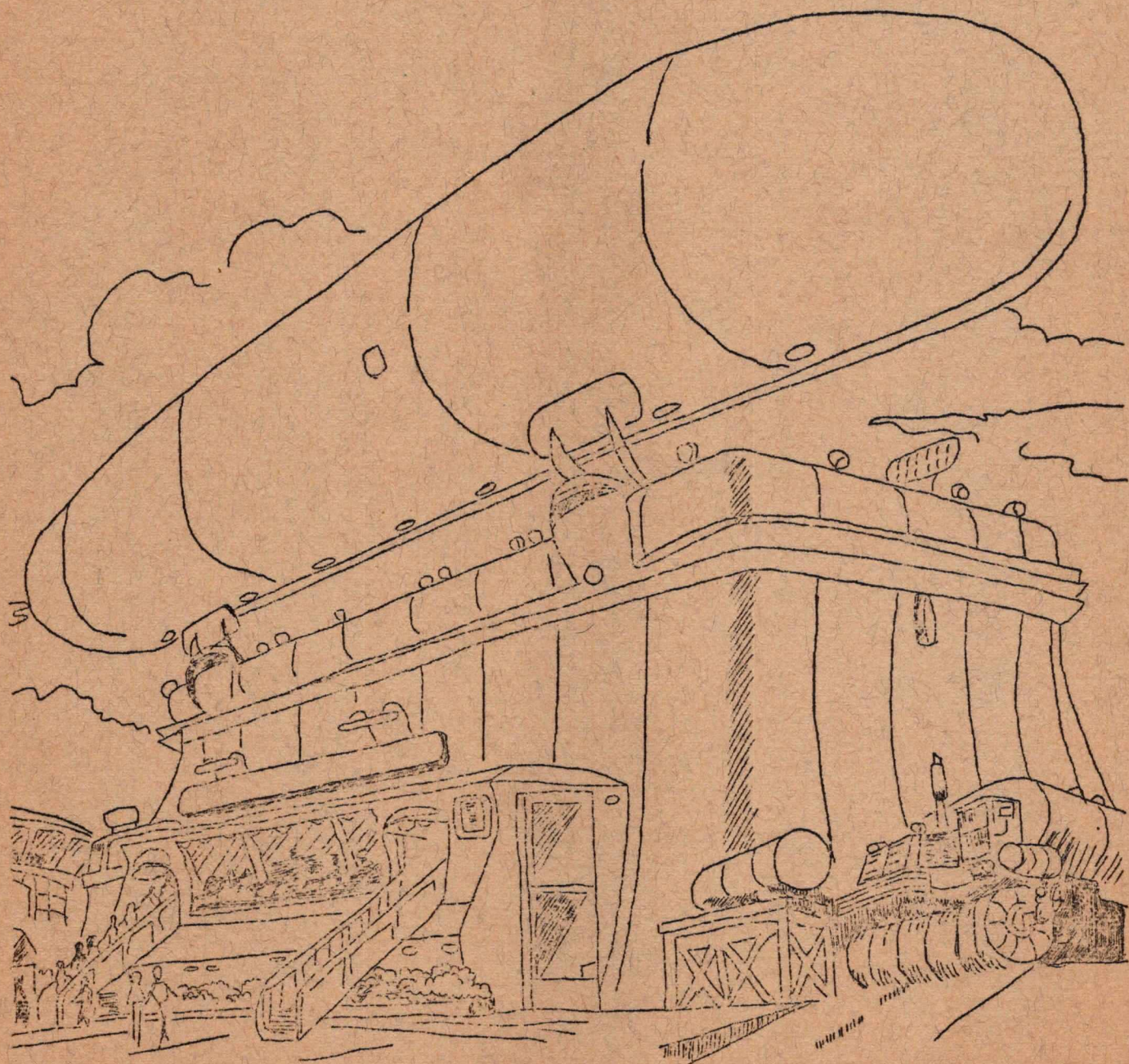


STAR- LING #9



STARLING

This is STARLING #9, published by Hank Luttrell, currently at Box 625 Thomas Jefferson Residence Hall, 202 West 18th Street, Rolla, Missouri 65401. At the end of the school year, my address goes back to the old one, Route 13, 2936 Barrett Station Road, Kirkwood, Missouri 63122. February, 1967 issue. Obtainable with 25¢ (4/\$1), a letter of comment or contribution of artwork, prose, poetry, or anything else you can convince me is worthwhile.

COVER by Jim Bogart

your man in missouri. . .(editorial). . . .Hank Luttrell. 4

list on page six. . . .(some books and things i want to sell) 6

with malice toward all. . .(book reviews). . . . Joe Sanders. 7

words from readers. . . .(letter column). 10

the specimens. . . .(fiction).W. B. Bliss. 17

fragments. . .(poems).Ted Kehr 19

BACK COVER by Nancy Rapp (?) and courtesy Ray Fisher, who gave it to me out of his material file.

ART CREDITS

- all lettering Hank Luttrell
- 5 Gene Klein
- 7 Robert E. Gilbert
- 9 Gene Klein
- 12 Gene Klein
- 14 Gene Klein
- 16 John D. Berry
- 18 Robert E. Gilbert

proof reader (who, as always, shouldn't be blamed as much as I): Jerry Hall

MAILING LABEL SYMBOLS

Go ahead, take a look at that mailing label. The symbol by your name there might just mean the following:

- L You usually write letters.
 - R You review fanzines, review mine?
 - T We trade fanzines.
 - S Sample copy. Do something to get the next issue.
- a number indicates the number of the last issue you've paid for, according to my records.

if you don't have a symbol, you couldn't get off the mailing list if you tried.

C? Contribute? Please?

YOUR MAN IN MISSOURI

which I'll have to call an editorial by Hank Luttrell

A number of fanzines have been coming out of St. Louis recently. OSFAn, which receives only local distribution for the most part, was the first of these fanzines to tumble out of Ray Fisher's new lithograph. The first lithographed St. Louis fanzine that a number of you might have seen was Ray's ODD. After that, OSFA's SIRRUIISH #3, now edited by Jim Hall, made its triumphant appearance. Paul Willis is threatening us with a fanzine, and there is always a good chance that Dave Hall will publish another GRIMORIE. So. Most of the fanzines you see coming from St. Louis will be beautifully reproduced -- lithographed, even.

All of them except STARLING.

I could probably have Ray print it for me. But I'd feel rather bad about mailing him a bunch of masters and such from my winter home in Rolla here, and asking him to print the thing up, please, and not actually help in the laborious process. And it would be rather hard for me to get home long enough to be of much help. Anyway, when I get home for a weekend fanzine publishing doesn't seem like the great fun it might otherwise be -- there are other things which seem more interesting.

And, anyway, I have this cheap little mimeograph thing, and it works rather well, and why not use it? Mimeographing, if nothing else, means I can cut the artwork onto stencil myself, something I've always enjoyed doing, for some strange reason. After a brief experiment with electrostencilling in SIRRUIISH #2, I've decided that I'd rather do it all by hand.

Several people seem under the impression that Hank Luttrell was briefly gafia recently, and that STARLING folded. This is wrong of course. I've had delays between issues this long before without people mauling the dreaded word "folded." And I've been answering my mail with astounding -- for me -- promptness, meeting apa deadlines, and preserving my unchallenged record of attending every OSFA meeting. Hank -- gafia? Really!

Where Has All the Color Gone?

The last few STARLINGS and the two SIRRUIISH under my control were colorful things. This STARLING isn't, with the exception of the two covers. Color means expense and additional time spent publishing. Maybe this summer we can have color again. Maybe.

At the moment this stands to be a rather slim issue of STARLING. The letter column is an all time short (I think -- the second issue's might have been shorter.) But that is alright. It won't cost as much. And I'll be able to finish it sooner, and let all of you know I'm still around.

I've had cheese ravioli for lunch, and I'm sure it is doing something terrible to my stomach.



The last time I saw OSFA member Leigh Couch, she mentioned to me how similar all the discussion about censorship in a recent Tightbeam seemed to the discussion on the same subject in some old Thrilling Wonder Stories' letter column she had been reading. I agreed, it does always seem to be the same. Well, I guess I have nothing very new to say about censorship here, but I think I'll say it anyway -- perhaps to allow you to disagree back there in the letter column. I mean -- those Same Old Discussions must be interesting or entertaining or something, they turn up all the time.

The Supreme Court not too long ago thought they had something just a bit new to say, when they upheld the conviction of Ralph Ginzburg as a pornographer, and sent him to jail for five years, and fined him forty-two thousand dollars. This decision involved a criterion in the legal definition of pornography not previously set forth by our Supreme Court. His publications, the magazine Eros, the book The Housewife's Handbook on Selective Prom-

iscuity, and the newsletter Liaison, were not themselves declared obscene, at least not as the word obscene had been used previously by the court. Justice Brennan, for the majority, wrote, "Where the purveyor's sole emphasis is on the sexually provocative aspects of his publication, the fact may be decisive in the determination of obscenity." The court was saying that Ginzburg's promotion was at fault, rather than just his publications. The court implied that if judged on their own merit, the publications might have actually been found not obscene.

Let me become more basic for a moment. I can see only two possible motives for censoring erotica, sensuality, pornography, call it what you will. The first is the most wide spread -- many people feel being explicit about sex in print is immoral, evil, and just dreadful in general. Most people don't seem to feel thinking necessary, so they don't need any logical reasons behind this stand -- they accept it on faith. There are other people, however, who do have what they feel is a sound reason behind their support of censorship. They insist that pornography is harmful. That pornography is ever harmful has never been definitely established; for every expert who thinks that it is harmful, there is one who feels that it provides a needed outlet for people who might otherwise cause harm. I think in most cases calling pornography "harmful" and censoring it on those grounds is simply a justification for people who actually simply accept on faith that pornography is evil -- the first motive I mentioned -- and perhaps, too, these people feel sex itself dirty.

I can accept censorship only when applied by the individual for that individual's own reading, and that of his children's. If a person really believes pornography harmful, then he has the right not to read it, and to guide his children in that manner. But he doesn't have the right to censor what I read.

5

But. We have to be realistic. Enough people in the United States do believe pornography sinful or harmful to cause pressure for censorship. If censorship we must

have, then I want to see it done as justly and fairly as possible. I've implied that the only logical reason -- though in my opinion still false -- to censor erotica is that it might be harmful. If this is the basis on which we are going to censor, how should the censoring be done? Selling Fanny Hill to an elementary school age group is vastly different than selling it to an adult market. With the Ginzburg decision, the Supreme Court has tried to reject the role of literary critic, trying to decide what is worthwhile and what simply "appeals to prurient interests." It now wants to examine the aims and intents of the publishers and booksellers, rather than just what they publish or sell. I think this can be the only way in which any reasonable censorship is handled.

Potentially, the criterion introduced with the Ginzburg decision could be a boon to publishers and writers who might not otherwise be able to have their books published. It seems to suggest that now, finally, any serious author or publisher may publish anything of an honest nature. It seems to suggest this, anyway, until one examines just what Ginzburg did to bring down the wrath of the courts. A complete defense of Ginzburg's publications and his promotion would require more space than I want to spend on it here. I'll simply say that I don't think he was guilty of anything more than bad judgement and bad taste. His attitude was basically honest. While he was in business to make money -- this seemed to bother the Justices -- profit after all is an American institution. A five year jail sentence and fourty-two thousand dollars in fines seems outrageous.

Again I want to say that I oppose censorship by the state. But it seems that it is here to stay, at least for a long time, and if it can't be done away with altogether, I want to see it handled as fairly as possible. The logic behind the criterion introduced in the Ginzburg case is sound. It is a tragic pity that the criterion wasn't applied with better judgement. Perhaps we can be slightly optimistic about the future.

FOR SALE

PAPERBACKS (new condition, 25¢ each). THE PUPPET MASTERS, Robert Heinlein; THE ISLAND OF DR. MOREAU, H. G. Wells; THE FURIES, Keith Roberts; ECHO X, Ben Barzman; SAGA OF LOST EARTHS, Emil Petaja.

(Paperbacks in less than new condition. . . usually they have my named scrawled across them, 20¢ each or 6 for \$1) THE SPACE EGG, Russ Winterbotham; TIME IS THE SIMPLEST THING, Clifford D. Simak; A DECADE OF FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION, ed. by Robert P. Mills; THE INFINITE MOMENT, John Wyndham; I, ROBOT, Isaac Asimov; AND SOME WERE HUMAN, Lester Del Rey; CONDITIONALLY HUMAN, Walter M. Miller, Jr.; THE CITY AND THE STARS, Arthur C. Clarke; THE TIME MACHINE, H. G. Wells; THE MENACE FROM EARTH, Robert Heinlein; FAR OUT, Damon Knight.

Australian science fiction (this stuff is for completests only, nobody else would want it) THE INVADERS, Robert Spencer Carr 10¢, WHERE ETERNITY ENDS, Eando Binder 10¢; PLANET OF DOOM AND OTHER STORIES, 10¢; F&SF (Australian edition) #2 10¢.
. . . all of it for 35¢

Send the orders to Hank Luttrell at one of the address in the front. I'll pay the postage on orders over 50¢, otherwise, why don't you send me an extra dime, humm?

WITH MALICE TOWARD ALL



by
Joe
Sanders

After Many a Summer Dies Swan, by Aldous Huxley.
(Avon; 75¢).

Heavenly Discourse, by Charles Erskine Scott
Wood. (Vanguard Press):

The Lost Oasis, by Kenneth Robeson (Bantam, 45¢).

After Many a Summer Dies the Swan is a tract written in the form of a novel. How a reader reacts to this situation depends upon his tastes in tracts and in novels.

I enjoy now and then reading a novel with some substance to it -- some challenge in reading and some residue of sensation, thought, or feeling after I'm done -- but I prefer significance to emerge naturally from the story rather than the author shoving his message at me with both hands. Huxley evidently felt his message had to be stressed to that extent. It's a fairly straightforward mysticism: Good exists in a timeless, impersonal state, evil in the typical human consciousness's focus in the present moment, ownership of things, domination of people -- in the cravings of individual person-

ality. The best one can do is separate himself from this chaos and assist others in doing so too. Naturally, such a point of view is fairly difficult to get across to a materialistic modern reader. It requires quite a bit of explanation. But to really expound on it, Huxley runs the risk of killing his novel. It seems old-fashioned, to say the least, when a story suddenly stops while a kindly old philosopher sits under a tree and discourses for pages and pages to a fussy, opinionated skeptic (put there to ask pseudo-tart leading questions) and a bright-eyed but slightly fouled-up youth. That's what happens, though. Repeatedly.

Huxley tries to overcome this difficulty in two ways. For one thing, he makes the book as lively as possible stylistically. His writing is a finely honed cutting instrument, delighting the reader with its elegant verbal wit. For example, Huxley is skillful in counterpointing his ideas by unexpected juxtaposition, as when a character exclaims "I'll be damned!" to a new friend and gets the reply "We mostly are" (p. 20-21). Then, too, the plot elements Huxley uses are very sensational, inviting our prurient fascination; the story involves a California tycoon and his fantastic castle (obviously modeled on William Randolph Hearst and Sam Simeon), sex (with various perversions), and a hideously successful ^{search} for eternal life (the reason for my reviewing the novel in a fanzine). All of it neatly intertwined, in elaborate variations, as in this description of a cemetery the tycoon in Hollywood:

Statues wherever you turned your eyes. Hundreds of them, bought wholesale, one would guess, from some monumental masonry concern at Carrara or

REG
654

Pietrasanta. All nudes, all female, all exuberantly nubile. The sort of statues one would expect to see in the reception room of a high class brothel in Rio de Janeiro. "Oh Death," demanded a marble scroll at the entrance to every gallery, "where is thy sting?" Mutely, but eloquently, the statues gave their reassuring reply. . . . "I am the Resurrection and the Life," proclaimed the scrolls. "The Lord is my shepherd; therefore shall I want nothing." Nothing, not even girls in tightly buckled belts. "Death is swallowed up in victory"--the victory no longer of the spirit but of the body -- the well-fed body, for ever youthful, immortally athletic, indefatigably sexy.

Of course, all this gaudiness in style and content works with Huxley's point -- that an eternal life composed of such elements is worthless. The trouble is that in the end it all works too closely with that point. Each character, for all Huxley's skill remains primarily the representative of one idea, one debating position on the question "What Kind of Life is Worthwhile?" Each is set, fixed in a role like the characters in a Doc Savage novel. And in the last resolve Huxley's characters remain inert as people, however interesting their speeches are. Semi-developed as human beings, clustered around the central message like so many points of a syllogism, they possess strictly limited spontaneous life. And the same can be said of the novel -- a dutiful exercise by a skillful novelist.

Huxley is best known in our field for Brave New World. After you've read that, try his Point Counter Point. It has very little to do with science fiction or fantasy, but it's a pretty good book.

Heavenly Discourse is another fictionalized tract, or rather a series of tracts which were published in the old socialist Masses. Wood's message is a pretty standard radical-liberal appeal for pacifism, libertarianism, rational thought, etc. Its chief novelty is in the device Wood uses to express it: a series of dialogues among the inhabitants of Heaven. Wood succeeds both in being entertaining and getting his points across; for example the first dialogue, on the subject of tolerance, begins with Jesus asking God, "Father, are we Jews?" (p.1). A good line. And aside from the initial shock it's surprising how non-Basphemous Heavenly Discourse seems. The Heavenly dwellers -- and the devil -- come through as wise, tolerant, rather ironic people, and if you're not Aravingly anti-religious or narrowly sectarian to tolerate that idea you'll find the book entertaining.

Two quibbles. Wood, not treating institutionalized Christianity with much respect, feels free to distort doctrine to fit his point. For him Jesus is a tolerant, patient fellow -- so the story about his driving money changers from the Temple must be a myth. And so on. A more serious defect is the fact that the book becomes rather monotonous about half-way through. Wood repeats himself quite a bit, a failing probably left over from the dialogues' first publication as installments of a column. Anyway it's best to read Heavenly Discourse in short stretches.

But the book is worth reading, even if you have to hunt for it at used book sales like I did. Huxley's novel is a good deal better written than Heavenly Discourse, but Wood's book has a sharper bite to it. Perhaps this is due to Wood's basic idea --it's just more stunning to encounter the inhabitants of Heaven than those of Southern California. Or perhaps it's because Wood is much less subtle in his outrage than Huxley, as he addresses himself to concrete problems in the news as

well as to a basic reform of human consciousness. At the same time somehow Wood's book seems to have aged better than After Many a Summer Dies the Swan. Heavenly Discourse is valuable for Wood's piercing gaze -- sometimes a little glazed over with his own preconceptions, but often penetrating politics, international relations, institutionalized religion, etc., with fierce, funny insight. For at times, reading the book, one gets the feeling that only names have changed: the problems then are the problems now. I wish Wood were around today.

The Lost Oasis is the sixth of the paperback reprints of Doc Savage novels. It's no better but not much worse than most of the other Doc Savage reprints I've read. One thing: do not read the blurbs of these paperbacks if you intend to read the books, too. They give entirely too much information and misinformation. The covers -- although handsome portraits of Dean Grennell -- are rather non-functional, too.

* * *

While I'm recommending trash, though, there's a non-stf paperback, Code of Vengeance by Ennis Willie (Merit, 60¢), that might be worth your time. It's part of a series about Sard, a former syndicate gangster who now goes around being deadly to evil-doers. The series has a ridiculous slogan ("Sard: The Man Nobody Walks On!"), this novel is riddled with poor punctuation and grammar and built on a downright silly plot, but somehow it doesn't matter much. I picked the book up from among the sex novels while I was killing time in a newstand. Almost immediately I was hooked. Willie writes of incredible adventures with the weird conviction of early Spillane, and his story is set in a sharply-observed, gritty world. Code of Vengeance pretends only to be about two hours worth of relaxation, and it succeeds very well.

END



Creath Thorne, Route 4, Savannah, Missouri,
64485

I saw that Peanuts cartoon show, too; I didn't think it was too good, but I agree the last scene was classic. One thing that disturbed me about the show was that the voices somehow didn't fit the characters as I had imagined them to be. The only one that seemed perfect was the voice for Linus. It had a perfect high-pitched wavering tone that fitted Linus' insecure personality.

WORDS FROM READERS

A letter column, without doubt

//It didn't occur to me to think that the voices were out of character. I was perhaps too busy being pleased that the makers of the program had used children for the voices, rather than adults trying to sound like kids. HL//

One thing that I keep saying over and over about the classification of science fiction is that most science fiction is really fantasy. Only a very small percent of what is generally called science fiction is really science fiction in the truest sense of the word. Space opera is lowbrow fantasy; Ballard's work is highbrow fantasy. I prefer highbrow fantasy to lowbrow fantasy simply because it offers more to the reader; but most of all I prefer science fiction that is really science fiction -- and I don't think that it can be classified into highbrow and lowbrow categories. The reason for this is that true science fiction does not depend on usual literary techniques but instead depends on ideas and scope of imagination -- and sf-tional ideas cannot be divided into highbrow and lowbrow categories.

Robert Furey, 1618 So. Yewdall Street, Philadelphia, Pa., 19143

In Starling #8 Seth Johnson asked why someone didn't do a book review of John Hersey's WHITE LOTUS. I don't think this is necessary because it seems to me that WHITE LOTUS is not actually an sf story. Oh, it has quite a few elements of sf, a Yellow War, subjugation, and enslavement of the United States, etc. But these are just a basis to bring the writer to a point where he could discuss such topics as the basic need of all mankind for equality. Probably this book means much more to the student of literature but I for one heartily commend the sf fan who can wade through the 691 pages of the Bantam edition.

//You don't think, then, that a book which concerns itself with a serious topic, a book in which the theme is more important than the plot, can be science fiction. I disagree! HL//

Roy Tackett, 915 Green Valley Road NW, Albuquerque, N.M., 87107

I hadn't thought about sf as being divided between "highbrow" and "lowbrow" although considered in one light I suppose this division could be made. Highbrow sf. . .the arty non-story raved over by Judith Merrill and various pseudo-literary types. . .no plot, no story, no readers. Ah, but there is style, whatever that is. It annoys you when someone refers to space opera as "utter crap," eh? How annoyed do you get when someone refers to so-called highbrow sf utter crap?
//Well, pretty irritated, anyway. HL//Merril, for instance, tries to equate sf

with the quasi-literary garbage ground out by the "beat" writers, but Merrill doesn't know anything about stf anyway. Generally speaking, if the new wave is rejecting the traditional story-telling method it is because they have no story to tell and no talent to tell it with if they did have.

Ah, Stephen Pickering. I thought this was a book review but it is merely another of Pickering's triades against what he terms "anti-intellectualism." It finally becomes apparent that Pickering equates "intellectual" with "sociological," only sociologists are intellectual. Sociologists, by their nature, are guided by emotions not by intellect.

Pickering seems to reject the idea story as unworthy of the label science fiction but the idea story is science fiction. Time travel, alien worlds, etc., these, says Pickering, are not science fiction. Dealing with reality, that, according to Pickering, is science fiction. Only sociology is science fiction and worthy of consideration.

Ah, but sociology is excluded by the very title of the field, science fiction. Sociology is not a science. Sociologists are not scientists. If Pickering wants to expound on and defend intellect in sf then he should study science, which requires thinking and the exercise of intellect. But sociology is easier, it doesn't require the ability to think, only parrot. Science requires facts, while sociology requires only opinions and he has a lot of those.

Jack Gaughan, P.O. Box 177, Edgewater, New Jersey 07020

Lawrence/Stevens did NOT imitate Finlay. Unless you think that anyone who drew with a pen imitated Finlay. True, if one accepts Moskowitz's Finlay profile, Stevens was hired because he could supply elaborate pen drawings in Finlay's absence but Stevens always used a style as much his own as Finlay's was Finlay's.

Finlay modeled his drawings using short, close together strokes conforming to the shape of what he was drawing. Each succeeding row of strokes, as the form he was drawing went into shadow, was closer together. Then at right angles to the first strokes he deepened the modeling by cross hatching. He then soften the edges of his tones by stippling. (Of course Finlay used several techniques but this one is the one that seems to be his.)

Lawrence applied his tone in long strokes not necessarily conforming to the contour of what he was drawing, then using a cross hatch he accented his tone using what is called the "illustrator's ridge" . . .that dark tone between light and reflected light.

Finlay produced the more imaginative drawings. . .the more personal interpretations than did Stevens but somehow I find myself more taken by Steven's realistic approach. Often Finlay's work was marred by his obvious use of photographs for much of his "middle period" (FFM, FN) work. One could pick out the movie idol he used on his cover illustration. Hannes Bok kept a sort of file (not maliciously . . .just out of idle amusement) of the things Finlay drew and the sources of his drawings. (A figure used in a WT story and later in the FFM version of Allan and The Ice Gods f'instance, came from PLASTISCH ANATOMISCHER HANDATLAS. A muscular man from the back with one arm upraised.) Stevens was either more sparing in his use of swipes (research its called) or more artfull. And if one must make ||

comparisons, tho much of Stevens' work can be described as "dry", Stevens was better able to construct a picture than Finlay. (A thing about which Hannes and I disagreed.)

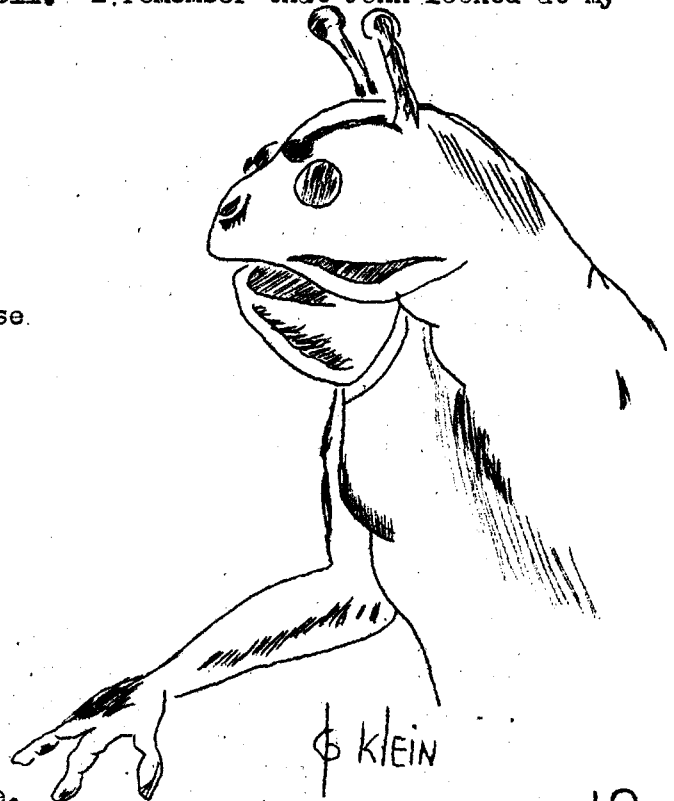
All in all, in spite of my sniping, I think it is unfair to compare the two and certainly inaccurate to say that Stevens imitated V.F.

None of these men sprang full blown into a mature, complete technique. I'm not of the scholarly Bent that traces sources and influences. . . I'd rather scribble than wonder about where the scribble came from. . . but any pen-ink artist working has a lineage of ancestors including Franklin Booth, Joseph Clement Coll, Henry C. Pitz, Daniel Vierge, Howard Pyle, Andres Zorn, James Montgomery Flagg, Gibson, etc., etc., right on down to Albrecht Durer. . . or UP as the case may be.

I once had the dubious honor of working for a man (whose name I forget) who claimed to have bought Earle Bergey's first work. I remember the guy had an apartment in Sutton Place and there were several Bergey paintings on the wall. Girlies all! Apparently, so my nameless friend told me, Bergey was self taught. He painted innumerable girlie magazine covers with titles like PEEK, WINK, WHOOPS, etc. ad infinitum. He was quite a technician and quite appropriate to the mags at the time. (I suppose even as we are now.)

Everybody is darned interested in these "campy" pulpy things. Doesn't anybody remember Hubert Rogers? Now there was a painter and a draughtsman! I'd give my eye teeth to be able to do what he did on some of those old Astounding covers. He too was of the pulps! I once met him in JWC's Elizabeth N.J. cubicle. I had gone to try to sell my wares to Mr. Campbell. I remember that John looked at my stuff and then launched into a lecture on pit-vipers. Eventually Roger began to take pity of me and swung the talk around to drawing. On that very day JWC learned for the first time what scratchboard was . . . he didn't know until then that one can scratch a line on a clay surface. . . even though he'd been buying the stuff. Rogers told me not to be so concerned with technique (I was a Finlay man in those days) but to draw and draw. It was good advice and I'm still learning from it. Both JWC and Rogers agreed that I should give up trying to make a living at illustrating sf as just about nobody (Cartier, Rogers, Schnceman) did it!

It is funny how everybody advised me not to go into art. The local celebrity in Springfield Ohio (he painted a pseudo Chinese mural for the Elk's Club) told me to forget about a career in art. After all. . . he never made it. "So forget it, Kid!" Hannes suggested I find a rich widow. I always wondered at this attitude. If they didn't enjoy it why did they do it?



John C. Ballari, 2328 47th Street, Moline, Illinois, 61265

Pickering throws his charges around so loosely, offers so little in the way of supporting argument, that I sometimes wonder if he has the slightest idea of what he's talking about. Occasionally he goes so far as to -- well --: "Davy suffers from sociological naivete, shallow characters, lack of originality. . ." Pickering never bothers to tell us just what is sociologically naive about Davy; he might just as easily have said Davy suffers from political ambiguity. Why didn't he? Probably he considered it, then discarded the idea as lacking the proper cadence. . .wouldn't go with the rhythm of the rest of his bullroar.

Now I like intellectual books well enough. But what I consider intellectual and the popular concept of intellectualism seems to be quite different things. As someone in your lettercol said, the New Wave is emotional. Ballard -- in his short stories, I haven't read all that many of his novels -- concentrates on what his characters feel, not what they think. And when you've read something like "The Watch Towers" (I think that's the title), you're left with a certain feeling of strangeness -- but certainly nothing you can put into conceptual terms. As for the Judith Merrill "intellectuals," I can see very little evidence of thinking in any of William Burroughs' drug-induced hallucinating. So that's it -- and why my reading is largely limited to space opera. If I want to read intellectual books, I'll stick to Rand and O'Hara, both of whom I like immensely!

Richard Labonte, 971 Wakeley Road, Ottawa 8, Ontario, Canada.

The Good Old Daze makes me drool a bit. Someday I'll have those pulps you talk about. One little thing bothers me: I can see no significance for the use of the word Daze, no punnish purpose or rhetorical reason or alliterative association. Could it be that you have mis-spelled D-A-Y-S?

//Oh, darn. And here all along I thought The Good Old Daze was one of the better of the many titles I've thought up. "Daze 1. to stun or bewilder. 2. to dazzle" A pun, darn it, a pun. HL//

James Suhrer Deor, 824 East Cottage Grove Ave., Bloomington!, Ind! 47401

Permit me some curiosity about "Another Part of Groff Conklin." Does Mr. Pickering wish to say that science fiction should be sociologically oriented? If so, why doesn't he say it? Does he wish, instead, to say simply that the current trend in sf is toward sociology (he does, after all, refer to "early, naive 'gadget' science fiction" as a genre)? Does he, in his final paragraph, wish to in some way equate "new ideas" with "sociological content" (whatever that may be precisely) and the lack of predisposition toward "sociological content" with "anti-intellectualism"?

I enjoyed your editorial; unfortunately I am not up enough on J. G. Ballard or British sf in general to make much comment. I wonder, though, if the increasing importance of the reality of space travel might not cause the downplaying of "interplanetary" elements in fiction: authors, and editors, would be becoming more and more interested in new worlds of speculation as it were!

Dave Dawson, 4 Eldredge Street, Newton, Mass., 02158

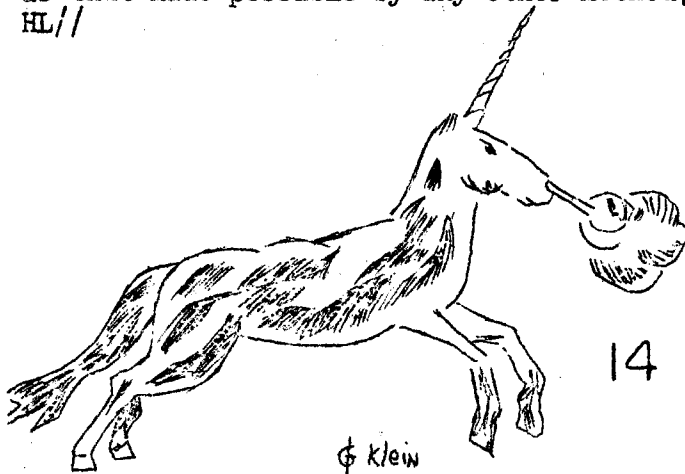
Nice cover, for mimeo. For an example of an excellent mimeo cover, see Lucifer #3 That was cut by hand! //Well, mine was too, of course. HL//

I want to talk about my last letter, and your rebuttal. First of all, comparing style and all that nonsense, which fans constantly do when attempting to downgrade ERB or any other author, is not really fair. If you compare the actual writing of ERB to someone like Fitzgerald you can wipe out ERB. Yet those two writers have no business being compared to each other. ERB (and for that matter, nearly all the early sf and fantasy authors) wrote solely to entertain. Therefore, he was writing a plot oriented story, and was not character conscious. Today, mainstream writers, and the better sf writers, use the plot as a vehicle to accomplish complete characterization. THE GREAT GATSBY is the story of a man, TARZAN OF THE APES is a story of a man's doings.

In character writing, identification by the reader is accomplished by making the reader empathize with the protagonist. In adventure writing, the reader identity is caused artificially, by making the reader wish he was the main character.

//I'm not sure, exactly, what your comments above have to do with the discussion last issue. I wasn't comparing styles. As I remember, you suggested that fantasy (ERB's fantasy, specifically) was unbelievable, and enjoyable for just that reason. I disagreed, saying that while fantasy is by definition unbelievable from an objective viewpoint, stories are read subjectively, and to be successful demand a reader's belief. I went on to say that identification with the hero is the commonest form in which this belief takes place. If you are trying to say that all the wild, fantastic things that John Carter or Tarzan did makes the reader identify with them in spite of ERB's sloppy writing (which seems reasonable to me) you are refuting your own statement that the reader's inability to believe in Burroughs' fantasies increases his enjoyment, because now you are saying that readers are able to believe in his plots because of the charm of the fantastic events.

How do you like this theory, then: To enjoy a story, a reader must be able to believe it; that is, it must be presented in a manner that seems to be reasonable, even if the plot is objectively nonsense. ERB didn't attempt at all to use ordinary literary methods to accomplish this -- literary methods meaning the construction of a plausible frame of reference, 3 dimensional characters, etc. Rather, he depended upon the charm or appeal of his fantastic events to make the reader (to paraphrase Dave) wish he was the protagonist, and thus identify with the protagonist. Assuming a reader can swallow ERB's writing -- or the writing of any other author of this type, Merritt, for example -- and assuming the fantastic events in the story appeal to the reader, the belief in the story can be just as great as that made possible by any other method, and the enjoyment, too, just as great.
HL//



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14
You can't be blamed for failure to recapture exactly what Famous Fantastic Mysteries and Fantastic Novels stood for when they were new, since you weren't reading the prozines yet. But maybe you can conceive the general atmosphere in which they emerged upon unbelieving fans. Remember, this was long before the big boom in paperbacks -- they had begun to appear in quantities, but were still confined mostly to big name authors, westerns.

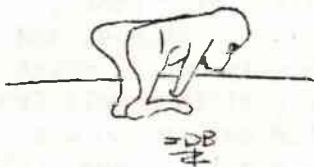
and detective stories. So fandom in the 1940's could not find reprinted old science fiction novels and short stories by walking down to the drug store. The Munsey magazines were already very hard to find in second-hand stores, and the stories from them that had appeared in hardcovers were mostly out of print or too expensive for the average fan's pocketbook. Not just certain novels from the Munsey magazines were sought-after; there was author after author who was known by little more than reputation as a writer of fantasy, simply because only the big collectors owned copies of his important stories. The Gnaedinger-edited magazines descended upon us with almost as great an impact as the second coming of Christ. I'll never forget the stupid way I stood and stared at the first issue of FFM that I found on a newsstand. Almost every story in it was one that had been raved about and written about for years, and it was impossible to accept the fact that here these stories were within arm's reach and I had enough money in my pocket to purchase a copy, more's the luck. After a few years, the thrill leveled off for most of us, partly because the most celebrated stories were reprinted early; partly because we found a lot of these famous old stories somewhat less magnificent than their reputations. But try to grasp the difference between the situation then and now. Then the two magazines were something special and unequalled in the literary world. Today if a reprint magazine is published, it's something to compare with the latest batch of anthologies and story collections on the paperback racks.

John Boston, 816 South First Street, Mayfield, Kentucky 42066

Your editorial is some of the best common sense I've seen on the business of "new" sf versus "old." The touters of Ballard, Vonnegut, et. al., seem not to realize that the pulp stories they despise are not intended to compete with the "new" or lit'ry sf of their preference. Likewise, the pulp addicts who complain that the lit'ry crew doesn't provide them with fast-paced adventure stories don't seem to know that Ballard and crew don't care about plot except as a means to their particular ends. I haven't time for the typical Age novel, for Burroughs, or for the more readable work of Keith Laumer; that sort of thing just doesn't entertain me. But I don't condemn a pulpy story because it has no literary pretensions (except when I'm in a bad mood). Let's criticize stories on the basis of what they try to do and how well this is achieved, not how well it measures up to the standards of another type of work. Of course Ballard doesn't write good adventure stories; nor is James H. Schmitz profound in any sense of the word; nor are Erle Stanley Gardner's novels very good psychological studies; nor was Dostoyevsky very good at fast action.

I think Banks Mebane is missing the point of labelling the Ballard/Aldiss axis "intellectual." True, they are not advocating intellectualism; they are practicing it. Having just read The Crystal World, I can see the point in calling Ballard a "pro-emotion" writer; but Aldiss sometimes gives just the opposite impression -- for example, in "Man in His Time," which cuts bitterly at the type of person who not only fails to understand intellectual (in this case, scientific) matters but tries to hide from them. "The Cold Equations" according to Aldiss, no less. A conviction that "a rational approach to life is not sufficient" is a thread running through much of modern sf. Look at The Humanoids. . . they tried to enforce rationality. Look at Maturity. . . Robin was rational; Look at Beyond This Horizon. Hamilton Felix approached life so damned rationally that he saw it as completely pointless!

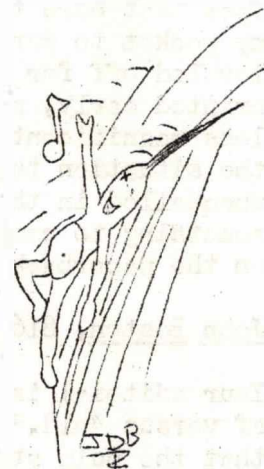
Buck Coulson, Route 3, Hartford City, Ind. 47348



My apologies to Jack Gaughan. I had interpreted his previous remarks as a personal stand. I must say that I agree 100% with his letter in STARLING #8! There is very little modern art that I personally like, but I try to avoid feeling that it's all trash just because it doesn't please me. (I have an easier time being broadminded about modern

art than I do about modern writing, since I know less about art.) I'll even admit that change is usually for the better; my objection is simply to people who imply that all changes are for the better, or that something new is good simply because it's new.

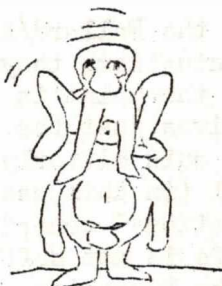
At least one other author has sold to Badger Books. I own one written by A. A. Glynn. This is Tony Glynn, who has done artwork for various fanzines (including YANDRO) and published a couple of fabulous issues of his own fanzine. (Don't bother with the book, though; Glynn's fan writing is superb, but the book isn't much better than the rest of the Badger line. This leads me to think that Fanthorpe may not write as much of the stuff as people think; it's just that the Badger editors cram everything into the same mold.) Glynn also wrote several short stories for the various pb-sized magazines published by John Spencer & Co. -- they were just as bad as the books!



* * * * *

This time, WE ALSO HEARD FROM

Mary Reed, Don Hutchison, Bill Bowers, Jay Wellner, Ned Brooks ("The Marsha Bise story was a cheerful note to end the zine on. Gack."), Andy Zerbe, Charles Pearson, Steve Johnson ("The one thing STARLING doesn't have that I miss is a fanzine review column; . . ." I don't publish often or regularly enough to make it of any worth.), Alan Dodd, Jim Sanders (Jim Sanders, not Joe, who writes the review column; Jim says that his parents got a kick out of Marsha Bise's "Last Laugh," but that he didn't like it much. He also said, ". . .and may the wrath of Meta descend upon you if you cut one word of my deathless prose." I'm in trouble.), W. G. Bliss, George H. Stackler and Paul Gilster



the SPECIMENS

Fiction

by

W. B. Bliss

One does not often put his ear to a closed casket.

My sister remarked one Friday morning in October in nineteen thirty while we were at breakfast of my unusual pallor. I had not felt any real ambition for weeks, yet I did not feel really unwell. I resisted her pointed suggestion that I see a physician, and went and opened my used book store as I had every morning for fifteen years. Common books were selling very poorly. My partner of three months, fat Peter Ruul, still did very well with a private line of what I liked to think of as exotic volumes. He always met his costumers in the back room. He remarked during the day that I might get some iron tonic. It was three days later that I did have to admit that something was at my system. I was carrying the latter part of the Encyclopedia Americanna, S-index, when they became intolerably heavy and I fell back on the stair. Fat Peter drove me to my home on Anice Plaza in his Jordan sedan. In a little while Dr. Molox arrived. He seemed a little older, but I had not seen him since father passed away ten years ago. He diagnosed overwork, my having a seven day week business and prescribed some tonic and rest. Peter assured me that he would have his son assist with the shop and left. My sister brought in some chicken broth and remarked, "It was lucky, how Dr. Molox was coming along the street just when I was going to phone him." The days and nights passed along swiftly. I slept a great deal, my sister often remarked how getting me swake at times was like trying to raise the dead. I did always manage to get up into the big chair that was my father's and listen to the evening radio programs on the Atwaterkent. At ten thirty one night I tried to reach over and snap the toggle switch on the panel of the radio off and found that I had not the energy left to do so, or even to hold my head up or blink. My sister Lucene quickly phoned Dr. Molox. He appeared more vital and robust than he had on his earlier visits. There was a difference that strained my perceptions. He quickly examined me. He gently pulled down my eyelids and took my sister to the other room, the kitchen. "I'm sorry, but you really should have called me sooner. Your brother passed away from a wasting disease that only seems to have general symptoms. There obviously was an anemia. I would suspect a number of things, but without an autopsy." I did not seem to have a paralysis, yet there was no energy to make any motion. It did not feel like anything in my body was operating except my perceptions. The light coming through my closed eyelids was dimmer. My attention strayed away to a nothingness and I was astounded, it must have been a few minutes later, by the loud remonstrating voice of my sister in the kitchen, "Good heavens, you have been coming here to see Henry every Tuesday and Thursday since he fell ill five weeks ago." "Lucene, you are overwroght. I 17 have some pills here, and I want you to take one now and one before you go to bed. Your brother's partner will be over in a little while and he assured me on the phone

that he would take care of the arrangements." After the outside door closed, Lucene said aloud, "Something terrible has happened to that Doctor's memory. Maybe he has lost too many people lately." I felt my consciousness again fritter away. Then, it must have been after midnight, I heard the smooth oily voice of fat Peter. "I have had a lot of expense the last few years, but I will take care of the funeral costs. You will need what little insurance money there is. Perhaps you could come to work in the bookshop, Henry has mentioned that you used to work there until you had to take care of your father in his last years. I know where I can get a superb used casket for Henry."

"Used? That is too morbid for words."

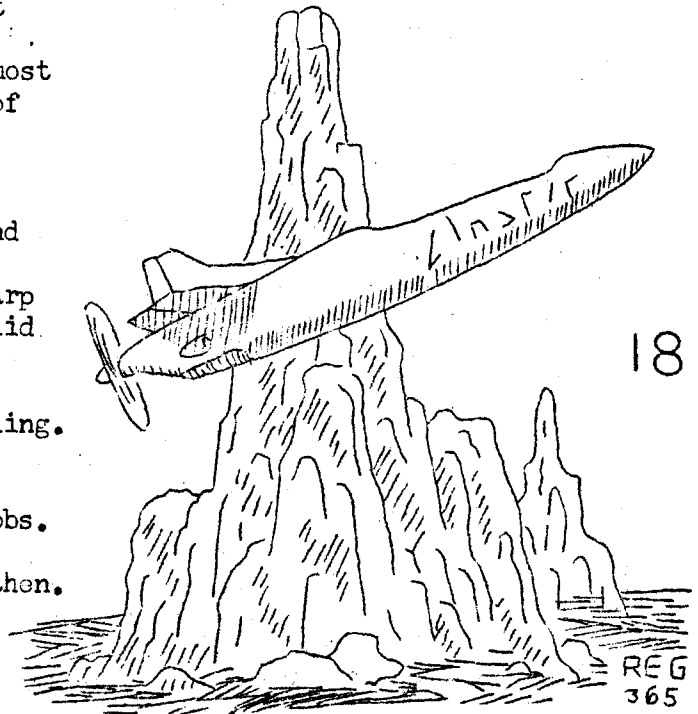
"Allow me to finish. It was used for display at a mortician's convention. We will lay him away tomorrow in your family crypt since he will not be embalmed."

"None of our family has ever had that done to them. It is too terrible to think of."

"It is difficult to think of Henry as dead." My attention wavered and was out again. I heard the massive iron doors of the crypt being levered shut. I had missed my own funeral. Something pricked me sharply on the sole of the foot. Someone was taking in slow sonorous tones in the vault. It ceased and there were sounds of rustling. It was warm in the casket, I suddenly realized. Tombs do not catch fire, so it had to be the noorday sun. The iron doors were open! The excitement made a wild thump and another wild thump in my chest. They would only open to admit my sister Lucene and close then for centuries. I could dilate my nostrils -- an immense feat for a dead man. I had been expelled once from grade school as a youngster for annoying the teacher, Miss Parsons, for doing that. But even if someone were to fling back the lid of my coffin and see, they would ascribe it to changing humidity or something more sensible than finding me still alive -- or the fear thought, dead and still capable of small movement. I tried my will on my left arm, the one closest to them. It rustled on the silk lining. I made it flail wildly. The rustling and thumping and pain in it were deafening to me inside my coffin. All anyone even half deaf had to do was lean down and put their ear to the side of the coffin. I willed my arm to stop. There was a small scrape sound on the casket lid. It was almost quiet in the tomb now. Then the iron doors were being levered closed. Something stung me on the foot. There is a nice complete silence in the crypt that gives peace to long slow unimportant thoughts. At times I have noticed an almost sound of some mechanism in the far end of the casket. Perhaps it is something to control the humidity and prevent my body from becoming mummified. All sound is terribly loud when there has been no sound for so long. The iron doors are being opened. The lid is flung back, and a sharp light flashes over me and is gone. The lid slams down and it is latched and sealed and something pricks me on the sole of foot again. I have an early morning feeling. I feel young inside. There is a waft of something like of an antiseptic in the air. "All right, Mr. Henry J. Fobbs. You may quit playing possum now."

"I was quite correct in that opinion then. I was not dead at all."

"You were hibernated for six months."



I did judge your temperament correctly -- you do not shock easily?" It was of course the voice of Peter Ruul. His enunciation always seemed to lack the usual emphases of conversing, yet the control of a deliberate monotone seemed to be missing. "After being dead, what else might shock me?"

"You and one female of your local species have been collected. The utter immensity of the galaxy makes any repeating through an area impractical, so specimens are carefully chosen."

"I imagine that you have quite a motley assortment of unearthly creatures here on your ship. I assume this is a space ship. I have read science fiction as you know."

We select only humanoid bipeds. We also only select personality types who can do well in places of advanced civilization."

"So the bookworm, the bibliophile turns out to be a viable sort." I could not resist a dry chuckle. The ones who want to space were usually depicted as supermen, or at least super scientists. I rose out of the casket. I paced the small metal room and gazed down at the other casket which save for being newer was the same as mine. "Do look, it is your mate." I let the lid back down gently. "You fool, it is my sister."

"A minor question of ethics of a place that you will never return to. Incidentally, you will go to a place of study and be very thoroughly examined and analyzed and educated as well as possible before you are put on your own in a colonial service." I lay back down in my casket. "All the women from my family for five generations have been completely sterile. That is one of several reasons why my sister never married." I did not bother to look for the expression on the face of fat Peter Ruul. I kicked the end of the casket and something stung me on the sole of the foot.

END

FRAGMENTS

by Ted Kehr

Cathleen

Cathleen is just another name for darkness
She's already started to make my head whirl
I've given up on self preservation
To become part of her burning world

And do I dare to speak, while she scars my
vision with mystic scenes of a nightmare's
conceit
Resting on the emotional bomb she carries
In the midst of the twilight my conscience
retreats

Swiftly sinking,
Becoming unreal
Murky and smothered,
The outcast orange peel

Raised in an era of nausea and paste
The forlorn frogs make meaningless haste
The discarded Negro, compressed in a shell
Pictures the hunchback ringing the bell
Winsome and lifeless, the rhetorical snail
Measures his life in a sandbox pail
Weary and outcast, forgetting the grass,
The hideous sandman, sharpening his axe

The torch carrier sickens,
His brain beats so slow, the tambourine man whispers,
"I told you so!"

STAR- LING #9

