cold anyway. (There may be a moral in this.) The movie program, unlike Boskone's, was a very interesting selection, but the schedule was adhered to or not on a sporadic basis. Overall, I got the impression that a lot of the con programming was thrown together at the last minute. Maybe it's impossible to have both a strict schedule and programming interesting to fans. Boskone and Lunacon represent different mixtures of these two ingredients. Of the two, I must say I preferred Lunacon by a wide margin.

David Thiry
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I'd like to begin by mentioning the quasi-professionalism shown in the format of NIEKAS. This is good for the reader, for the features are well laid-out and most easy to read. Also, the illustrations are excellent, all of them, and of a higher quality than the majority of those I've seen in the magazines which claim to be professional, but which often look as if they were thrown together by a band of speed-freaks whose deadline was give days ago. NIEKAS is a very attractive zine.

However, my use of the term "professionalism" doesn't necessarily infer that I, as a reader, am not completely happy with everything in the zine. I found, for the most part, that your attempts to provide Lasting and Significant Commentary made for dry, uninteresting reading. And the fact that you try to maintain a high intellectual standard limits your ability to take

real chances with your material. (By "Lastin Material", I refer to Ms. Braude's pieces, which read like something out of one of my old University English papers; and high intellectuality automatically tells one that you are going to limit the topics you'll cover in material to those which do not offend...anybody. Or is this simply a case of your wanting to remain "The Nice Fanzine"? I can't tell. I only know what I read.)

I knew ahead of time that you had a zine into which you were not only trying for a wide readership, but which was aimed at a particular readership (namely, the one which will vote you a Hugo). From this knowledge, I entered into my reading with a bit of prejudice (always a dangerous--and stupid--attitude). Luckily for us all, I found many interesting matters in among the dry material, and I shall now mention a few details...

Mr. Meskys' article was good, I guess, except that I had already read The Stand, knew already what he commented on in that book. But the discussion of the Lagrange points was superior to that which I was forced to pick through in my second-year physics class. It's too bad the academics feel the need to be both Profound and most Cryptic when discussing science. I'd rather study materials written like the article in the zine.

The best part of Mathoms was the illos, and there was a really neat gryphon on page 11.

"Isn't It Romantic" was nicely written and significantly academic, but who cares? Except for a pretty nice title and some cutesie illos, the whole thing was just a near-repeat of my first year English class. I don't need that.

I was wondering if there were any plans for publishing all of Mr. Langeveld's pieces in a single volume. The Catalogue would make for an interesting addition to someone's wargaming source library.

Some years back, I was being forced to read some ancient Chinese commentaries on their long history for a philosophy class. One of these mentioned the use of giant kites which were partially driven by rockets, and which carried bombs. I thought I might mention to Vera Chapman that these weapons were used to scare the shit out of an army of Mongolian invaders some time three thousand years ago (or so). The historian mentioned that the Great Wall was not intended to completely halt the invaders, but only to stall them long enough so that the Emperor's troops could move up their

artillery, bomber-kites, and other advanced weapons.

Of course, a glider carrying explosives was about as advanced a weapon as anyone could hope for in those days. But, when I read this piece, I thought of very ancient hang gliders, Da Vinci's magnificent sketches of the same, and the fact that my little trips out to Kitty Hawk were actually activities which kept alive a tradition which went back thousands of years. That made me cockier, if that was possible back then.

Jewish sf would be a lot easier to read if I didn't have to pronounce all the Yiddish words aloud. So much for the space rabbi.

The "Fox" piece, again, is an example of why NIEKAS is a superior zine. When I first glanced at the drawings, I was shocked. I felt that, somehow, Steven Fox had attended my old high school, and was now caricaturing my old classmates. Even worse was the alarming sense of having met the cephalopod on page 51, for it reminds me of my high school sweetheart, whose...uh... hand, I almost was betrothed with, marriage-wise. Could you imagine the results of such a mixed marriage? A cute blond like myself and a near-snail? Yikes!

Oh, I forgot to mention my favorite piece, "Mother Ghoul's Nursery Rhymes." I remember well the first time I read Where the Wild Things Are (I can't remember the name of the author of that savage little children's book). These little verses which combine the elements of adult shock fantasy and children's poetry sort of reminded me of those old shivers. Neat piece, that. Wished there was more of it.

The only book review I'd like to comment on is City Come A-Walkin', by John Shirley. Shirley doesn't get the sort of publicity he should. When most of the accolades of the sf field are going to derivative fiction, innovators such as Shirley are ignored. He has not only been one of the few authors who has truly translated the spirit of rock on to paper, but he also is one of my favorite authors because of his ability to cut through the glitter and bullshit which surround the topic, and takes up the challenge of translating the emotions behind it for those who've never come near. In particular, I bring your attention to Shirley's book Dracula in Love, which really lets us know the true meaning behind the vampire mythos.

John Shirley is most evocative, though at times bizarre, a writer. I am glad that a staid member of your

audience has read him. Makes me feel better about the world, somehow.

(By the way, I really was serious when I said that Shirley was the only writer who knows rock. "Stone", a story by a hack with big contacts within the sf field, hardly won a Nebula because it had anything to say about rock. And the only other short story which comes near John Shirley's insight into heavy metal and all that was "The Feast of Saint Janis", by Michael Swanwick, I think. Anyway, I read it in NEW DIMENSIONS 13 some time back. It's pretty good, too. Reading City Come A-Walkin' or this short story, can give all you kids who listen to Dylan or (gasp!) John Denver a good feel for what the more daring members of your generation are experiencing.

Summary:

1. NIEKAS is a good zine, though dry in areas;
2. it is well-bound, which I appreciate;
3. all fu's are old fu's;
4. and finally, I think you should put the cover on the front, and leave the back cover for the back.

[I could be snide and serve up Anne's favorite line for a reply to a letter such as yours: "Your comments probably say more about you than what you criticize." But I won't.

(Though in some cases I feel it is true.)

So, Variety is the operative word for what we try to publish. You can't please all dapiple all the time but when I read a magazine, if I can find at least one piece that catches my fancy, it was all worth it. So take a belt of your favorite and move on to something a bit less arid.

While we don't go out of our way to pick fights with people and ideas, we have managed to tromp on a toe-bone or two. Not intentionally and it only hurts for a bit.

No, we have no plan to publish a separate edition of Colin's ET's but there will be a new installment each issue.

Thanx for the marathon LoC. mike.]

Beverly Kanter
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San Gabriel, CA 91775

A fellow student of mine who looked at NIEKAS pointed out that Ed Meskys obviously speaks Lithuanian: NIEKAS is the pronoun for "nothing" or "nobody," "bumbejimas" means "humming" and "Meskys" itself is a

typical lietuviskai surname. Were your parents immigrants, Ed? Do they remember anything about life in the old country?

Re David Palter's statement about my praside of tranquilizers: (He says) "While they undoubtedly do have some utility as a means of alleviating symptoms of mental distress they do nothing to relieve the actual casue of that distress, and thus become a means by which people can avoid dealing with or even perceiving their real problems." What David and I disagree on is the percentage of people with addictive-psychopathic personalities and the percentage who ran into sheer bad luck who would get well in a few years in any case. With the latter, tranquilizers and energizers function somewhat like the current treatment for Asiatic cholera, which consists of having the patient drink water with dissolved electrolytes until his natural defenses take over. The object is to keep the patient alive, not to cure the disease. This I have found tranquilizers can do. (I take Lithium and Haldol.) Of course, there are always the psychopaths who say, "I have the right to abuse you because I'm a (writer, artist, gay, parent, handicapped person, etc.). These people can't be helped by tranquilizers, religion, self-help books or any other means.

Ed, I couldn't make head nor tail of your article on the physics of L-5 points. Anne, I enjoyed your synopsis of Frye's Anatomy of Criticism. Next essay, could you be a bit clearer on where you opinions begin and the author's you're quoting leave off?

[Both parents are from Lithuania. My father came in to the U.S. in his early 20s and my mother in her early 30s. They had always spoken of life there. erm.]

Anne Braude
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...By the way, you owe an apology to Margaret Hildebrand for omitting her name from the Review & Comment masthead; I feel bad about this since I was the one who got her to send in the review.

[The Evil Speller pleads insanity and offers said apology. mike]

John Brunner caught me fair and square attributing a Peacock quotation to Dr. Johnson; I can only plead nolo contendere (and having read only Nightmare Abbey and Crotchet Castle). I have a very clear memory of a lecturer in my Age of Johnson course giving this

item as a bit of Johnsoniana; but since he was a leading expert on the man, I assume the glitch is in my memory bank.

I'm glad David Palter liked my piece, but he shouldn't assume it is a sufficient basis for a true

understanding of the phenomenon of romanticism--my scope is much too limited. It's a safe rule of thumb that any discussion of romanticism that doesn't even mention Beethoven is less than exhaustive. My article is more a history of the connotations of the word "romance" as used in English literary history. There is a whole world of romantic art, music, and philosophy that I didn't even touch on.

I'll yield to Kathy Godfrey's interpretation of Gone With the Wind, as she had obviously read it with much more sympathetic understanding than I did. As she said, it is (like Madame Bovary) a story of romantic love gone wrong. But if you ask the man in the street--or the woman under the dryer--to list the Great Lovers of history and fiction, Rhett and Scarlett are apt to head the list. The whole pre-Civil War Southern aristocracy is largely a story of romanticism gone wrong; all too many of them went off to battle with heads stuffed with notions of fighting drawn from the pages of Scott.

Suzette Haden Elgin
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NIEKAS is very impressive indeed, and I'm not sure you haven't graduated beyond "fanzine," my friends. Lots of the "real" magazines I get are not as well done as NIEKAS is; obviously you have many talented--and hard laboring--people involved in the project.

The review [of Twelve Fair Kingdoms and The Grand Jubilee] was a pleasure to read. I should certainly think I am not as good at writing as Anne McCaffrey, not by a whole series of long shots; you are quite right. Comparing me to her is a welcome compliment, nonetheless, and since the Ozark Trilogy was intended to gently spoof the Pern stories you have demonstrated your perspicacity.

(That was not the primary purpose of the books--their primary purpose was as a political act, and their secondary purpose was to be a satisfactory read--but it was one of the purposes.) It's wonderful to read a review in which it is clear that the reviewer actually read the book(s) all the way through...that happens rarely. I'm most grateful. And you do obviously understand what the books are all about, also marvelously rare.

Contest Announcement. \$25.00 for the best answer to the question: "Why was Troublesome of Brightwater banished?" 25 words to 1000 words, any format that's legible, poetry fine. Deadline August 1, 1982. If you want your entry returned, enclose one 20¢ stamp; if you want a copy of the 100 best solutions (and your entry, in case it's not in the top 100) enclose two 20¢ stamps. Copyright remains with you, of course. Entries should go to Suzette Haden Elgin, Route 4, Box 192-E, Huntsville, AR 72740.

Joe R. Christopher
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I can't resist making a comment or two on Anne Braude's "Mathoms." First, the last name of Dorothy L. Sayers' Lord Peter Wimsey is misspelled (p. 10, col. 1). Second, I think Anne probably named the major religious detectives, although I'm not certain I'd agree that Rabbi Small novels are better than the Father Brown stories. It seemed to me that Harry Kemelman's novels got laxer as they went on; the first one or two were very good, with the actual use of pipul, but after that the puzzles and solutions were not as much fun. Chesterton's stories are sometimes puzzles, sometimes parables, but all written in that imagistic style of his which delights some readers and turns others off. I rather like it.

By the way, one of my favorite religious detectives, not mentioned by Anne, is Anthony Boucher's Sister

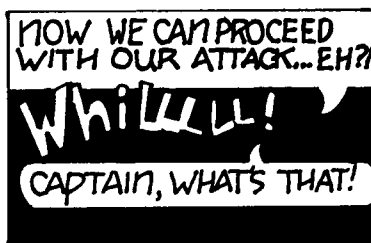
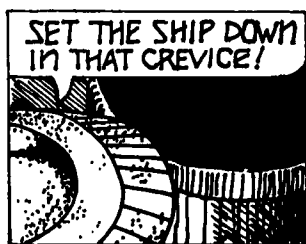
Ursula; she appeared in two novels and three short stories. Of the other religious detectives Anne mentions, I like William X. Kienzle's Father Koesler; so far the novels have had something to say about people and the Church (sometimes just the Roman Church) which isn't true of many mysteries. I read the first of Charles Merrill Smith's Reverend Randolph mysteries, didn't like it, and haven't tried the more recent ones. I suspect the ambiguities of real life in the presentation of the minister bothered me, but anyway I felt he was earning a dishonest livelihood as a clergyman. I'm not certain I remember the details now. Was he having an affair with a woman in his congregation? I think so, and he didn't feel guilty about it. What are clergymen for if they don't feel guilty when they act like laymen? (Actually, I define the issue more precisely in theological terms, but you get the idea.)

About Jane Sibley's illustration for the Father Brown stories which accompanied Anne's essay: does Father Brown ever peer through a keyhole? I don't remember it. I also don't remember him as wearing glasses. The other illustrations seemed fine, although purists might react to Miss Marple being drawn in terms of her movie self rather than as Christie described her. Murder at the Gallop, one of the titles in the background, is a movie rather than a book title, I think.

I also liked the Steven Fox portfolio.

[The Evil Speller again takes the credit for typos. (As long as you take credit for misspelling pipul in your letter. mike)]

[I agree with you about the Kemelman books. Chesterton's tales aren't always, as you say, true detective stories; and his florid style is rather like divinity fudge: it becomes cloying when overindulged in, as when reading the complete stories in sequence. I omitted Sister Ursula because she is primarily the protagonist of uncollected short stories, and the new reader exploring the genre would probably not be able to get hold of them. Reverend Randolph in the first book is not having an affair with a



parishioner; he is investigating the murder of a choir singer who turns out to be promiscuous. He devotes into her love life but doesn't participate in it. He does get involved with Samantha, the (unattached) TV interviewer he eventually marries, but whether they have a premarital affair is not spelled out. One of the themes of the series is Randall's unwillingness to see himself as a clergyman. He is a divinity-school professor roped into a temporary pastorate who has to be convinced that he's really cut out for it. I suspect Jane Sibley got Father Brown's spectacles from the Alex Guinness film portrayal. anne.]

Pat Mathews
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ERM, where do you get this equation of libertarian with Tory? The ones I know are busy staging anti-draft protests and recruiting for NARAL; philosophically, it's the place where Left and Right dissolve into absurdity via radical acid. (They defend the right to do that, too, as well as all other forms of illegal but private amusement.)

I didn't like the ones who wrote for REASON, but they may be vanishing into Reagan's swamps, co-opted and harmless.

Anne, another word for "low-mimetic" is "naturalistic," and I like it better because of its immediate associations with the "life is a sewer and I am a camera" school of writing. I remember hearing it said that while Romantic literature at its best far surpassed anything the naturalistic school had to offer, the third-raters didn't do as well. "A third-rate naturalistic writer might still have some valid social observations to offer; a third-rate Romantic generally has a third-hand plot."

Science fiction is generally a Romantic sub-genre; so, oddly enough, is the murder mystery; it's no coincidence that so many people like both. Thanks for the Kipling quote; Romance is landing at White Sands Missile Range a week from tomorrow (March 29). Wish I could be there.

[Until I started corresponding with David Palter the only Libertarian I had discussed matters with at length was a rabid Reagan supporter who approved of Reagan's friendship with Latin American dictators and who opposed equal rights for women. David has given me a much more reasonable impression of Libertarianism. erm.]

[I disagree with your equation of "low-mimetic" with "naturalistic": not all low-mimetic fiction is naturalistic (cf. Dickens, Austen, George Eliot, Meredith); and as Frye himself points out, "'naturalism'... rather like the detective story, though in a very different way, begins as an intensification of low mimetic, an attempt to describe life exactly as it is, and ends, by the very logic of that attempt, in pure irony." (Anatomy of Criticism, p.49) The novels of Zola and Stephen Crane's Maggie: A Girl of the Streets portray typically ironic scenes of bondage, frustration, and despair; and such novels often involve symbolism to such an extent that they exemplify the return to the mythic that Frye mentions as characteristic of irony, as in Dreiser's American Tragedy, Crane's Red Badge of Courage, and Frank Norris's Octopus. As for the space shuttle being romantic, I think that is true in a sense different from Kipling's. He would be more inclined to say that the family car is romantic, its one-time miracle now unconsidered, submerged in the commonplace. The commercial airplane is an even better example: have you noticed the Pan Am commercials that deliberately invoke the early days of commercial flight for romantic effect? anne.]

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One serious error in Don D'Amassa's column in #29: the sequel to Blish's Black Easter is The Day After Judgement, not The Day After Doomsday (the latter title was by Poul Anderson). I recently saw a movie DEATHTRAP, which is one of those annoying borderline cases Don writes about: while it's basically a straight thriller, it also contains a genuine psychic.

Anne Braude's list of "foreign" (i.e., non-US-andUK) police procedurals omits some of the really exotic ones, e.g., Robert L. Fish's Jose da Silva of the Brazilian police and Interpol, Arthur Upfield's Inspector Bonaparte in the Australian Outback, H.R.F. Keating's Inspector Ghote in Bombay--and I guess Robert van Gulik's Judge Dee in 7th-century China counts, since he's in effect police chief as well as judge.

"If only a fourth of you cast a vote our way, we would surely end up on the [Hugo] ballot." Oh, less than that: it only took 31 nominations in 1980, 34 in 1981. (But NIEKAS got less than half of that. Don't know

yet what happened this year, but I nominated you.)

Has anyone remarked that the heading for "Laiskai" is misspelled?

[The artist, a relative of the Evil Speller, missed that one. It may be correctable. mike]

MISC. NOTES

DIANA PAXSON has completed her two part novel for Timescape which should be out around December or January. She is not sure whether it will be marketed as Lady Of Light and Darkness parts I and II, or as Lady of Light and Lady of Darkness. This will be her first published novel and is in her Westria series. It is set in the far future in a post disaster California. She has completed two juvenile fantasy novels set in the same universe, and has had at least one short story, "Windspell", published. She

is considering rewriting the juveniles as adult books and has plans for other volumes in the series. Her second Thieve's World story will be published in July.

PAUL ZIMMER has shipped off to Playboy Books the first half of his epic-length fantasy novel, The Lost Prince. The 416,000 word volume is scheduled for September which means it should be available by early August. Paul is doing some final editing to bring the second volume, King Chondos Ride, down to about the same length. The novel is considerably longer than anticipated and Paul had been asked to divide it into additional volumes, but there were no other places in the plot where the book could have been broken into self-contained units.

DR. ELIZABETH POPE, who had been Diana's teacher and mentor at Mills College, was hospitalized and designated Diana to take over her basic myths class. Dr. Pope has written several fantasy novels herself.

MARION BRADLEY's major Arthurian novel, The Mists of Avalon, will be published by Knopf in September. As Marion explained on a Pacifica Radio interview (HOURS 25, KPFF) she originally sold the novel to del Rey books. It went way over length and she greatly compressed the ending. Lester saw that the book had real potential so he told her to expand it and he would publish it in four volumes. It was Lester who took it to Knopf and sold it to them. The first del Rey volume will be titled Mistress of Magic, which was Marion's original working title. The book concentrates on the female characters of the Arthurian cycle.

THE LAST WORD

Unreviewed New Releases

Ace

The Horribles Go for Broke, Michael de Larrabeiti
Dream Park, Larry Niven & Steven Barnes
The Warlock Unlocked, Christopher Stasheff
Expanded Universe, Robert A. Heinlein
Through the Eye of Time, Trevor Hoyle
The Golden Naginata, Jessica Amanda Salmonson
Emperor, Swords, Pentacles, Phyllis Gotlieb
Unicorns, Jack Dann & Gardner Dozois, ed.
Under Heaven's Bridge, Ian Watson & Michael Bishop

Ballantine

The Bane of Lord Caladon, Craig Mills
Pawn of Prophecy, David Eddings
Dancers in the Afterglow, Jack L. Chalker
Blue Adept, Piers Anthony
The Jade Enchantress, E. Hoffman Price
The Forbidden Sanctuary, Richard Bowker
The Dream-Quest of Unkown Kadath, H.P. Lovecraft
Trouble with Lichen, John Wyndham
The Flying Sorcerers, David Gerrold & Larry Niven
Tron, Brian Daley
The Doom that Came to Sarnath, H. P. Lovecraft
Millenium, Ben Bova
Journey Behind the Wind, Patricia The Cyborg and the Sorcerers, Lawrence Watt-Evans
The Mysterious Planet, Lester del Rey
Tomorrow's Heritage, Outward Bound, Juanita Coulson
The Web of the Cloyen, Jack L. Chalker
The Last Yagdrasill, Robert F. Young
The Time of the Dark, Barbara Murphy
Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?, Philip K. Dick

Gregg

Black Easter/The Day After Judgement, James Blish

Oxford

The Old English Exodus, J.R.R. Tolkien trans., Joan Turville-Petre, ed.

Prentice-Hall

Our Turbulent Sun, Kendrick Frazier

Time-Life

Earthquake, Bryce Walker



Due Dates

[N.B.: articles and columns are due before this issue is actually received.]

July 1, 1982 - reviews
 July 15, 1982 - LoCs
 August 15, 1982 - NIEKAS 31 mailed

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#21: CAROL KENDALL interview, Notes on Lord of Light by ROGER ZELAZNY--\$4.50
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Coming Up

Conan issue with CATHERINE & L. SPRAGUE DE CAMP, AL MOFFE, and MORE; "The Integrators" by FRED LERNER, PIERS ANTHONY looks at GORDON R. DICKSON's Dorsai series, "The Space Race, Bioregions, and the Renaissance of the Celtic Harp..." by DIANA PAXSON, HARRY ANDRUSCHAK returns with "After the Golden Age", "The Lawnmower that Ate Manhattan" by ELIZABETH ENSLEY, and other stuff.

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