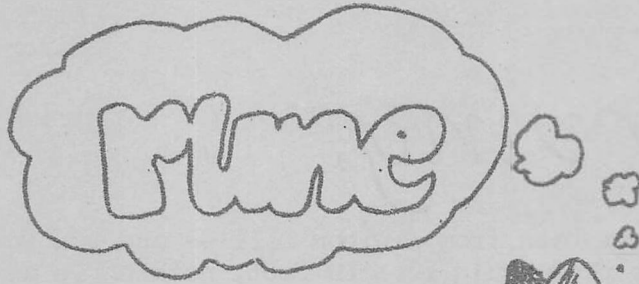


# Rune









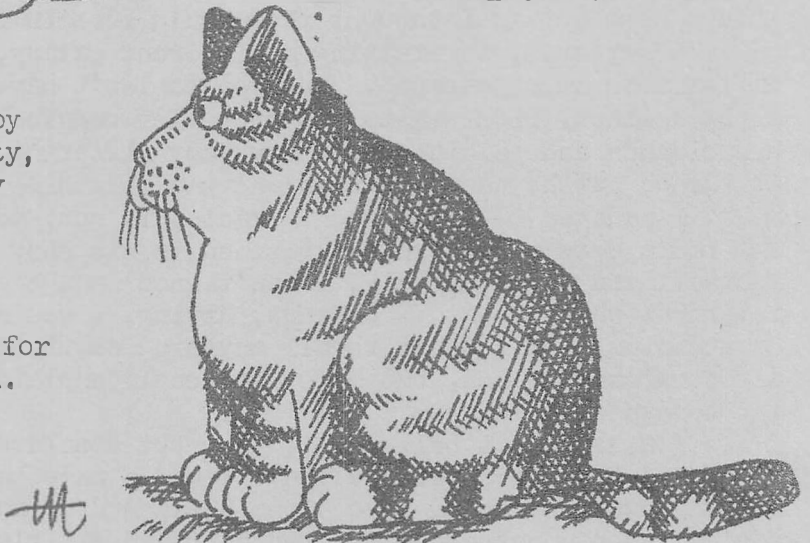
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Martin Schafer, Mike Wood, Richard Tatge, Nate Bucklin, Steve Bond. Thanks!

Alpha Beta Pi  
March 27, 1978

dear rrrving,

Well, Rrrving, I just got back from Minicon XIII -- and you were right, things were not as I thought they would be. In fact, nothing is as it seems.

I expected, in visiting a different galaxy, that the inhabitants would differ more in appearance. But you couldn't have told them from a group of Alpha Betians, right up to the propeller beanies. There was one who kept changing his clothes and talking about how many different Munsingwear outfits he had, but it turned out he wasn't a fhan; he was something they call a "radio announcer".

I managed to bring back a radio, TV set, telephone and other artifacts. The radio does work here, so I tuned in his show for awhile but he was discussing football and unfortunately, I don't know enough about the subject yet to fairly interpret what he said. (I know, Rrrving, I was supposed to study that game during my training, but I don't recall anything about tight ends or trading players. I'm almost afraid to ask, but maybe you could explain some of this the next time we get together.)

You might not believe it, Rrv, but absolutely none of the fhans were surprised to meet me at the con. I had a name badge with my name and address on it, and everyone acted like Alpha Betians drop in at cons every year. (There were a few comments about my red hair and big blue eyes, but I noticed other redheads in the crowd and I'll show you the videos to prove it. I've got everything on film, or is it tape?)

I got along fine with the language; don't you think my usage is improving? There was only one time I was really confused -- a fhan said, "In the back of the duck you get two kinds of sex." That just didn't compute, so I queried him, and it turns out that he meant, "When you pack in the dark you get two kinds of sox." (They looked O.K. to me, but apparently he thought they should match.)

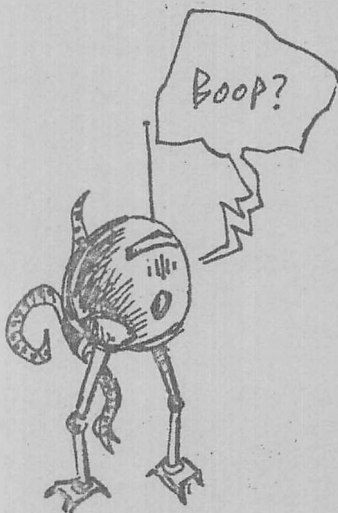
That fhan was from Chicago and I had a little trouble with the dialect but I've got the tapes (all except a few minutes which Rose Mary erased) and can practice until I understand Chicagoans, just in case I get assigned to Windy Con.

As instructed, I of course acquired some reading materials. Not as much as I had hoped, but their electronic gears were heavier than I expected so I just got a movie magazine, "Fantastic Films"; and "Midwestside Story", which is the true story of the Npls. '73 Worldcon (it's going to surprise a lot of people who thought there never was one). I also have an autographed program book (strange autographs) and I managed to acquire a copy of DHALGREN. (I expect I'll have to spend 5 or 10 minutes reading it, but so far it seems to be pretty straightforward, easy reading. Only 800 pages left to go.)

Rrrving, I got in on the music sessions and even sang "Sacred Harp". (I should have practiced sight reading more, but I wasn't expecting to have to read notes.)

I guess I'm still pretty tired and should end this for now. But if you think you can manage to get me assigned to more cons, Rrrving, I'll do it. It wasn't nearly as scary as I thought it would be. In fact, it was a hell of a lot of fun. (Wait till you see the videos.)

rrhuth





# 6 Days in March

A mini-Minicon Report  
By David Schlosser

It all began harmlessly enough with the moving of Kara Dalkey and Nate Bucklin to the Sin Twitties. Because of a lack of written communication, I opted to take matters into my own hands and call -- no answer. Casting about for a solution, I decided to call my only other known contact in the Minneapolis area, Carol Kennedy. What followed was a marvelous conversation and, in the September disty of LASFAPA, a vague promise of visiting in late '78 or '79.

Carol immediately took up the cause of an earlier visit and was soon joined in this by Kara, and later by the redoubtable Lee Pelton. Under the pressure from this Minnesota connection I was pinned down and I agreed to a trip in early '78. Then Lee drove the final nail and sealed my fate; he said, "Whay not come at Easter, that's Minicon time."

On March 23, I took off via Western Airlines. I had your basic uneventful flight and, as my fateful destination drew near, discovered why Minnesota is called the Land of 10,000 Mud Puddles. We landed, I entered the terminal and looked around for a couple minutes. Then I saw them: the familiar face of Kara Dalkey staring into my throat, a character who didn't really look like Lee Pelton's picture, and a Cleveland fan named Barney Neufeld.

In spite of the horror stories that had been fed me about Minnesota weather, the air outside the airport was cool, clear, and unprecipitating. Upon arrival in the heart of Minneapolis, Kara abandoned us to the tender mercies of Lee and Carol's apartment. The three of us sat around yammering until Carol's arrival -- ah, the glorious, magnificent presence that is this Red-Headed Marvel!

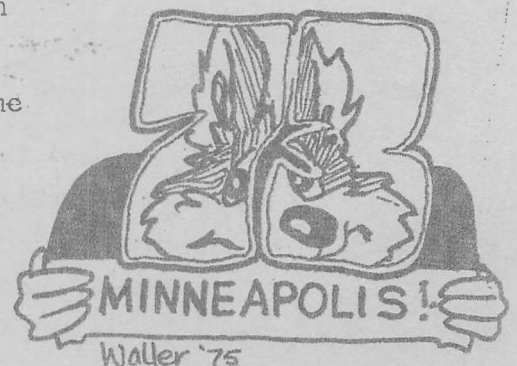
That evening, Kara rejoined us and the five of us went out for dinner at Pracna's, an excellent establishment with good food and outstanding personnel. We then proceeded to the preCon party at the home of Dave and Caryl Wixon. There I met the cadre of Minneapa Davids, Minneapa's OE Mike Wood, outgoing Minn-STF President Denny Lien, RUME's subscription manager Joel Halpern, and a number of other fans local and nonlocal. It was during this party that I got my first impression, an impression that only got stronger as the days went by, of my captors -- they are, without a doubt, the friendliest buncha Dodoes that I've ever had the opportunity to come into contact with.

During this indoctrination period, I was coerced into helping to collate the program book. (I introduce myself as California's top-ranked amateur collator.) I also found myself drafted into helping with the opening ceremony, as a new member of (Fanfare) The Legion of Super-Davids.

An unusual highlight to the evening was provided by Nate Bucklin; I went over to say Hi, and he told me that the reason he hadn't wandered over to greet me was that, "You looked so natural in with Minn-STF that I forgot I hadn't seen you for 9 months." I must say I certainly felt at home.

The next day before the Con opened, Lee took me on a quick walk to Shinder's, one of the local bookstores, where I picked up a previously unacquired Robert E. Howard. This walk also provided my first view of Hennepin Avenue, the Hollywood Boulevard of Minneapolis -- HA!

We then headed for the con hotel and the early hucksters. I found the huckster room





to be as well-organized and complete as any I've ever seen. The temptations were strong, but I only spent about \$33 for books at the con.

At registration I found that I was the only fan from Southern California to come to the con -- their loss. I went to watch "The Day the Earth Stood Still", and then it was time to rehearse the opening ceremony.

The actual ceremony went roughly as follows:

Denny Lien gets up on stage and starts delivering a closing speech, "I'd like to thank you all for coming to the con. I hope you all had a good time..." As he nears the end, one of the other officers goes over to him and tells him that he is giving the wrong speech, at which he embarrassedly admits that he doesn't have an opening speech. At this rather dramatic junction a man in the audience leaps up and shouts, "This is a job for" (the other members leap up and join in) "The Legion of Super=Davids!!!" And the 8 of us rush to the stage.

David Emerson begins, "Allow us to introduce ourselves. I'm David." "I'm David." "I'm David." ... "I'm Denny."

David replies, "I'm sorry, that won't do. Would you consider changing your name?"

"No." At which David motions him away and Denny takes his position with the two other officers at the right side of the stage.

David starts the speech, "Hello," and it is translated by each one of us into a different language (German, French, Hebrew, Computer, Alien...). My own translations were:

"Hello"---"Shalom."

"Welcome to Minicon"---"Baruch atta ha Minicon."

(At this point the judges hold up their cards: 9, 7, 6. Not good enough.)

"We hope you all have fun this weekend"---"Hamotzi lechem min haoretz."

(The new scores are log 8, pi, and something else. Better.)

"And remember"---"Veahavta"

(In unison) "Nothing is as it seems."

(Final scores include aleph, infinity, and i. Much better.)

We all congratulate each other and melt back into the crowd, leaving only a false nose as a clue. "Who were those masked men?"

Later that evening I spent most of my time in the music room of the con suite listening to song fandom. I found an interesting thing -- while at LA cons, filksongs are an almost exclusive fare, at Minicon they sang mostly real songs, and sang them very well.

Moving right along to Saturday, we come to a viewing of the series of animated and related shorts which included such things as Roger Ramjet and Hoppity Hooper. Ah, the memories, the nostalgia, the enjoyment. After that I wandered around and found the computer gaming room, with six terminals and a waitlist to get on them (I never did make it).

For dinner, Carol, Kara, Joel Halpern, Steve Bond, and I went to Weigh To Go, where we could make our own sandwiches and salads and pay by the weight.

We returned to the con in time for the main event: STAGE WARS, a marvelous theatrical parody of a well-known SciFi flick. It featured such characters as Dumb





Waiter, E-I-E-I-O, Okee-Wan-Fenokee, Drum Solo, and Doowacka. At the climactic dogfight scene, the audience launched a massive paper airplane strike on both of the combatants. It was preplanned by the audience but not by the actors, and was the best bit of audience participation I've ever seen.

After this hilarity it was time to relax in the music room once more. About 11:30 Lee and Carol left to participate in the art auction. A couple hours later I wandered down to watch the auction, and decided it was decidedly too rich for my wallet. However, while I was there I met the late-arriving, last member of the Legion, David Stever.

When my host and hostess had managed to acquire most of what they wanted, we headed over to the movie room to watch the OUTER LIMITS episode, "The Demon With the Glass Hand". About halfway through (4:30 A.M.) Carol and I began taking turns falling asleep on each other's shoulders, but we stayed for Lee's sake.

It was sometime during this day that I decided I was definitely going to be returning next year and the next year and the next year...

Sunday was rather slow as the con was winding down. I managed to get myself a Foglio nametag based on the Legion of Super-Davids ("#17 in a Series -- Collect Them All!"). I also attended a panel about the history of Minn-STF and found that we both were born on the same date, 11/26.

That night Carol cooked a fine spaghetti dinner and we watched a medley of movie out-takes. We were all so zonked that we opted not to attend the Dead Dodo party and just went to bed.

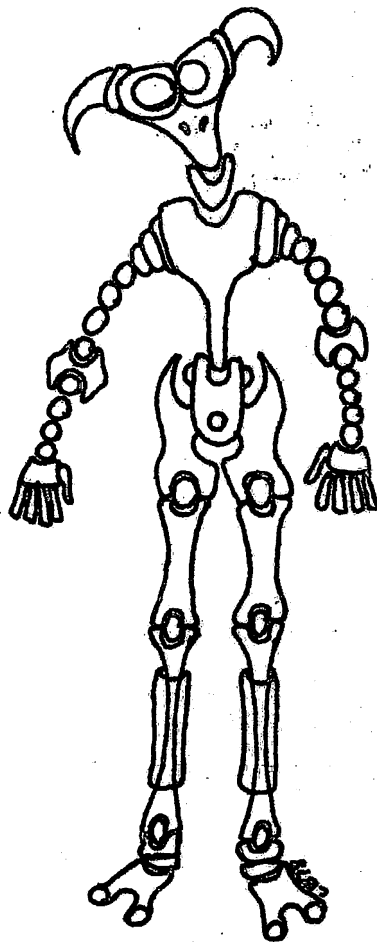
Monday was my day for touring the town. Lee and Kara showed me around the downtown area and I got to see the Nicollet mall and the IDS tower (with 51 stories, the tallest building between Chicago and Denver). The view from the IDS observation deck is quite beautiful if not spectacular -- what can you say about miles and miles of flatland?

That evening before we went out for dinner, Lee and I were cleaning the apartment (TANSTAAFL) and we got into a rather long pun battle. Carol came home from work, Kara and Carol Anndy arrived, and we went on a scenic tour of Minneapolis. This included Minnehaha Falls; although everyone thought there wouldn't be much to see at that time, there was a spectacular frozen waterfall. We began reciting Longfellow's famous poem, and the surprise came when I, the Californian, remembered the most lines to "Hiawatha" (shame, shame, Minnesotans!).

On the way to an excellent pizza dinner at Perry's, with myself cozily cuddled between Kara and Carol A., we had yet another pun battle. Later, at Carol and Lee's, we were joined by Steve Bond; and the six of us sank comfortably into the famous and fabulous Minn-STF handshake (condensed version).

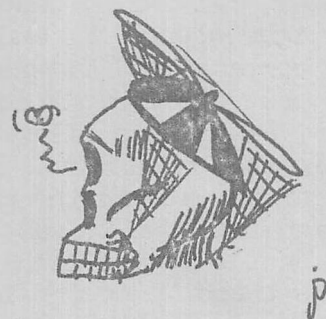
Tuesday was a day of rest for me as I prepared to bid a reluctant farewell to this city whose strange and wonderful fans had found their way into my heart. I promise that I shall return, for as I left I felt as if I was leaving home, rather than returning to it.

Minn-STF, I love you.





# CAUGHT IN A WEB OF SANITY



## Spider Robinson's Minicon Speech

Good evening, Genties and Ladlemen of the Audio Radiance. I am Spider Robinson, the P. Schuyler Miller of the Stone Age. When in folk-singing, I introduce myself as the James Taylor of the Stone Age. I stole that from Homer and Jethro, who used to introduce themselves as the Everly Brothers of the Stone Age. One of them would say, "We are not brothers; my brother is living." Here I stand, a credit to my procession and a sanitary sight to see, and I hope you will all agree.

We are standing on the vestibule of a new age, which, like a corporation that kicks its deadwood upstairs, can only fire us higher. Higher than the topless towers of Ilium --

Hey, do you remember when the towers first went topless?

For that matter, do any of you remember Ilium? Used to do a solo with a guy named Team -- I mean, a team with a guy named Solo, who incidentally was so low he once gave a camel a hickey. I once gave a guy named Hicky a Camel, myself, but according to his father it was heir pollution -- but that's neither hither nor yon.

Excuse me for yoning, I didn't get much nest last right...I mean, I didn't get the last rites...the second serial rights went to Conde Nast. Buy all rights, they said, and by all rights I should be asleep rite now.

No but foolishly, folks, -- do you ever notice that comedians always say, "No, but seriously..." right after they've laid an egg? -- the reason why I'm squatting here tonight is to pass a great gasp of relief at the way we're all managing to fart at staggered intervals rather than all at once, holding it down to a tolerable level, even, if you will, helping all the candles of the world to burn a little brighter. I think it's magnificent that the Lord, in His downtown Providence, saw fit to arrange things so that peristalsis runs downward. Otherwise, all food would have to be in suppository form, food-fandom would vanish, and banquets like these would pass out of existence. So would all beards and moustaches. I leave the tailoring problems to your imagination. Not to mention what happens to kissing...

Now that I've helped you all to return to your dinners, it looks like I can't put off much longer saying something reasonably serious and intelligent about what it feels like to be Fan Guest of Honor, when you've never felt much like a fan before. As I said last night, for those of you who weren't here then, I barely knew that fandom existed until I happened to sell Ben Bova a story. Almost accidentally, he's responsible for having exposed me to you idiots. Essentially, I was too much of a loner by nature to even know of fandom's existence until I sold a story. This state of virginity was ended rather quickly thereafter, and, as such things go, rather painlessly.

The shock has not yet faded. In fact, I kind of hope it never will.

It has been said -- I don't know if correctly or not -- that the ancient Chinese treated the insane with reverent fear. I believe this is an appropriate response. I have had enough friends who worked in mental institutions and hospitals to be certain that insanity is as contagious as leprosy. Hell, I'm



living in New York City right now.

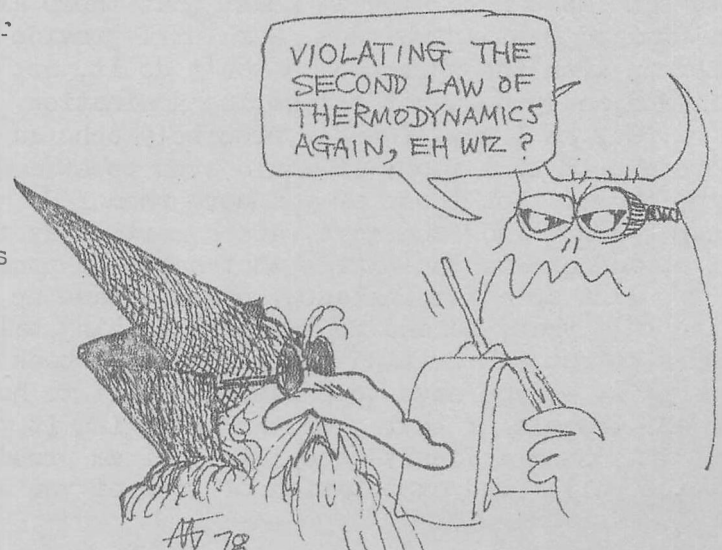
And if insanity is contagious, it seems reasonable to me therefore that so is sanity. Now I know this is going to dismay, affront, and offend many of you, and I apologize in advance; but I maintain that as a group you are among the sanest collection of folks I know. I know it's not a popular opinion, but I believe it's true. I think of us as people who insulate ourselves against a sea of insanity with massive doses of a powerful anti-idiotic called science fiction. I think SF is a literature which by its very nature kind of requires that you be at least a little sane, and you know at least a little something. You must abdicate the right to be ignorant in order to enjoy science fiction, which most people are unwilling to do these days; and you must learn, if not actually how to think things through yourself, at least what the trick looks like when it's done. Frequent injections will keep a lot of madness away. I can tell you -- I've been on SF therapy since the age of five, and here I am, I'm not even thirty years old yet and I really feel I'm in a position to call myself a happy man, which would have surprised the hell out of me 5 years ago.

But even the strongest dosage of even science fiction reaches a threshold effect, and side effects start to outnumber the benefits. The inability to remember which continuum you're in at the moment, the constant necessity of reminding yourself that you're not immortal, not to mention the aching eyeballs and the good friends who cannot be persuaded or cajoled by any means to try just one little bag of science fiction even if it's free.

And so we gather together at frequent intervals to reinfect each other with sanity, in person. You may dispute this interpretation; but I contend that in a world like the one out there, gathering together to wear funny hats, sing parodies off-key, and shine lasers at each other can be -- and probably is -- sane behavior. The Firesign Theater, whom some of you may know, would probably consider us a sub-genre of the group they belong to, called "Bozos". I once heard them on David Susskind define a bozo as a person who, with other bozos, get together to wear funny clothes and have a good time. At the time, they were wearing approximately six costumes apiece, one over the other; and as the evening progressed, they would remove costumes, revealing new costumes beneath them. After about four of these costume changes, David Susskind was hopelessly disoriented. One of them grabbed his shoulder and said, pointing, "That man over there, do you realize that three layers down he's wearing a costume head to foot composed entirely of human skin?" David Susskind turned white. That's a digression.

It seems to me that the central problem of the world today, if I may be so pretentious, is morale. I have a cousin who visited me last week, who also lives in New York City, and we spoke 5 or 6 hours on that particular visit. At least five times in the course of that conversation, she said some variant of: "The whole world is going to hell, sliding hopelessly down the tubes, and there's nothing that can be done; so the only thing for a smart person to do is get everything you can for yourself before it all goes smash."

I have heard essential variations on this theme for thirty years. It's not too hard to understand, I suppose. Here on Starship Earth, after several thousand years, we finally got together a reasonably efficient intercom system; and mostly what we broadcast over it is bad news and situation comedies. I can't blame





anybody who's depressed. But what my cousin was talking about was despair, what the Catholics rightly call the only unforgivable sin. My cousin is part of the problem, the only real problem that we've got.

With so much bumper energy going around, the only way I can stay sane, or one of the only ways I can stay sane, is to come to Minicons, to get truly high and have a good time, with people who know better than to think it's all pointless. This is not the only way I have. For instance, I know a bunch of folks down in Tennessee who do the same thing more or less constantly. They don't use booze; they get high by sharing work, which is a more powerful method -- and one that's a little too strong for me.



There's an anecdote Ben told me earlier in the weekend about one convention we both attended where the toastmaster talked for an hour and a half and said essentially nothing. When he was done, people fairly enthusiastically applauded, but that was about all the enthusiasm they had left of any description. Nobody wanted to hear a word from anybody else on any subject whatsoever. Poor Jay Kay Klein stepped up to the mike next, in the hot seat. He looked around the room and tears came to his eyes, and he said, "Holy smokes, just about everybody I love is in this room." And the whole place was his. He won them over in a minute. He could have asked a march on the capitol from that moment on.

I'm finding that there are other kinds of fandom. There's another kind of fandom that I sort of belong to on the side that I think of as spiritual fandom, which is people that get together and argue about spirit. And we have no more agreement on doctrines or dogmas or creeds or the foolishness of same than science fiction fans seem to have on great writers, or underlying themes, or what it is that makes science fact fiction. I mention this only in passing, because I suspect that one day science fiction fandom and spiritual fandom are going to collide, and I want you to have your arguments ready.

But I think that the majority of you fans are sane, like it or not -- that you agree in your secret heart of hearts with what the wise and holy Fred Pohl said at Discon: that we as a species have no real problems, but only complex games we have agreed to play with ourselves, and fans are among the only people on earth smart enough to know that.

I have a copy of that speech, Fred, and I'm seriously thinking of having it privately printed and selling it through the mail. I'll talk to you about the rights later.

The more audacious of you out there actually are working hard on solutions for the pseudo-problems we've come up with ourselves. I think nearly all of you are sane enough to know at least that there are solutions and that nothing but our determined best and hardest work will provide them. The government won't do it, the man with the white beard won't do it, not even Cal Tech will do it -- thou art God and you cannot refuse the nomination.

So, as I say, I can't precisely echo Jay Kay -- only a lot of the people I love are in this room, or would even be at a Worldcon held everywhere at once by videophone. But those of you here whom I do know and love, and those of you here whom I don't know and love, are a part of my family, an indispensable part of my life, and one of the things that makes it possible for me to write my stories.

Just as a for instance, someone came up to me yesterday and for the second time in a year, handed me the most amazing ball point pen I've ever found. It's going to cut the writing time on my next book in half. The hand glides right off the paper -- you have to use some effort to hold it on the page. And someone went to the trouble of buying one and dragging it to Minneapolis to hand it to me.

As such a Johnny-come-lately, I am proud to be considered a fan. Contrary to the belief and expectation of most of you whom I seem to run into, I know



extremely little of fannish legends and rituals and famous personalities. I knew nothing of this at all until 2 or 3 years ago. I have a particularly abominable memory for names, which cripples me. And frankly, there are just too damned many of you for me to keep track of, too much lore to be absorbed, too many letters to remember hardly any of them. I am hampered in convention-going by having to meet many deadlines to stay alive, and I literally have no time to spare for fanac or letterhacking or fanzine reading (because I get them all! -- any of you have any idea how many fanzines there are?). I rarely have time for more than one or two carefully-selected conventions a year.

But this is one of them, and I've had a fabulous time so far; and I must tell you that I have never in my life felt so at home and so at ease with so many drunken strangers.

I really do try to do my part for fanac, but economics requires that I publish it in Analog. I hope that is satisfactory to fandom; fandom is satisfactory to me.

And in conclusion I can only say that if your groceries come tumbling down around your ears, you have only your shelf to blame.

Before I stagger off into the past, I did figure that I ought to, since I'm up here and there's a guitar, sing you probably the only fannish song that I've ever written:

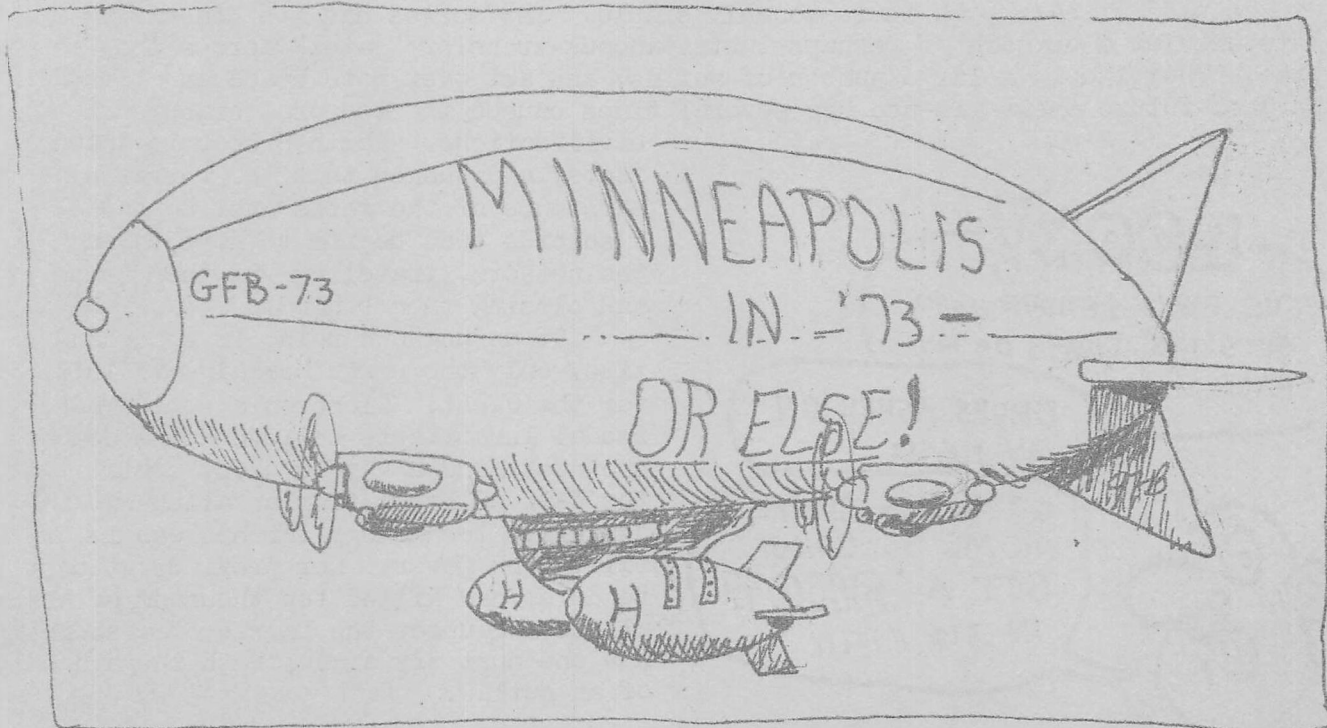
Bova, Ben Bova, I see your face in the night.  
It's an old hack plot Bova makes me write.

Bova, Ben Bova, You help us writers to write.  
A sale to you is worth 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 sales to Ted White.

Other magazines may print me yet,  
Though I wouldn't make the bet,  
But Analog I get  
Success, a word from you.

Bova, Ben Bova, Sometimes friends are so hard to find.  
I guess that old hack plot keeps Ben Bova on my mind.

(Tune of "Georgia On My Mind")



# A STUDY IN NECESSITY

BY DAVE WIXON

G.J. Cherryh came out of nowhere, a couple of years ago, as an accomplished novelist, with Gate of Ivrel; I am pleased to report that the sequel, Well of Shiuian, is even better. Her imagination remains strong, and her concepts grabbing -- but it is gratifying to note that her technique, too, is advancing.

Ivrel was her first book, and while it demonstrates that Cherryh from the beginning is possessed of the story-teller's gift, it is written almost totally in the third person, near-present-tense viewpoint of the warrior Vanye. Following several intervening books not of the series, Shiuian, too, is an engrossing tale; but it also shows a great change in technique, using in large portion an outsider viewpoint, to enliven the background and provide counterpoint to the action. (Interestingly, The Faded Sun: Kesrith, not of the series but published after Shiuian, uses the shifting viewpoint technique even more.)

This technique prompts in the reader a re-thinking on the characters who have begun to be comfortably known qualities to the viewing mind. Such a shift is irritating for the casual reader who has, for instance, identified with the Vanye viewpoint in Ivrel, but finds Shiuian opening with the viewpoint of a peasant girl -- particularly when she demonstrates a conflicting view of some of the events and characters. Cherryh's experiment is successful here, however, in providing the reader with a fuller spectrum, a wide-screen view of a new world and culture.

The technique also succeeds in imparting to Shiuian a depth often lacking in similar tales in the genre, which so often are variations of the simple, black-and-white, good-versus-evil theme -- books in which everything which occurs is interpreted from one viewpoint (even if seen by more than one character), making relationships seem deceptively clear-cut. Not so in Shiuian, wherein different characters, with truly different slants on events and other characters, also manage to present their views to the reader. This is a depth of philosophy unusual in adventure fiction.

The plot of each book is reasonably simple. The series has its genesis in the existence of a network of perhaps-instantaneous-transfer "gates" across the Universe. They lie in a large number of worlds, and act over both space and time; in the past-future their mis-use has several times caused the temporal erasure of

civilizations. Earth discovers these facts, and judges that the threatening existence of the gates must be ended. A suicide team begins to move through the network, traveling via the gates and closing them behind.

At an unknown point in space and time, only the woman Morgaine is left for the quest. Alone on a world whose feudal inhabitants believe her a demon, she must find a way to wrest control of the Gate of Ivrel from an alien who is using its technology for his own immortality and power. Her previous attempt to do so had killed ten thousand of her allies and upset the fabric of a society; now she must try again, with the aid only of an outlaw.

**LOOK!**

THE NEXT READER WHO  
PUTS HIS THUMB ON MY  
FACE...

DROPS ASHES ON  
MY HEAD

OR SPILLS COFFEE  
ON ME IS GONNA  
GET A SHOT  
IN THE MOUTH.



frejac



Misunderstanding and selfishness lead to many more deaths, but eventually the Ivrel gate is sealed, and Morgaine and Vanye find themselves on another world, with the whole struggle to fight again. (At this point, one could begin to suspect the onset of an interminable sameness to the series, as in, say, the Dumarest books, with worlds and battles never-ending, and each book moving on to more of it; I suspect Cherryh has something rather different in mind.)

Although Ivrel and Shiuan are part of an adventure series, a straight-forward blend of feudal horse-warriors and near-magical science, the real strength of the books lies in their masterful world-building and character studies. And although the viewpoint character is usually the outlawed follower Vanye, it is the character of Morgaine which dominates these books. (Use of total outside view of her is also effective in lending to her a larger-than-life, or epic, stature. The reader is never allowed to step into her mind, and can know her only through the eyes of her companion. This is probably a good thing.)

Morgaine is nearly mad, at times, driven to it by the crushing weight she bears. She alone knows the scope of the destinies she is responsible for, to the end of time and for the whole Universe--that-is. And because there is no one else, she must avoid failure at all cost; whatever evil deeds she may be responsible for on her road, they are as nothing beside the evil she will be responsible for if she fails.

She warns Vanye that she has no honor; she cannot afford it: "It is unconscionable that I should take risks with the burden I carry. I have no luxury left for virtues." She does much that she may well have wished to avoid -- but she does it. She causes great sufferings, in the name of a cause that would prevent worse. She tells Vanye, "I would kill you too if it were necessary."

But the evils she feels responsible for weigh heavily on her soul. At times she becomes manic, eager, intense; her mission is her raison d'etre, to a degree that approaches obsession. And she pays for that drive, relaxing now and again to realization of how truly enslaved she is -- how her life is driven, ruled, by this overwhelming purpose. She sinks then into despair. She is under immense strain. Without Vanye she might well crack, and may even yet. But he complements her, he relieves her, in so many ways. He is her godsend.

Christ in the garden asked His Father to take away the future He saw, if that could be; but it could not be, and He yielded gracefully, to carry out the Will. Some traditions say He sweated blood in his fear and loathing of what He saw coming. Morgaine does not know what is to come, but she sweats psychic blood over the past and the present, and over a future that may imitate them, or worse.

And she is immensely lonely, desperately afraid that indulgence in any human



weakness will endanger her mission. Sometimes this affects her behavior, and she begins to seem irrational. Or she unbends -- is human -- a little, but then realizes the dangers in such a course, and dons again her steel persona. And at times the weight of it begins to be too much, and she nears a suicidal recklessness, leading one to suspect that she longs for a release from her charge, through death, but is too responsible to take her life in forthright suicide.

Vanye is beginning to learn this. He is her salvation. From a tool picked up for a moment's use, he has grown to be a flywheel for her behavior. And he is a sign of hope and humanity for her. He will never cease to be a tool, unless he becomes an equal partner in the task; on his way to becoming such, he is rapidly becoming her totem, the reminder of her charge and its worth.

Years ago I had a fearful argument, in an Ethics class, over the question whether an End could justify any Means. My teacher held for the position that a wrong Means is wrong no matter how noble the reason for doing it. I continued to harbor reservations on the subject, and feel a great sympathy for Morgaine, who is right up against the question.

I begin to suspect that both my teacher and myself held a bit of the truth. To save a universe, Morgaine does what she must. Her actions seem justified -- but, if so, why is she paying so stern a penalty? (The Christ metaphor comes to mind again.)

Doesn't it seem clear that Morgaine is facing the old moral problem about "the lesser of two evils"? If she is, as seems true, consistently doing the best she can, then how can she be blamed? To this reviewer it seems hard to understand how she can be so agonized over her deeds, in such case; but then, this reviewer has never had to face such a choice -- and he also begins to suspect that it is some basic aspect of human-ness which feels the regret, pain, and guilt of such a course.

You just don't find many psychological epics!

\*\*\*\*\*

#### CLASSIFIED ADS

Roommate wanted -- antlers optional.

Contact R.J. Squirrel, Frostbite Falls.

FREE to a good home -- 2 tribbles, 4 tribbles, 8 tribbles, 16 tribbles. Contact Capt. Koloff, Klingon Space Force.

LOST -- a Boy. Contact a Dog, c/o H. Ellison.

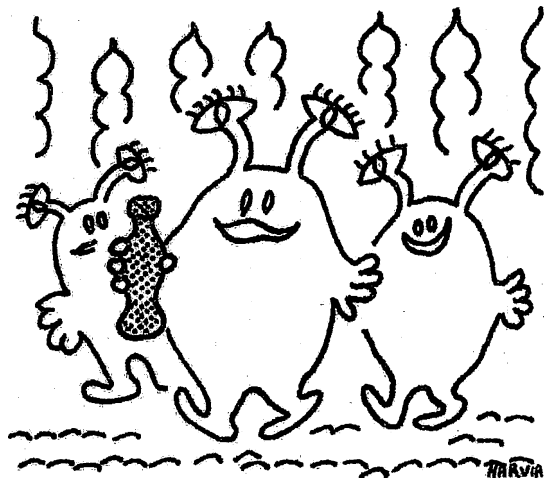
Feel a need to get away? Contact #2 for info concerning seaside resort.

FOR SALE: Pleasant suburban home, big front yard. Contact C. Simak.

Happy Cloneday, Tom -- from Tom, Tom, Tom, and Tom.

USED Spaceship, made Kessel run in 12 parsecs, available immediately for best offer (in doo-dahs). Contact H. Solo, S.P.O. Box 2001.

Send money to S.P.O. Box 1984.



♪ I DRINK DR. ZEPHYR  
AND I'M GREEN;  
I'M PART OF AN  
ALIEN SCENE... ♪



# BUILDING AN ALIEN

BY C.J. CHERRYH



KLEPH, from Hunter of Worlds

The easiest route to alien-building is first to understand ourselves as someone else's aliens... as nature's logical and best response to this specific environment. That is, man works, and if brontosaurus had worked better, we wouldn't have had a job.

Simplistic, verily, and of course there's debate possible... all we're doing by that statement is seeking a model we can use. ASSUME, kindly, that we, in our generalized functions and varied types, are very nicely adapted for survival on Sol III, to its gravity, temperature ranges, light conditions, atmospheric pressure ranges, radiations, atmosphere, availability of moisture, nutrients, eco-systems in general (open to debate).

Change one item in that list and humanity might find itself up against the wall. Change our star one magnitude. Take away our moon (tidal and biocycles). What kind of changes would be wrought if we orbited a brighter star? Would eyes be advantageous under such conditions, with brilliance like a perpetually exploding flashbulb filling the sky?

Let's look at US for a moment, fragile, variable organisms that we truly are. Consider our environment, and how our biology conforms to it and compensates for it in wondrous intricacy; consider our senses, and which are strongest to us and most affecting; consider our drives, our cultures, our languages, our varied percepts of the same reality, or our beliefs, our desires, our fears; consider how we regard self and community; consider our variety, stone-age and space-age existing on the same planet; consider our history and how we still dance to old tunes; consider our reaction to strangers, and how we identify our own.

Consider what designs have shaped us: the complex neural system that makes so many responses possible; a bodily design that makes manipulation of delicate objects easy...tool use; grouping-tendencies, with eventual division of labor and passing-on of information, sharing of discoveries; memory of non-present objects and concepts; ability to control emotional or instinctual responses...one could go on.

Must the alien we are building have all these? I think not, but they are worth thinking about: how does he compensate? Or in his environment is it needful? Or does he have MORE than these?

Consider whales and fish and men. Whales and men are closer kin...but environment molds outward shapes...and perhaps mental responses. Perhaps whales are indeed an alien intelligence, one of whom we have never asked the proper questions.

Consider our own adaptations to terrestrial environment...our upright skeleton, leaving hands free; consider our faces, with bony projections protecting the eye, that most essential of our sense-organs, with flexible ears and noses, muscular sheathing for the windpipe...all well-suited to surviving impacts; our u-shaped jaw

gives our tongue free range to modify sounds for articulate speech; the lips play their part in speech, too; our hand rotates, grips, flexes, and does so with a very lovely thumb: try manipulation without using it.

And even as adults, we can go into a foetal tuck, -- imagine being pregnant with a non-tuckable offspring: curl-ability in foetus is VERY nice ---and our adult ability to assume this posture helps us protect our soft spots and fragile limbs. I think aliens should be built tuckable too...or they must spend a great deal of time in hiding.

Here's a checklist for aliens based on the above:

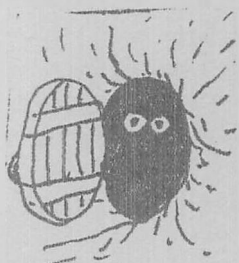
1. How does culture respond to environment? to biology?
2. What's the food chain that supports this alien?
3. What is the range of sensitivity of its senses, and which are most important to it?
4. What are its drives and which are the strongest? (What drive, for instance, could substitute effectively to ensure survival of a species in which there was virtual lack of a parenting-response?)
5. How would drives influence religion, vocabulary, sense of self?
6. How would drives affect its response to outsiders? What would be its greatest fear in such a contact?
7. What part of its anatomy is most vulnerable to injury and what reflexive and cultural responses protect it?
8. How long does it live?
9. How long are its generations, how does it reproduce, how often? How many sexes? What are the signs of physical maturity, and is there attempt to conceal these or are certain ones deliberately made visible?
10. What kind of expressions and mannerisms are possible with such a physical structure? Is there cultural variety?
11. How long is parenting and how is knowledge passed?
12. What sort of biological, environmental, and cultural cycles operate here?
13. What drove them to develop technology? What did they invent first? Were they moved by territoriality to go first for weaponry, or by hunting, or by some quirk of environment? How fast was the progress with how many lapses and slips?
14. How curious are they about the cosmos? What were their early answers to the forces of nature and the mysteries of life?
15. How long has the species existed?
16. Internal biology: would vast size, perhaps, need extra help with circulation ...perhaps a second heart or heart-like mechanism? And what other changes might one guess at?

Fill in the questions in a harmonious fashion and you have your own alien.

One additional point that is a matter of personal observation: that the changes should be beautiful...an alien symmetry, as it were, but symmetry, a sense of rightness in all its parts, harmony in motion and function. I should add to that, I think, that there is no creature on Earth in which I can find no beauty, and some which are considered horrible are -- to the right and loving eye, I suppose -- most magnificent. Consider the motion of the serpent and its colors in that motion; or the same in the lowly earthworm. Or the spring of a tiger.

And lastly, the matter of individuality: the understanding of individuality rests on understanding of the commonality. By that I mean that an individual plays upon the stage of his ancestors and his contemporaries, reacts to them either positively or negatively, either conforms or challenges. Once we have built the aliens, we can build the alien...an individual, with individual differences from the commonality of which he is a part.

Therein lies the character.





# WISCON 2

OR

"Do I have a mouth?"

BY

John Bartelt

As the second Wisconsin Science Fiction Convention got under way, The Madison Book Co-op, the original home of the Madison Science Fiction Group, burned to the ground. This was very melodramatic. Fortunately, also a gross exaggeration. There was indeed a fire in the same building as the Book Co-op, but the Co-op itself sustained no damage, and was open for business the next day. (One might even argue that the building wasn't the original home, since the Book Co-op had moved from where the first meetings had been held.) First reports and rumors, of course, weren't that specific, so we at the convention weren't sure what was happening. Then I had another weird incident involving a fanwriter who didn't take kindly to my criticisms of one of his articles (I could have called this a "Close Encounter of the Uneasy Kind", but managed to avoid a joke as obvious as that).

That evening, though, the con really got going. One of the minor bugs was that the con was spread through a number of buildings (all within about two blocks of each other). Things were blocked, however, so that there wasn't a lot of running from one building to another (and fortunately the weather wasn't unpleasant). Registration, hucksters, artshow, and all of the afternoon programs were in the Wisconsin Center, a University facility. Friday night, after the wacko opening ceremonies, the action moved to the Great Hall of Wisconsin Memorial Union. It was at this point that I uttered the question, "Do I have a mouth?" -- and it made sense in context. You see the committee had arranged to have nametags stuck on our backs, with the names of fictional characters. Then by asking yes-or-no questions, we were to discern who we were. At one point I had determined that I was a character in a famous Harlan Ellison short story. My mind was temporarily blank, and that was the only question I could think of. (The answer was yes.) Soon after, I figured out I was "the Harlequin". I played twice more, ending up as Robin, the Boy Wonder, and the Emperor Wang. The whole game was very successful in accomplishing its purpose, which was breaking the ice.

During this time, a band began playing, much too loudly to allow casual conversation. The band took a break while Moebius Theatre from Chicago performed their "Future Schtick". The lack of a stage and lighting control detracted from the performance. The band started playing again, and some people stayed and danced; but the movies and parties were starting back at the Madison Inn (more or less the

con hotel, though some fans stayed at the cheaper Lowell Hall, a University-maintained hotel across the street. There was a good movie program, including the silent classic "M", the featured "Barbarella", and many others. There was also, unfortunately, some lack of parties on both nights. (A Minneapolis in '73 party certainly would have helped.)

The main programming took place Saturday and Sunday in the Wisconsin Center, though one morning panel, "Children's Role Models in Juvenile SF", was held in another building. In particular, I attended the "Feminism and SF" and "Sex and Gender in SF" panels. There were, however, many other panels whose topics included: The Silmarillion,



Fascism and SF, Women in Fandom, Teaching SF and Fantasy. Other events included the Magic Lantern Triple Feature, "Will the Real James Tiptree, Jr. Please Stand Up?" (in the format of a famous game show), and the Madison Parade of Cats (a guided tour to local fans' felines). And for real Dungeon & Dragon ~~fantasy~~ fanatics, there was a continuous, 48-hour adventure. (I'm probably leaving out something, but that's the way WisCon is -- something for everyone.)

The artshow awards were given out Saturday night. The artwork had been assessed by a blue-ribbon panel of judges. My suggestion that the beautiful lucite trophies be named "Wiskys" was unappreciated. (Nor has the term "mun-fi", which I coined after hearing a remark by Susan Wood, caught on as a synonym for mainstream literature -- as in, "Want to go see a mun-fi movie?")

Vonda McIntyre and Susan Wood were marvelous, congenial guests of honor. Susan Wood gave me egoboo; and Vonda McIntyre gave me and other would-be writers advice, in a quickly-planned Sunday afternoon seminar. Both of them also took part in some of the panels.

As last year, one could occasionally hear mutterings complaining of the feminist orientation of the con. Two things to consider: 1. The guests of honor and programming were well-advertised in advance -- you pay your money, you get your con; 2. You could go to programming all weekend and never go to anything "feminist". As cons continue to proliferate in the Midwest, it's nice to see one maintaining a unique identity.





# Books



The Forbidden Tower, by Marion Zimmer Bradley; DAW sf, \$1.95, 364 pages.

This book raises one old question -- when is a book a science fiction book? -- and a new one. The new one is: when a superb book that doesn't quite match your definition of science fiction gets nominated for a science fiction award, how do you vote, and how do you justify it?

It's pretty clear that The Forbidden Tower straddles the borderline between sf and something. Is that something "personal relationships fiction"? Yes; and if there were such a genre holding conventions and granting awards, The Forbidden Tower would walk away with one. (Its main concern is the development and the workability of a four-way marriage relationship among telepathically gifted people.) Fantasy? Also yes. The use of the word "psi", associated with science fiction through tradition and through John W. Campbell's printing of many such stories in "Astounding/Analog", is misleading; what Marion\* has done with laran (psi powers, more or less) is to answer the question, "If there were forces with which to control our environment and our destiny that bore no resemblance either to magic as it is ordinarily thought of or to science as it is ordinarily perceived, what form might those forces take?"

Any honest answer to that question will straddle the borderline between science fiction and fantasy if it's written believably at all. Other factors nudge The Forbidden Tower in opposite directions, leaving it on the borderline: since Darkover is an alien planet around another sun, and the book takes place in our future, it is science fiction; since science and technology as we know them play no part worth mentioning, it is not. Is the treatment of laran scientific, or simply systematic and detailed? Is the resistance Terran Andrew Carr displays to concepts Darkover natives take for granted enough to qualify this book as anthropological science fiction? Does the fact that science, technology, and consistency are never thrown out the window for the sake of plot -- or the sake of anything else -- mean that we ought to let the book be considered science fiction in the absence of a solid reason to the contrary? I'll give a tentative "yes" to the last one, let you wrestle with the other two, and move ahead to tell those of you who haven't read it what this book is about.

The people are the story; and the people are Damon Ridenow, soldier-in-spite-of-himself and former psi technician, his bride Ellemir, her twin sister Callista, and Callista's true love Andrew Carr. Callista has been trained for years to be a Keeper in one of the Towers, where laran is focused, controlled, beamed, and used to keep society going. (Laran can heal, teleport, be broadcast as power for technology, and put one in contact with the past; the matrix circles which operate within the Towers form as close a bond as humans can form, since laran includes telepathy.) Keepers must be virgin women; and Andrew can scarcely touch Callista, let alone be her lover, due to the conditioning she has been put through to help her maintain her aloofness. They marry, and things get no better; but Ellemir is available to meet Andrew's needs as is frequent among Darkovan women -- the sister of a sick woman may take said woman's place in her husband's bed. The four grow closer -- and closer -- and at the same time, Leonie, Keeper of the Arilinn Tower, who originally trained Callista, is trying to pressure her into giving up on herself and on Andrew and coming back.

This sounds like character development and background. It isn't; it's the story. The other elements of the novel, which might sound like story ingredients, are world-building and background; only the unhappy, talented, illegitimate Dezi and his struggle for acceptance truly play a part in the building of suspense. And suspense there is, but it involves the growth of the rapport among the four, and their conflict with Leonie, and Callista's struggle for womanhood; this isn't an "action" book.

I haven't told you how good a book it is, but I'm not sure I can. I will here make a gesture of defiance: read this book, and then name one (other?) science fiction book not in the Darkover series where the world comes as thoroughly alive as Darkover does in this one. Mesklin, from Mission of Gravity? From an astronomer's standpoint, yes; otherwise, no. Arrakis, from Dune? No way. Winter, from The Left Hand of Darkness, gives Darkover a major run for its money; but since no single individual in that book comes alive to the extent that Damon, Callista and Ellemir do (and those three come alive as Darkovans, not as Terrans with alien names), a major element is missing. Earth, a planet mentioned in many science fiction and almost all non-science fiction novels, comes close.

Yes, this year's Hugo award could be given to a book that is better science fiction, or more clearly science fiction. But it would be difficult to give it to a better book.

\*(I have adopted the Spider Robinson convention of first-naming authors I know, last-naming the rest.)

-- Reviewed by Kate Bucklin --

The City of the Sun, by Brian M. Stableford; DAW sf, \$1.50, 189 pages.



Any book which starts out with "Nathan was drumming his fingers on the tabletop, just to keep himself active" is going to win a certain amount of my attention. I was disappointed to find out that Nathan Parrick, the only character in the book who comes alive even occasionally, bears me no other resemblance. I was even more disappointed to realize that I was about to have to damn an honest craftsman's serious piece of work with faint praise, for RUNE, because I can't honestly recommend it.

The Daedalus stories, of which this is the fourth, appear to be a series like Star Trek or Stephen Tall's The "Stardust" Voyages. The mission of the Daedalus is to scout out century-old Terran colonies, partly to see if they need help, partly to see if there are any lessons to be learned before the U.N. launches the next batch of colont ships.

This kind of story has its limitations. The first half of the story has to be

description, which must build suspense without giving too much away; the puzzle has to be worth the buildup (difficult, in something longer than novelet length); and the story can't be too similar to any other story in the same series, or a different one.



I haven't read the other stories in the series, but Stableford has done a decent enough job on this one to make it very easy to finish. So the characters, including narrator Alexis Alexander, are only disembodied voices and viewpoints whom one never gets to know, or know anything about -- well, that just makes them less of an interference with the description of the new planet. (Nathan, who tends to argue the opposite side from the narrator just for conflict, is somewhat of an interference, and an irritant; perhaps a sympathetic adversary must have depth to his character as well as reason behind his arguments?) The colonists on the world Arcadia have been infested by parasites who may control their thoughts. So okay, George R.R. Martin did "A Song for Iya", and Heinlein did The Puppet Masters, both far superior; but though there was no need to do it again, there's no harm in this honest attempt. The ending is a mild let-down, but doesn't cheat the reader; the style is totally readable.

I suppose it depends on what you want out of a book. This one is simply a time-passer.

-- Reviewed by Nate Bucklin --

Interstellar Empire, by John Brunner; DAW sf, \$1.50, 256 pages.

Two of these three relatively early Brunner stories (1965, 1958, 1953 -- that last one's really early!) are almost novel length; the third is short. I'm going to tell you about "The Altar at Asconel", which is long, is the most recent, and leads off the book. If you like it, the other two will scratch your itch for more; and if you don't, you don't need to know about "The Man from the Big Dark" and "The Space-Time Juggler" anyway.

Most of Brunner's early work is unusually good space opera. The science is never thick or phony, the characters never stereotyped past believability, and the leaps in logic and amateurish writing that plague many other action-adventure sf books never seem to show up in Brunner stories. "Altar" involves four brothers who are heirs to the throne of the planet Asconel. Spartak, the monk, is dragged out of seclusion by the news that his oldest brother, the Warden of Asconel, has been killed and the throne usurped; and he and the other two surviving brothers set out to find out what's happening and avenge the death. The space travel is stock enough; the descriptions of the different planets won't knock you over with their novelty; but the characters, the use of psionics and mental conditioning, the details of living in a universe where the Empire has fallen and chaos reigns but the starships still fly (which, come to think of it, are reminiscent of those details as presented in Asimov's Foundation and Empire -- and about as well done here as there) and the final blazing realization of the nature of the usurper are all well realized.

Buy it, and read it on your lunch hours and coffee breaks.

--Reviewed by Nate Bucklin--



A Touch of Strange, by Theodore Sturgeon; DAW sf, \$1.95, 256 pages.

Contents: "Mr. Costello, Hero", "The Touch of Your Hand", "Affair with a Green Monkey", "A Crime for Llewellyn", "It Opens the Sky", "A Touch of Strange", "The Other Celia", "The Pod in the Barrier", "The Girl Had Guts".

Cover by Hans Arnold.

There are several qualities which I value in fiction writers; two of the most important are a flair in stringing words together, and the ability to tell a story. Sturgeon is a master of both.

Sturgeon the wordsmith produces lines like these:

"He was confused and despairing, lost especially in the once securely-blueprinted stretches of the future."

"...the mermaid's lips were not only cold, but dry and not completely flexible, like the carapace of the soft-shell crab."

"There was an old spinster in this very building who collected bottles, large and small, of any value or capacity, providing they were round and squat and with long necks. A man on the second floor secretly guarded his desirables with an unloaded .25 automatic in his top bureau drawer, for which he had a half-box of .38 cartridges."

He can describe a person's mental state, appearance, or entire personality, in a few closely-woven words. Scenes and actions are equally well portrayed.

And Sturgeon the storyteller? He writes love stories, horror stories, first contact stories, space adventures, and psychological studies -- and sometimes all those in one.

This collection shows him at his versatile best. Highly recommended.

-- Reviewed by Carol Kennedy --



The 1978 Annual World's Best SF, ed. by Donald A. Wollheim; DAW sf, \$1.95, 270 pages.

Contents: "In the Hall of the Martian Kings" (J. Varley), "A Time to Live" (Joe Haldeman), "The House of Compassionate Sharers" (M. Bishop), "Particle Theory" (E. Bryant), "The Taste of the Dish and the Savor of the Day" (J. Brunner), "Jeffy Is Five" (H. Ellison), "The Screwfly Solution" (R. Sheldon), "Eyes of Amber" (J.D. Vinge), "Child of the Sun" (J.E. Gunn), "Brother" (C.D. Simak)

Cover by Jack Gaughan.

There are a number of anthologies each year which claim to reprint the year's best sf. This one has some justification for that claim, since 4 of the 10 stories are Hugo nominees (the ones by Varley, Ellison, Sheldon, and Vinge). Two of these were among my own top Hugo choices (the Varley -- second only to the Robinsons' "Stardance", and the Ellison); and there are several others which would have been had I read them in time. This collection seems to contain a good balance in subject matter and style, and is of notably high literary quality.

Recommended for those who don't have the original publications.

--Reviewed by Carol Kennedy --





# LETTERCOLUMN

Barney Neufeld  
3357 Silsby Road  
Cleveland Heights, OH 44118

RUNE 52 arrived ~~quite some time ago~~ at the end of a particularly frustrating week. Thank you. It was like a tonic.

The uniquely Lien humor of the "Outaugural Message" is superb. Denny is perfect in print, where one has the time to ruly savor his wit with all due irreverance. I wish he would do more.

Don Bailey's Boskone report is a pure delight. The disclaimer notwithstanding, Don packs a powerful pun behind that unassuming mien. Of all the reports of the con I've been exposed to, his is among the most enjoyable.

Dave Wixon has a marvelous sense of the ridiculous. His review (?) of COUNTDOWN FOR CINDY is witty, pointed, and vastly entertaining.

Rarely have I been so thoroughly amused as by such as these. Thank for a much-needed lift!

One question: Why does the 52 on your cover look like a 59?  
(((Well, Jim's always been a little Od...)))

D Gary Grady  
612 E. Maynard Ave.  
Durham, NC 27704

...I especially liked Dave Wixon's analysis of COUNTDOWN FOR CINDY, which is one of the most awful titles (albeit appropriate, from his description) I have ever heard of.

What's really terrible is that so many women have evidently been socialized to behave this way. I know a woman about 30, very beautiful and not at all dumb (I have seen her solve complicated problems in an instant) who acts dumb because (she has told me) "It's the only way to get men."

(((But who wants that kind of men? -- Carol.)))

Evidently it works for her (or merely fails to repulse them, but I don't believe that axiom. It turns me off utterly, and I honestly think it does most men. Some women read these idiotic books as kids and grow up on Cosmopolitan and The Total ~~Liberal~~ Woman and they finally come to believe all this. One of the best things to come out of the women's movement is non-sexist reading matter for youngsters. That's really where we're going to see some tangible progress of the kind we can't legislate.

Elyse M Grasso  
300 Main St. Apt. 14  
Danbury, CT 06810

...You'd better keep those fuzzy seditionists away from my beasts or you're likely to be sued for alienation of fuzzy animals...

Krissy  
1868 Commonwealth Ave. #14  
Brighton, MA 02134

...Your ex's speech added substantial weight to my theory of the possibility of genetically inheriting deviant qualities. As you must know, a group of deviant and malcontent New Englanders fled our hallowed,

historic and blessed homeland (a true and veritable Paradise where benevolent decree permitted -- nay demanded -- that they harvest two crops a year. One of granite, prior to sowing, and a later, less divine vegetable harvest). As I said, these ingrates fled their native land of milk and honey (granite and noreasters?) for the sinfully seductive clime of Minnesota -- a land obviously unloved by the gods as evidenced by its lack of ocean, its ostentatious display of topsoil (easily six

inches in some places, or more), and, of course, its paucity of granite. Bubba Denny's speech praising his successors vividly points out that this self-same, aforementioned degenerate spirit not only lives on, but it flourishes...



Mike Wood  
1378 Roblyn Ave. #3  
St. Paul, MN 55104

Greg's follow-up article in RUNE 52 does get into something with the "don't dream it, be it" theme --

the appeal of that idea to SF/fantasy fans is obvious. But while that's a neat idea in the abstract, when it's expressed in the specifics of Rocky Horror I can only react by saying that that's not my dream, or anything I'm interested in being -- and I feel worlds apart from anyone who does feel a real affinity for the particular dreaming/being going on in the film. I can appreciate and enjoy Rocky Horror as a multifaceted parody, and as an interesting excursion into a truly bizarre world-of-its-own, and some of the music is a lot of fun (and some of it a dreadful bore, in my opinion) -- but I can't see joining in with the aspirations of the characters in the movie. I guess that's what distinguishes someone like me from a hard-core Rocky Horror cultist. I wonder if another point of distinction is one's sexual response to Tim Curry's portrayal of Frank N. Furter -- I also feel worlds-apart, sexually, from anyone who finds Dr. Frank attractive. He comes across as arrogant, manipulative, cruel, showing scarcely any sign of tenderness, affection, or even kindness toward anyone in the film -- that's supposed to be a turn-on? No way.

((It may be that you're reacting negatively to the form of the movie, while many fans react positively to the content. The appreciation seems to be directed at the underlying theme of "don't dream it, be it", rather than at the details of Frank and company's method of realizing their dreams.)))

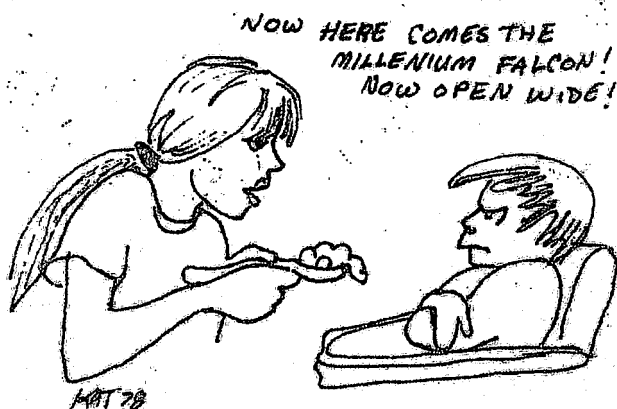


David Schlosser  
7322 Aldea Ave.  
Van Nuys, CA 91406

...If you're going to  
publish inciteful  
material I think you  
should run a warning

in the ToC. I mean, except for the fluke  
that had me home the day RENE came and  
allowed me to read it first, Wally may  
have read that Abolitionistic article from  
the COSMIC ENQUIRER. And I shudder to  
think what may have happened if KualaWally  
Schlosser had learned of FAL. And I also  
request that you not allow Moleyair to see  
this letter. All I need is for this  
sickness to spread to my clan...

((You think you have problems? I was just cleaning the bookshelves, and  
behind some books I found posters, placards, and badges with slogans  
like "Fuzzy Freedom" and "Animal Anarchy". I am in big trouble here. --  
Carol.)))



Cal Johnson  
803 N. 37th  
Corsicana, TX 75110

...Lee echoed opinions of my own in his editorial. I have been  
a fan for a little over a year. That year has seen me grow  
in many ways, and many of those growings were the result of  
being in fandom. I am now more sure of myself, and more

sure of what matters to me. I am a more secure person. And, I care less about  
what some people think of me -- they just don't matter to me. I have my friends,  
inside and out of fandom, and they have helped me to realize that what I believe  
and what I want to be is important. After reading SF and Fantasy for almost as  
long as I could read, it was great to find a group where I could talk about it to  
my heart's content. I know that when I go to college, or no matter what state I'm  
in, there will be people there that I can call friends. I tell you what, it's  
great being here, folks, thanks a million for the privilege...

Neil Rest  
6577 N. Lakewood  
Chicago, IL 60626

...the current RENE incorporates a break with tradition which  
threatens some of the most beloved hallmarks of Minneapolis  
fandom. I almost hate to say it so bluntly and explicitly,  
but inside the bacover, the calendar lists meetings and  
get-togethers, some of which had not even happened yet when I got my copy in the  
mail!

This sort of flagrant disregard for everything which has made the Minneapolis  
in '73 bid great could strike at the root of Minneapolis' credibility if allowed  
to continue.

Shape up!

David S. Bratman  
P.O. Box 4651  
Berkeley, CA 94704

...Concerning the cover of #50, Jim Odbert, and Mike Glicksohn:  
pointed satire can be a very dangerous thing. Its perpetrators  
are always surprised when it is mistaken for the real thing.  
But with certain touchy subjects, and sexism is one, no satire  
can be sure of seeming so outrageous that nobody will make this error. Even I  
did not realize, at the time, that the cover was intended to be a put-on. I just  
shook my head and wondered why this travesty on the cover of RENE. Parody, which  
might be defined as satire that looks silly, is much more along your line...

((In this particular area of editorial standards/preferences, we tend  
to agree with you, as you may have noticed.)))



Waller '75

George J. Laskowski, Jr.  
The Lanshack  
47 Valley Way  
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48013

... I am putting together a special Jack Williamson issue of my fanzine, *Lan's Lantern*, and would like any kind of artwork from any of his stories...

One point to clear up, in Wixon's review of Terry Carr's *CIRQUE*, he calls it Terry's first novel. Wrong! In 1963 he wrote a book called *WARLORD OF KOR* (one side of an Ace double, R.M. Will ms' *THE STAR WASPS* on the other side). Then I guess after several short stories, he became a fairly competent editor...

Dan Goodman  
1043 N. Curson #7  
Los Angeles, CA 90046

Cover: this is the first Odbert illo I've seen that I really liked. It's also the first Odbert woman I've seen who turned me on.

On Denny Lien's farewell speech: I don't see why owning a dog is such a problem. All that's needed is to buy the beast a species-change operation. Once the dog is transformed into a cat, the problem is solved.

The fanzine reviews make me want to purr.

((And when did you have your species-change operation?)))

They're GOOD. As informative as they can be, without making each review longer than the zine it deals with.

...Robert Runte's regret that he doesn't live in a fanarea with long-established traditions: he should think of it as an opportunity to help establish the traditions... And in twenty years, if it works, people will talk about such fabulous old-time fans as Robert Runte, without whom Edmonton fandom wouldn't be what it is.

Of course, there's always the chance that people will forget Runte's contributions. The usual way of preventing this is to write the fanhistories oneself. (Damn. So much for my resolution to be less cynical.)...

Harry Warner, Jr.  
423 Summit Avenue  
Hagerstown, MD 21740

...Dave Wixon's review involves a gray area in science fiction. I don't think much has been done about compiling records of what has been published for juveniles. It wouldn't be hard to reconstruct publishing activities from sources like *Locus* for science fiction meant for a general audience. But I doubt if the juvenile book lists published for library use cover the more obscure lines of paperbacks. There must be many hundreds of titles published in recent years which qualify as science fiction on every ground except that they aren't mature enough in treatment to interest fans, so they're generally ignored in fanzines. Most of them are as hard to read as *COUNTDOWN FOR CINDY*. But there must be a bit of gold scattered here and there amid all that dross. Besides, quite a few important pros have written extensively for juveniles, like del Rey and Wollheim, and it might be hard to complete bibliographies for some of these authors if nobody pays attention to the kid stuff...

Irwin Hirsh  
279 Domain Road  
South Yarra, Victoria 3141  
Australia

(RUNE 51)...And it was good to see a wombat on the cover (australia in '83). Good stuff.

((You were the only person who recognized it as a wombat. But an Aussie should know!)))



We Also Heard From: David Thayer, J. Owen \*  
 Hanner, Perry Glen Moore, Jim Meadows, \*  
 Sheryl Birkhead, Lester Boutillier, Denys \*  
 Howard, Ruth Judkowitz, Dennis Jarog, Jim \*  
 Hershberg, Stephen Borer, Teddy Harvia, \*  
 Sternpersohn, Erica Ellingson, Rebecca \*  
 Jirak, Mary Long, Gary Deindorfer, Samuel \*  
 Edward Konkin III, Adrienne Fein, Arthur \*  
 Hlavaty, Margaret Middleton, R Laurraine \*  
 Tutihasi, Brett Cox, Rick Shoary, Vito \*  
 Vitkauskas, Harry Andruschak, George \*  
 Flynn, Cal Johnson, Greg Kotter, John \*  
 Purcell, Tim C. Marion. \*

\*\*\*\*\*

#### ATTENTION: FAN EDITORS

If you would like to have book reviews  
 written by RUNE's reviewer Nate Bucklin,  
 he would be happy to write for you.  
 Contact Nate at:

2301 Elliot Ave. #1  
 Minneapolis, MN 55404

\*\*\*\*\*

#### NEW APA ANNOUNCED

APA: DAVID (OJLSD) is an apa primarily,  
 but not exclusively, for people whose  
 name is David. It will be quarterly.  
 It is intended to be a real apa,  
 without any fixed topics. Members get  
 a free copy if they contribute.  
 Subscribers pay for their copy and may  
 contribute if they feel like it. There  
 is a procedure for joining: you send me  
 a stamped, self-addressed envelope,  
 and I will send you the important  
 details you need for the next issue.  
 If your first (or last) name is David  
 then you are qualified for membership.  
 Otherwise you may join as a subscriber.

David S. Cargo  
 343 E. 19th St., Apt. #6B  
 Minneapolis, MN 55404  
 Phone: (612) 371-0495

\*\*\*\*\*

RUNE is available for trade for  
 other fanzines. We prefer to trade  
 subscription for subscription,  
 rather than one for one. Please send  
 trades directly to Lee and Carol  
 (address on ToC).

\*\*\*\*\*

#### MINN-STF NEWS

##### Meetings:

Sept. 9 - Blue Petal, 1036 Front Ave.,  
 #3, St. Paul  
 Sept. 23 - Meeting suspended by vote  
 of membership.  
 Oct. 7 - Sheldon Halpern (Joel's  
 father), 220 W. Meadow Lane,  
 Golden Valley  
 Oct. 21 - Bozo Bus Building, 343 E.  
 19th St., 7B & 8B, Minneapolis

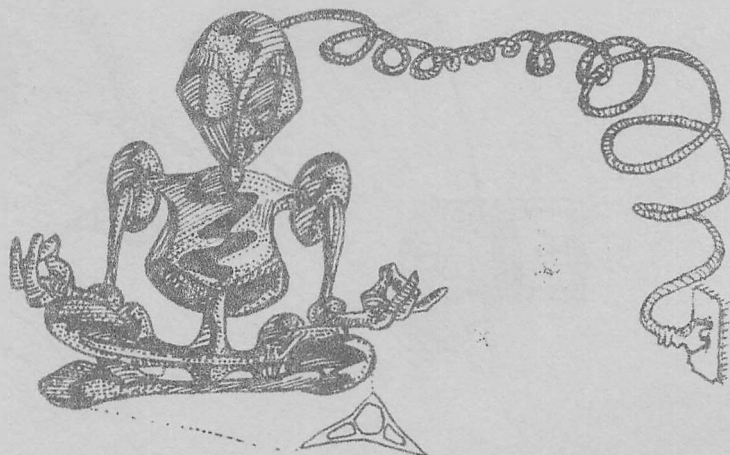
Jan Appelbaum has resigned from the  
 Board of Directors. The Board agreed  
 to ask Joan Marie Verba to serve out  
 his term. She has accepted.

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#### REGIONAL CONS

PGHLANGE X - Sept. 29-Oct. 1. Info:  
 Barbara Geraud, 1202 Benedum-Trees  
 Building, Pittsburgh, PA 15222  
 WINDYCON 5 - Oct. 6-8. Info: Windycon,  
 P.O. Box 2572, Chicago, IL 60690  
 NONCON - Oct. 7-9. Info: P.O. Box  
 1740, Edmonton, Alberta T5J 2P1  
 CONCLAVE 3 - Nov. 3-5. Info: EMUSFS,  
 117 Godison, Ypsilanti, MI

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# Weird Pails

