WARHOON 26

WARHOON

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The story behind the cover is almost too gruesome to contemplate, but I must contemplate for at least 17 lines. It isn't gruesome just because the drawing is or because it's the final stage of the warrior robot series, it's an unpleasant story because harsh fate decieded what cover should appear on this issue: the present cover replaces a collage extravaganza which kept getting more and more expensive to produce until it reached the point where the lowest quote I got for engraving and printing the thing was an exhilarating $75. And that's probably more than the entire first year's issues of Quandry cost -- which is reason enough to spend less money on frills and more time on material.

I know a hobby is a hobby but some soulful calculating of the number of pleasure units that amount could purchase lead to a regretful jettisoning of the cover and the now decomposed opening piece to this editorial that went with it. And so Ming Daly's henchman appears on this issue when something like less than half his predecessors have been published elsewhere.

Er, can anybody use a $75 two page collage cover for their fanzine. Free.

"DOCTOR MIRABILIS" AND THE PIRATES

"Doctor Mirabilis", the historical novel about Roger Bacon which James Blish is thoroughly convinced is "the best work I've done", looks mighty like a fanzine. At least the latest edition does: it's mimeographed with a flawless precision even Grennell or White would be proud of, it runs some 100 legal length buff pages (the same page size as certain issues of Dawn c/w The Imaginative Collector if you find it easier to remember fanzines than paper merchant's terminology), it's stapled, each of these last copies will be inscribed by the author to the buyer (a paraphrase of the typical fanzine's scrawled back page address label), it seems to have cost its author a small fortune (another parallel to the contemporary fanzine), and there may never be another issue (ditto). I'm sure the author fervently hopes it'll be a one-shot.

The first edition, published by Faber & Faber in London, is now out of print and these few mimeographed copies are the last for sale anywhere. Blish wrote in Australian SF Review #6, Jan '67, "It got miles of review space all over the Empire, including India and Singapore, and almost all of it enthusiastic. As a result, since its appearance very early in 1964 it has sold steadily and well, and can be chalked up as one of my three or four most popular books." The remaining copies of the second edition, guaranteed to contain all 125,000 words of the British edition plus a new preface, are available from the author @$5. (579-A Sixth St. Brooklyn, N.Y. 11215)

Under our copyright laws a work which is first published abroad in the English language is only granted an ad interim copyright -- for a period of five years. A full term copyright is only obtainable on publication in this country and if publication doesn't occur within the five year period the work falls into the public domain. One wonders if there is any circumstance, in the case of living authors, where such a set

of laws can be equated with justice? And if there is it seems odd an additional clause doesn't protect this exception and allow a more just law for every author who finds himself in this predicament -- potentially every living author.

If you'll recall the treatment accorded authors whose work is published in another country and improperly protected under our copyright laws you'll understand that the private printing of "Doctor Mirabilis" was a step Jim had to take to protect a large investment of time and inspiration from a band of publishers whose ships prowl the publishing lanes watching for unfortunate authors who have run aground on the hidden reefs of the United States' copyright laws.

But has Blish acted with all the cunning of a true fanzine publisher?

It seems to me there was an opportunity to turn "Doctor Mirabilis" into a Judas Ram of the publishing world. Judging from quite a few literary efforts there's nothing in those laws saying that what you copyright has to make any sense (even fanzines are commonly copyrighted these days and I doubt the officials in Washington are able to fathom them). Blish could have quietly published and copyrighted every third or fourth sentence of "Doctor Mirabilis" (preferably under another title) with the usual prominent warning that "No portion of this book may be reproduced in any form..." and then calmly drifted into those reefs and prayed for sunny weather to bring out the pirates.

I should imagine a rather handsome settlement might have been worked out.

HARSH WISDOM FOR DEJAH THORIS

The Manicurist: It would be nice not to have to worry about money for a change.
The Customer: Why worry? Uncle Sam will take care of you.
The Manicurist: Uncle Sam!? You can't live on what they give you.
The Customer: You wanna retire?
The Manicurist: No, but it would be nice not to have to worry about money.
The Customer: You wanna live like a princess? You gotta produce like a princess.

THE SEARCHERS

A spaceship moved in its orbit from behind a moon and intelligent beings watched as Earth rose above the chillingly bleak horizon. An incredible predatory beast fashioned with a trumpet snout capable of swooping up with terrible suction anything near it scoops up other equally improbable creatures into its cavernous interior; looking at a now empty landscape it sucks at a corner of it drawing in its entire environment; unsatiated it turns on its own extremities and scoops itself into itself -- finally obliterating this last vestige of its world. Filled with frozen lava tears the unblinking eyes of a moon stared coldly at an unexpected visitor from an alien planet. A glove with a malicious grin, agent of a depressing blue mood, violently smashes capricious signs of affirmation and love and terrorizes a country-side.

Meanwhile back in fandom, tireless seekers after a sense of wonder review the latest efforts of authors whose works are being turned into period pieces by the passing minutes and Science fiction Times finds astonishment in the winning of a prize by a primitive animated cartoon with a science fiction theme.

In case you too have been pre-occupied by more interesting matters, I should probably take a moment to explain that the perplexing opening paragraph of this piece isn't an example of Logogenetics. It's composed of alternating sentences describing respectively: a journey to the moon sponsored by the United States last December and scenes from "The Yellow Submarine".

As my father and I were watching part of the first event in a snowbound farm house

in Vermont, he said "That's something, isn't it?". I replied in a matter-of-fact voice with what I now think was quiet understatement, "It's the most fantastic adventure in the history of man." The second event is marked by a quality and quantity of invention which I can only compare to a Samuel Delany story ghost-written by Abraham Merritt and revised by A E van Vogt. Taking its place by a very insubstantial hair as the third most incredible event since the last issue of Wrhn has been the reaction of the masses of fandom to the first two: from bored to neutral with one example of goshwow-ohboyism (this from England!) and another of active disinterest. Apparently the only fanzines in which one can find commentary on these subjects are titles like Life, Look, and Time -- the small circulation journals whose editors have been vicariously living a trip to the moon for 40 years are lost in a maze of brief commentaries on a branch of fiction which suddenly seems to have been outclassed by a reality with a more original imagination. As Ted Johnstone notes in a brilliant article in Shaggy 75: "So even if Christ's birth is hardly worth celebrating any more, we have something else to remember for the next twenty centuries -- something which even Bradbury never suggested.

If the lack of evidence is an indication, and I hope it isn't, the consensus seems expressed by this note from Redd Boggs: "I find myself so dis-interested in the 'conquering' of space that I have to force myself to skim the account of it in Time magazine... If I could have seen myself today via futurescope from about 1939, I'm sure I would have been dumfounded by my lack of interest in space conquering, but back then I had an idealistic attitude toward the subject and had not foreseen what They would make of it."

However, Redd did predict a reaction of disillusionment on the part of fandom to the successful exploration of the moon as early as the 40s without realizing it was to be his own attitude. Redd's protagonist, reacting with pique that "Even a semi-literate newsdealer was learning all about Earth's remote satellite" seizes a newspaper splashed with news about the journey "and then ripped it across, and again and again" and "hurled the tattered, wrinkled sheets into the gutter."

I'm not exactly sure just what is so disappointing about what 'They' have made of it. Offhand I can't think of many explorations which have been completely ultraistic -- when you stop to think of it, it's unbelievable that the billions spent on the space program have largely been justified on the basis of competition; no short cut to the Far East or quest for the gold of the Incas is dangled before us. There have been scientific advances not connected with war efforts or commercialism but none costing as much as this one. Walt Willis, writing about The Dawn of the Space Age, "as those neofannish newspapers persist in calling it", in Oopsla! 23, Nov '57, shortly after the assent of Sputnik I, noted: "And now here it is and it's happened in a way not one of us foresaw. What's more -- and this is the most surprising thing of all -- we now see quite clearly that it just couldn't have happened any other way."

Unfortunately that's the way things are and one might more profitably pine for the billions which aren't being spent on the de-salting of water and are being spent to pound a Far Eastern country back into the stone age rather than being disillusioned because space travel didn't come about through an old scientist stumbling around in his laboratory and accidentally mixing the components of a chemical explosive which enables him to fuel the rocket which he will use to rescue his gorgeous daughter from the Venusians who have abducted her. Numbered among the dividends of Buck Rogerish wonders

we seem to have no trouble taking completely for granted are satellites which allow us to forecast the weather of a planet, television relays of events on the other side of the world as they are happening, and science fiction films with budgets riveling or surpassing those of "Gone With The Wind" or "Ben Hur".

Granted the more awesome our advances the more terrifying their implications because man has never failed to find a military use for his knowledge. Still, it is man--as unpredictable a creature as ever existed -- and perhaps somewhere up there he'll find a mirror of awful knowledge which will transform his self-hate into love. After all, whatever its faults, science fiction is essentially an optimistic science -- it assumes that man has a future. We can do worse than share that belief. If we "are all the last generation" as Boggs foresees in "The Wine of Wrath" in Wrhn 14, we probably won't be around long enough to regret having enjoyed being optimists.

In the meantime, my sense of wonder is continually aroused by man's epic reach for the stars, by such marvels of imagination as "The Yellow Submarine" and by the seeming imperviousness of science fiction's fans to these happenings as they continue to look for a sense of wonder in the pages of magazines which, according to an editor writing in one of them recently, are filled with fiction so "ill-written, ill characterized, ill-conceived and so excruciatingly dull as to make me question the ability of the writers to stay awake during its composition, much less the readers during its absorption." It makes one wonder.

RUNNING SCARED

When you've worked on a Kennedy political campaign you learn to take nothing for granted and you discover that those who do often lose. That's why I'm urging you in the strongest possible way to make use of the enclosed Taff ballot -- especially if you intend to vote for Bob Shaw. Those of us who've enjoyed Bob's writing for two decades may assume that in the fitness and rightness of things it will come to pass that BoSh will be circulating among the conventioneers in St. Louis this Fall. But sometimes we old timers lose contact with reality. A great number of people who haven't been around for 20 years, and who haven't read "The Enchanted Duplicator" and "Quo Voidus", will be voting. Obviously anyone who has seen these last few issues of Wrhn needs no arguments in favor of which way to cast his vote. I'm delighted when people like Leigh Couch tell me they'll have 5 votes for Bob in the immediate family -- that's the kind of bloch voting even Mayor Daly would envy. But if the rest of us assume because we've enjoyed Bob for years that the outcome is pre-ordained (he's very religious) and one more vote isn't going to count for much then the outcome may not be quite what we expect. So vote. Now. And if there's another fan in the family or you have a friend who would vote for Bob and you'd like a few more ballots drop me a line and I'll be pleased to send you a dozen copies.

ART RAPP WAS A GENIUS

By now, if Wrhn doesn't hold the record for being the fanzine to have had the largest number of columnists it must be very close to it. I would guess only Oopsla and Psychotic might surpass it in the number of writers who regularly toiled in their pages. Art Rapp in Spacewarp first demonstrated for me this technique of solving all a fanzine's material needs. The only easier means of filling a fanzine's pages which I can visualize would be reprinting or to turn one's publication into a letterzine.

The jumbo Insurgent issue of Spacewarp (which was F Towner Laney's calling together of the Insurgents and Spwp's stalwarts to produce a spectacular issue) featured five columnists (Laney, Boggs, Sneary, Watkins, and Conner). That may be the record for a single issue unless Ccpsla topped it with a line-up of Bloch, McCain, Willis, Grennell, Warner, or Silverberg -- though the likelihood all were present in any one issue with

columns is slight. The closest Wrhn comes to the Spwp mark is with four columnists -- in the fourteenth and the issue at hand -- though perhaps I am being unfair in not counting the two departments I contributed to most issues.

Let's pause for a moment and recall those sterling characters who have and in some cases still are contributing with a baffling persistence so much to these pages. First was a member of Irish Fandom, John Berry, whose "A Worldly View started in issue number 9. The very next issue saw the arrival of Walt Willis and his Harp. With Willis and Berry my addiction was well advanced and number 12 saw the acquisition of Redd Boggs' "File 13". To bring us rapidly up to the present, the pattern has gone like this: Number 13: James Blish ("Accidentals and Nomics"), number 16: Walter Breen ("The Fifth Column") and John Baxter ("The View From Down Under"), number 17: Charles Wells ("Green Thoughts"), number 19: Robert A. W. Lowndes ("Aufgeknöpft), and number 25: Bob Shaw ("The Mortal Gael"). I suppose it's not ethical to claim "A Wealth of Fable" as a column -- though before Warner is through it will have appeared more often than some mentioned above. In the meantime I am trying to persuade Harry to continue a series of fan biographies following the conclusion of "A Wealth of Fable" and if anyone else agrees this is a fine idea I'd very much like to pass your sentiments on to Harry. (This is a dangerous game to play because fans are often notoriously apathetic about expressing egoboo -- even when their own best interests are involved; as they clearly are here. In fact, we'll probably finally give Warner his long deserved Hugo this year but not otherwise indicate we hope he ever writes another thing.)

This chain of musing was inspired by Terry Carr's decision to give up his unique status in fandom and become another in the series of Wrhn columnists. The 10th to be exact. This announcement doth pleasure me because there are never enough brilliant writers active in fandom and Terry has been silent for far too long -- many of us fondly recall his editorials in Lighthouse.

The opening installment of Terry's "the fannish i" is an article which appeared in Diaspar, his Fapazine. When I first read it I liked it so much I wanted to reprint it for Wrhn's much larger circulation -- I even Xeroxed a copy for Walt Willis, which explains his reference to the piece in the Harp. When Terry agreed to do the column he suggested we start off with this article and since Wrhn is no longer distributed through Fapa very few people who receive this issue will have seen it. Those of us who despair of producing something half as interesting will be further depressed to learn it was composed on stencil in a single evening. Now all I have to do is find a way to make sure Terry has four free evenings a year. This may be the difficult part.

Terry and I have locked in heated debate on more than one occasion -- I attempted to hand him his head in a seven page article in Wrhn 11, April 1961, and again we were at each others' throats over the infamous Joe Gibson in Kipple. However, unlike the exchanges with my most indefatigable dueling foe, FMBusby, which had a way of escalating from hand guns to hydrogen bombs and other forms of massive retaliation, the Carr/Bergeron disputes, perhaps due to a mutual respect and affection, (or more likely because Terry is just not a venomous soul) were conducted with tactical weapons. (Those issues in which Buz and I made waste-lands of each others egos are still dangerous to enter without an instrument to count geigers.) Somewhere in my not too well organized files I have a carbon copy of a letter dated '51 or '52 advising a very fledgling Terry Carr that his obviously carefully prepared columns for Peon were his best fan activity. Now, only 18 years later I can examine the latest work of columnist Carr in my own magazine at a time when this may be his only fan activity. Terry Carr, publisher of three of the dozen or so fanzines I will someday want to have permanently bound, welcome to Warhoon.

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Coming: All installments of The Harp in a single issue of Wrhn. Over 200pgs.

the fannish i

an occasional column by

terry carr

"I'm leavin' here this morning
with a smile upon my face.
I'm beginning to think there's
hope for the human race."
--Nillson

A fascinating thing is happening in fandom these days. It's also happening in science fiction itself, and in the Great World Out There. Primarily it's happening Out There, really, but that science fiction people should be not only responsive to mundane movements but in some ways in the forefront of them is a source of surprise and hope for me.

There's this cultural revolution taking place right before our eyes, and I say honestly that nothing has so jogged my sense of wonder since the ancient Mars-god Rhiannon answered Matt Carse's call in "The Sea-Kings of Mars". I'm not talking solely of hippies and pot and love power or lack of same, though they're all in there too; I'm not talking about the New Wave as such, either. (As a matter of fact, I think "the New Wave" is already an outmoded concept, as I hope to get around to explaining a bit later.) All these things are part of the revolution, together with Marshall McLuhan and the Negro revolutionists and Laugh-In and Eugene McCarthy and the Baycon. Student power. Vietnam.

A random list of "In" phenomena and controversies? No, not quite. For the first time since I've been alive I believe I see truly hopeful signs for the future of people in this country, eventually for people the world over (if we have any luck at all continuing to stave off the bomb). Because this time it isn't just politicians making promises; this time it isn't just disgusted societal dropouts writing bitter polemics in verse and prose because not enough people agree with them to make political or social action practical; this time there's a

tremendous and growing body of opinion in favor of change in this country, and the revolution is gaining momentum. It's the kids, the 17-year-olds (or maybe even 14-year-olds) who'll be voting in the next Presidential election: for once they're going to shape the future, rather than being shaped by it.

Look at the Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour. Pretty standard format, with songs and jokes and skits and the union-required dance numbers, and at the end of the hour the cast stands and waves while the credits roll in front of them. But notice that two or three of them are holding up two fingers in a "V" sign. If you don't know what that means, ask the clean-cut honor student next door; he knows.

Today in the mail I got a fanzine that was as bad a crudzine as any I've seen since the great days of Thurban I and Looking Backward. It was ineptly typed, crudely written, badly reproduced, with execrable artwork shakily stenciled and book reviews that were often just plot summaries and a story of which I had only to read three random lines to know there was no need to read more. But: the editor, the contributors, the lettercol hacks were at least talking about the right subjects for once. I was astounded; not only were they praising Delany and Lafferty and Zelazny and putting down reactionaries like Lester del Rey and John J. Pierce and Sam Moskowitz, but there were filler quotes from Dick Gregory and Bob Dylan and Archibald MacLeish, and in the middle of the book reviews was a review of Yevtoshenko's new book of poems. This from a group of young fans probably about 14 or 15.

They didn't understand it all, they wrote some silly and naive things, but give them a few years, Meyer.

There was a discussion of the "New Wave" at the Milford SF Writers' Conference last summer, and one of the main points raised was that the new writers mostly came to fiction writing by way of poetry. But poetry is dead, you say; no one has paid attention to it outside college classes since the twenties, or at best since Dylan Thomas died. Wrong. Poetry has snuck back into popular culture, disguised as song lyrics. Donovan, Bob Dylan, Lennon-McCartney, John Phillips, Marty Balin, Paul Simon, Janis Ian, Brian Wilson, Leonard Cohen...they're just a few of the people on the rock-pop scene who are mixing poetry and melody, raising rock from the oop-shoop atrocities and pop from the depths of moon and June. The kids are listening to the words today, not just the beat, and the words are giving them a new kind of consciousness, a poet's consciousness.

Fancy words, but I don't mean anything fancy by them. That's just the point: poetry is no longer fancy; it's commonplace. Poetry is, if you will, a non-linear medium as opposed to the point-by-point development we're used to in most fiction, science fiction or mainstream. And this is a post-McLuhan world, where the techniques of television commercials are among the most sophisticated forms of communication ever developed. Laugh-In exploited a number of these techniques, with a pair of stand-up comics about as talented as Martin & Lewis and a flock of gags straight out of vaudeville, and suddenly it's the hottest television show in years. Richard Lester showed us in "A Hard Day's Night" that collage-scenes can add a new dimension to the movie (or tv) screen, and half the directors in the world, including Lester himself, have been copying the idea ever since, with mixed but interesting results.

Non-linearity is an approach you wouldn't expect to see flourishing in science fiction, a form of fiction until recently measured primarily by its rigorous attention to logic, which is linear as hell. But so much of the most popular sf today ignores logic -- is a-logical -- that it's clear the forces spotted by McLuhan are at work here too.

This can go too far, I believe. Chip Delany told me last week, "What most intelligent people like about science fiction is invention, ideas, new juxtapositions, new viewpoints. What they don't care about at all is plot." I don't believe this for a

moment, but I do agree that the emphasis has shifted away from pure story values -- and I mean on the part of the readers as well as the writers. "The Einstein Intersection"s plot is rudimentary, but it has so many other things going for it that this doesn't matter. And is anyone going to tell me he voted for "Lord Of Light" for the Hugo because of its plot? (LoL does have a fine, and rather complicated, plot -- but how many of you were concerned enough with it to work it all out? Was it, therefore, of prime importance?)

What's happening outside our little world of sf and fandom is obviously having a profound effect on the microcosm.

The Baycon? Somebody whose name I don't have permission to quote wrote me a paragraph's worth of impressions:

> The convention hotel is a sprawling, gothic semi-circle. The oxygen inside is inadequate and one must thread his way to the emergency room, the square, stapled-on patio, to breathe. Here it is not the same. You look up into the night and find a lighted attic window, the outlines of a madwoman holding a candle. The fire exits are laundry chutes, you were told; you do not like to think where they end. The corridors are wide and winding. They have absorbed every known type of halitosis and breathe it back at you as you wait for the elevator that never comes. The rooms have a simple push-button lock while outside Berkeley simmers with "incidents" which threaten to spread to the parking lot, the lobby, the incense-clouded light show. A knock at the door brings silence inside. Maybe it's only a Star Trek fan wanting to get in. The coffee shop is a prop, the waiting room to somewhere else. Somewhere else is a huge expanse of tables supervised by waitresses who order the food from the Leamington. (Is that where the laundry chute ends?) Nothing is real. Joe Frap from IBM turns up high in love beads, and somebody's grandmother is freaking out in the pay toilet. The revolution is happening now, inside and outside. Meanwhile, back where the action is supposed to be, the scotch and bourbon flow at the usual rate and the people are talking shop while all the shops are boarded up and the hotel radio pipes in acid rock from nine to two a.m. The costume ball is redundant. "What's new?" is not an idle question.

That's a good capsule commentary, though I'm sure a lot of fans and pros won't recognize the con they were at in its descriptions. Not surprising: it was an amazingly fragmented convention -- not just because the hotel was sprawling, nor because so many attendees had to find rooms at outside hotels like the Leamington, but because there were so many different types of people there that it was a potpourri of conventions. As in years past, it splintered off into an sf convention, a fannish con,,a Burroughs dum-dum, a comicscon, a gaggle of monster fans and a babble of Star Trekkers; this time, though, add the generation gap. A lot of hippies came over from the Haight-Ashbury or up from Telegraph Avenue, but these weren't outsiders; the hippies are very turned on to science fiction these days. (They even are going through some of the growing pains regular sf fandom has to endure: water-brotherhoods a la Heinlein, even Scientology. I had a flash-fantasy about hippie first, second, even seventh fandoms, but I resolutely shove it aside as too grotesque.) Conversely, a fantastic number of the newer, younger sf readers are turned on to hippie phenomena. When Harry Harrison, seconding Columbus's bid for the '69 worldcon, asked the audience what kind of music they'd want at the costume ball, the response was an overwhelming "ROCK!" And though it would be impossible to judge how many of the fans -- and pros -- were turned on to other things at the con, I do know that a criminology major at Cal dropped by the con to go out to dinner with his brother and said, "I was in the lobby for five minutes and I saw at least four narcotics agents I know by sight." There were no arrests, however, nor even raids that I heard of.

Yes, a lot of generation gap. The newer fans and the hippies were sometimes indistinguishable; the First Fandomites must've been appalled. Norman Spinrad, Roger

Zelazny, Harlan Ellison were surrounded by the young fans; the older fans seemed to be flocking to Larry Niven and hailing him as the second coming of EE Smith. The Baycon was so fragmented in these various ways that it seemed like a collage-con. And maybe it was: maybe the Baycon was the first of a new kind of sf convention, the post-McLuhan convention.

I know that one of the standard lines of the con was "Isn't this a weird convention?" Nobody could quite seem to put his finger on the theme of the con, the running set of topics and preoccupations that would characterize it in our memories later. (As, for instance, the NYCon3 was the "New Wave" vs. "Old Wave" convention, and the '68 Lunacon was where everybody argued about "2001".) This one wasn't unified in that way, so it seemed strange. Yet despite numerous gripes about the hotel, the banquet, lack of air conditioning, etc., when it was all over the feeling seemed to be unanimous that it had been a fine, fine con, and the conreports I've seen so far seem to bear this out. Maybe (just maybe -- I'm only speculating) this is another sign that sf fans no longer feel the need for a totally ordered universe, a logical, linear environment.

McLuhan again: In the tight little island that used to be our in-group, patterns could be perceived and defined; in the global village that has now stretched its borders to include our territory, phenomena pile on top of one another and must be understood like a collage.

I'm not in favor of all this, either the fannish and stfnal aspects or those of the world around us. As a white man, I'm threatentd by the Negro revolution even though I'm in favor of most of its goals; the probabilities are that I'm going to have to give up some of the more gracious aspects of living I've worked for, as that revolution progresses. I don't think I'll begrudge giving up my fair share to repay the dues my father and his father never paid, but the nature of revolutions is that many people get hurt, lose more than is their "share." And I think there's danger of drug abuse, too -- not just because amphetamines can cook people's brains and LSD freak out people of certain psychological dispositions, But marijuana abuse too. We're told pot is no worse than alcohol and doesn't give you hangovers either, so it should be legalized. I'll buy that; but some of the same people who advance the first line say they feel no compunctions about driving a car while high on pot. Seems to me that's just as bad as driving while drunk on alcohol -- and if we're to accept the comparison on one hand, we should accept it across the board. Is it a necessary result of a non-linear world-view that one-for-one relationships like this are lost to us?

I also hold a little corner of my heart aloof from the very, very nice talking and writing and singing about Love that we hear from the flower children. I think the hippies' emphasis on love is fine, perhaps beautiful; but it's too often naive. I know they believe love is the answer, I know they want to love everyone and have everyone love everyone -- but why do they believe it, why do they so desperately want it? The hippie phenomenon is a middle-class one: kids from well-to-do homes get sick of hypocrisy and materialistic values, so they drop out, leave home and try a new kind of life. But what was the underlying emotion they had when they made this decision? Love? Or maybe hate? And if the latter, which I think is the more understandable and probable, then what emotional response is it likely to set off in these kids? I think it's guilt, and I think that's where the love generation's at, all too frequently. Not to belabor a rather superficial Freudian point, you can't so thoroughly reject your parents and not feel guilty about it; and if hate is mixed in there, what better psychological prop than a commitment to love? When that gentle kid in the Village hands you a flower next spring, don't doubt that it represents love -- but remember the fertilizer that grew it. And don't be too surprised if, on a day when he just can't make it, he dumps the fertilizer in your hand instead.

Norman Spinrad has written a very powerful novelet about just this; it'll be in

the next Orbit. It's about an acid-rock group that grooves behind the H-bomb. It's well worth reading - and after you've read it, you might take a look at the jacket for the latest (as of Nov 2, '68) Jefferson Airplane album, "Crown of Creation". It shows the group superimposed inside a beautiful color photo of a mushroom cloud. Crown of creation?

As for the effects of the cultural revolution inside science fiction, I don't like the idea that plots are irrelevant, as the non-linearists would have it. I happen to like a well-plotted story -- it's not the only kind of story I can appreciate, but it's one of them. Fortunately, of course, the changes that are upon us won't be universal; we may have a swing away from pure story-telling in favor of other techniques of construction, but I don't believe that even at the height of the reaction there'll be a serious lack of people interested in writing, publishing and reading plots.

I think I see some evidences of post-McLuhan attitudes in fanzine publishing already and I don't always like them. There was a fanzine I got a month or two ago, Bill Kunkel's Genook, whose editorial was almost a model of non-linear development: page after page of commentary on this and that subject, usually to do with rock or politics or fans, but with no unifying theme and frequent little trip-outs, flash-fantasy schticks of imaginary conversations brought to mind by the preceding topics. It was a mixed bag, but on the whole I thought it was one of the best fanzine editorials I've read in years. Still: this guy was very much on top of what he was doing; he was good. I doubt many fans could handle that form, and I suspect that a bad editorial of that type would just read like an interminable Betty Kujawa letter. (I'm told Betty Kujawa is a nice person, and I have no reason to doubt it. She writes godawful letters, though.)

For that matter, if we get a real spate of collage-type fanzines, might we not find ourselves faced with a mailboxful of Dynatrons every day? Marshall McLuhan, what're you doin'?

But enough of negativism. It's easy to spot the flaws and excesses in a new movement, particularly one so amorphous as this one is now during its beginnings. My caveats notwithstanding, I'm excited by the new vistas opening up before us. The less rigid consciousness of our mixed-media world, the greater commitments demanded by the issues that are producing violence and conscious misery in our country, the long, long overdue challenging of our accepted values...all these and more are changing our world right now. They are having a vastly more profound effect on the world than space flight, our great dream for the past several decades, is likely to have for a century or two. It's possible that we wouldn't be able to recognize the world of 1988 if we were transported there now; the revolution has that much potential.

Oh, the "New Wave"? I said earlier that I think it's an outmoded concept already; what did I mean? Simply this: The "New Wave," as best it could be defined by those either in favor or opposed to it, was a matter of experimental styles and constructions, sometimes of attempts at new subjects. But that's all superficial, symptomatic. What's happening now, what the "New Wave" began, is a new consciousness, more flexible attitudes, a realization that science fiction has come alive again as a possible contributing force to changing the future. I think a lot of us lost that hope when sf's warnings about the Bomb failed to stop anything and when our pet, space flight, became a political propaganda tool, bread and circuses. It seemed for awhile that we were on the wrong track, and maybe we were; at any rate, when sf's writers and readers show (as we are showing) that we're in tune with the very real and every important changes that are reshaping our environment and us, then it seems to me our old sense of lasting excitement must come back. I know it has for me.

And you know? -- it feels exactly like the sense of wonder. -Terry Carr

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"'Dear me', said Narcissus."

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ONCE THERE WERE TWO IRISHMEN

Bob Bloch

Up until twenty years ago, my knowledge of Ireland and the Irish was somewhat limited. Like the average citizen, I was aware of the difference between a shamrock and a real rock; I was aware that Ireland boasted of its twin cities, Sodom and Begorrah; I realized its chief exports were snakes and policemen, and I knew that the best place to find an Irish stew was not in a restaurant but in the corner tavern.

I think that dismembered fragments of this small body of knowledge were shared by most of my fellow science fiction fans. We had seen Erin go braggadocio in the films of John Ford, we anticipated such samples of Irish artwork as could be found in a Kelly frieze, we knew the names of traditional Irish heros such as Barry Fitzgerald, Mayor Daley, Laurence O'Livier and Ari O'Nassis. Such were the components of our comprehension; put them all together, they spelled Mother Machree.

Then, amidst the twanging of the Harp, a phenomenon known as Walter A. Willis burst upon the fannish scene. From some remote Belfastness in the northern wilderness, an Irish fan gave us a new Slant and dissolved us in Gaels of laughter. Within a few years, fandom had formed a Celt cult and everyone realized that Ireland must be Hyphen if Willis came from there.

Following in his wake (a singularly inappropriate expression in this context, for Willis was very much alive) came others who wrote in a similar Irish tenor--such bards of a feather as James White, Bob Shaw and John Berry. As time passed, fandom came to know far more about Oblique House than it had ever learned of Random House, which had published the works of a much more obscure Irishman, Jimmy Joyce.

And yet, much as we learned of Irish fandom, we were still largely in ignorance of the land which gave it birth. To the average science fiction fan, IRA still stood for Internal Revenue Agent, and a broth of a boy was some kind of soup favored by a child murderer.

But now, at long last, these errors are corrected, and our eyes are opened -- happily -- to feast upon the pages of Ace Book 36990, "The Improbable Irish."

Abandoning the rather unhappy but science-fictionally acceptable concept of feasting eyes, let me hasten to point out two important facts. "The Improbable Irish" is funnier than anything Walt Willis ever wrote. And its author, Walter Bryan, just happens to be -- Walt Willis!

For twenty years we science fiction fans have been impatiently awaiting the day when, like his Belfaster and more furious contemporaries, Willis would make the move from fandom to prodom. Now our impatience

is richly rewarded in "The Improbable Irish". Two decades of fanfare usher in a pro entry which amply illustrates how a lengthy apprenticeship serves to create a master craftsman. And Willis is a master indeed; here is wit and wisdom and warmth and all the other alliterative adjuncts of literacy -- which is merely a roundabout way of saying that he's written one hell of a good book.

By this time those of you who had the pleasure of reading Willis the fan all these years have already abandoned this review and are already hotfooting down to your friendly neighborhood newsstand and pornographery to search out a copy of "The Improbable Irish." As for the rest of you, I can only urge -- go thou and do likewise, and let he who is without Sinn Fain among ye cast the first stone.

Although "The Improbable Irish" is not science fiction by any stretch of the imagination -- nor would it be, even if published in Gaelixy -- it is well worth reading for its own merits as an introduction to a fabulous land and a fabulous people. If your knowledge of Erin is as limited as mine was before the publication of this book, if you were under the misapprehension that "the Ould Sod" was merely an obscure reference to the late Oscare Wilde, then you have a rare treat in store.

As Willis writes, "the Irish are more than wild creatures who have had a hard time and sing prettily, and have never done anyone any harm. For all the number of them, they are their tiny island have made a great stir in the world, and it is well worth anyone's time to find out more about them and the country which made them."

I shall delibertately refrain from quoting the contents here, difficult as it may be to do so, for this is a book which cries out for quotation. Sufficient to say that there's not a page which lacks inspiration and information. Willis begins by demolishing the Irish stereotype. He yanks the Hibernian from hibernation and reveals the nature of the beast. Do you regard "the typical Irishman" as a redheaded, pugnacious, priest-fearing, sentimental and impractical drunkard? Willis demolishes the concept straightaway in a few well-chosen words, then proceeds to introduce you to the far more fascinating reality. He writes with what is obviously great affection and understanding, and his examination of Irish history, legend, geography, economy, customs, folkways and mores is unexcelled. Analysis is intermingled with anecdote, and edification goes hand in hand with entertainment. Here again it's a temptation to give examples, but sure and I'll not be spoiling the reading of it for yez. Except to tell you that Willis does not write anything like that last sentence -- his style is purely his own, and I can make no higher possible recommendation. And if you need further urging to take an interest in the Irish, Willis, early on, quotes the late John Kennedy as follows:

"This has never been a rich or powerful country, and yet, since earliest times, its infludnce on the world has been rich and powerful...No larger nation did more to spark the cause of independence in America, indeed round the world. And no other nation has ever provided the world with more literary and artistic genius. This is an extraordinary country..."

To which I can only add that this an extraordinary book. "The Improbable Irish" is a highly probable delight to any reader, and a must for science fiction fans. To them I can only say -- if you like Walt Willis, you'll love Walter Bryan! --Robert Bloch

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...PSSST! Any fanzines for sale? I'll buy whole collections (if you suddenly want to find yourself with lots of extra room) or copies of Quandry (1-12), Spaceways (1), Slant (1-3), Psychotic (1-2), Oopsla! (13), Void, Fanac, Innuendo, etc. Or I can trade many copies of Hyphen, Oopsla!, Quandry, Slant, The Enchanted Duplicator, Willis Discovers America, or a complete set of Chanticleer or Vampire for the above wants. dick bergeron.

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THE HARP STATESIDE
WARIER BARD
ENCHANTED
PERFORATED
PLINTH
"THE PUN IS MIGHTIER THAN THE SWORD."

A WEALTH OF FABLE

Harry Warner

After Chicon II, Willis began a protracted journey across the continent. He began, improbably enough, by witnessing the first visit of Ackerman, the most violently anti-Lemuria fan, to Ray Palmer's farm home, where Richard Shaver was a guest. He was driven to Los Angeles, where he suddenly found himself discussing westerns with Ray Bradbury. Willis thought that he had attained the westernmost point in his travels when he strode symbolically into the Pacific, then was forced to wade somewhat beyond this ultima thule when the only pair of shoes he'd brought along washed out to sea. Next came an air flight to Kansas City, and a series of bus adventures that brought him to the Lynn Haven, Florida, home of Shelby Vick, and to Lee Hoffman country around Savannah. Then another Greyhound swallowed him up, and Willis was back in New York, where he collapsed into the Neptunia which he'd first seen five weeks earlier.

"Now I had something to remember for the rest of my life," Willis wrote. "I shouldn't have to grow old with the feeling that I'd done nothing exceptional with my life. I had been to America, seen the Pacific and the Grand Canyon and bathed in Florida, and I'd done it all through writing articles in fanzines. It might not be an awfully big thing, but it was exceptional, something that not everybody did: at least no one had ever done it before. And now, maybe, somebody could do it again, and fandom would become a more exciting place on account of that wildcat scheme of Shelby's."

The conreport tradition was firmly established in fandom even in 1952, and fanzines published vast quantities of narratives about the manner in which one fan had visited other fans. However, nobody had ever produced anything which combined elements of the two at such length and in such ingratiating manner as The Harp Stateside. There is a complicated history behind this 71-page volume whose effortless grace of writing and perfect matching of word and pictures cause the modern fan to imagine that it sprang up overnight like some perfectly formed mushroom out of sheer instinctive growth impulses. Willis first wrote about the con itself, and sent the manuscript to Lee. It was so long that she intended to split it between two issues of Quandry, and Walter feared two things: that its unity was harmed and that he'd mortally offended Shelby by not giving him the conreport for publication. Lee followed Walter's wishes, Shelby gafiated, and Willis came down with pneumonia. The trip and its after-effects on his nervous system had cost him 20 pounds.

Willis continued writing about his trip for Gregg Calkins' Oopsla!, then cut all the stencils for the full-scale narrative. Just as Calkins was scheduled to publish the volume, a mundane matter came up -- he got married. He returned the stencils to Willis, who somehow ferreted out duplicating paper that would fit the United States size stencils. In the next of a series of miracles, Walter acquired two Gestetners at an auction for a few dollars. With Ken Bulmer's first aid for deteriorated stencils, and with Carol Willis' slipsheeting assistance, the volume was finally published in February, 1957.

"Fandom is a very worthwhile hobby, and the most worthwhile thing in it is doing as well as you can something that interests ycu and gives other people pleasure, no matter how much trouble it is." That's Willis' summation of the philosophy that led to creation of The Harp Stateside, which won the most enthusiastic reception of all his writings up to then. He was particularly awed when he heard that Cyril Kornbluth liked it. Fans began immediately to quote to one another its most famous passages, like: "It was curious that in one hotel there should be a bellhop with the soul of a fan, and a fan with the soul of a bellhop." Some fifty thousand words of text were illuminated with tiny Arthur Thomson sketches which got amazing detail and atmosphere into a couple of square inches. In its way, it con-

Part Three

tained as devastating descriptions of fandom's worst aspects as anything Laney had written, but its pages simultaneously provided affectionate recreations of the finest attributes of the hobby. Willis' ability to put into words the spirit and atmosphere of fandom's fine moments saved him from the sort of resentment that Laney's almost unrelieved muckraking had created. There is no positive evidence that any better travelogue has been published professionally for the past quarter-century or longer. Mark Twain's "The Innocents Abroad" and Dickens in his American Notes had done something similar, but they used up a lot more words in the process. It is still hard to find anything in fanzines that characterizes more succintly and vividly most of the fans and pros whom Willis describes. EE Smith, he wrote about a speech, "is held in such affection that I think he would have got nearly as much applause if he'd merely read the Stock Exchange quotations in a Swahili dialect." Van Vogt was "tall, quiet, gentle, dark, and wore glasses, and altogether reminded me very strongly of James White." Walter attributed to Max Keasler a characterizing remark about the time Mrs. G.M.Carr got her head caught in a closing elevator at the Chicon: "I hope the hotel doesn't sue." Willis suspected nature of specially designing the Grand Canyon for a national park. A bonus in The Harp Stateside are its puns, not as frequent as in some of his shorter writings, but devastating when they occur, like some of the chapter headings: "Male, Female an' Utah." "The Outsider, and Authors." "And So to Bedlam." Bill Temple once said of Willis: "He almost becomes destiny itself, unobtrusively manipulating events and laying powder trains of association to lead up to the big bang" of the pun.

But before The Harp Stateside was fully written and long before it was published, Willis was associated with another special publication. The Enchanted Duplicator is the exact complement of the later, larger volume. It is allegorical where the trip report is historical, but the two creations reflect in similar manner all the mystery and delight of fandom. Everyone who read it assumed that it was a parody on"Pilgrim's Progress". But neither of its authors, Willis and Bob Shaw, had read Bunyan's allegory when they wrote The Enchanted Duplicator.

Willis credits Shaw with the inspiration for this fannish classic. Irish fandom had listened to a BBC radio play by Louis McNeice called "The Dark Tower". Willis wrote most of the text, and BoSh created the Map of Jophan's Quest. George Charters dummied the pages, which have justified right margins, and cut the stencils. Fans assumed an allusion to Laney in the form of the concluding statement that "This is a Serious Constructive Insurgent Publication." But that was just a spur of the moment addition to the colophon. Two hundred copies were mimeographed, with printed front an and back covers, and years passed before they were all sold, despite the later fame of the work.

The Enchanted Duplicator is the narration of Jophan's quest to find the Magic Mimeograph and publish the Perfect Fanzine. No matter how jaded with science fiction and disillusioned by fandom its readers may have been, they couldn't have failed to be stirred by old memories as they read in the first paragraph that Jophan "was unhappy, because in all the length and breadth of Mundane there was no other person with whom he could talk as he would like, or who shared the strange longings that from time to time perplexed his mind and which none of the pleasures offered by Mundane could wholly satisfy." Jophan (whose name was borrowed in a different spelling from Tucker's Joe Fann) has more adventures than Frodo, and they are described in somewhat better English. There is magic, in the sudden acquisition of a bottle of liquid called Correcting Fluid; evil, personified in such seductively luring forms as the Kolektin-bug; and puns, of course, like the elixir which comes from the egg of bu-birds. The Enchanted Duplicator is redolent of the language of fairy tales, the humor of Lewis Carroll, and the unique traditions of fandom. Its culmination, when Jophan climbs the Tower of Trufandom, finds an "obscene eyesore" where The Enchanted Duplicator should be, and discovers how to transform it into the Magic Mimeograph that will produce the Perfect Fanzine, had such an impact on fandom that nobody even tried to analyze the quest in Freudian terms.

Meanwhile, all during the 1950's, the mystique of Irish Fandom was building. Willis' reputation had been principally built in the United States from his own writings, his fanzines, and his visit to the United States, until another Irish fan saw his name in a prozine's fanzine reviews. John Berry made his first visit to Oblique House in 1954, quickly met the rest of Irish Fandom, and soon began to build legends as a supplement to the realities that centered around Upper Newtownards Road. A stupendous outpouring of articles and stories by Berry described people and events in Irish Fandom, some of them only slightly colored true stories, others fanciful imaginings based on some small actual event. Willis figured large in many of them. It was a risk, viewed from hindsight: Willis might have ruined his own writings by trying to outdo his activities in Berry manuscripts, or any slight decline in Willis' creativity might have caused fandom to neglect the real man for the Berry version. But either the strength of Willis' personality or the genius of Berry as a writer prevented any such disaster. No foreigner who visited Oblique House expressed the slightest disappointment with ghoodminton, when he saw the real game that had provided the action in so many Berry tales. Real things continued to outshine Berry's wildest flights of fancy, such as James White's use of water he'd scooped from the Seine to zap Chuch Harris with, when he introduced the zapgun to British fandom in 1953. As a publisher, Willis produced on an irregular schedule during the 1950s two successors to Slant. Hyphen was a general-purpose fanzine. Willis joined Fapa as the decade began, remained active in it for eight years, and published from time to time for the apa issues of Pamphrey, which bore the name he'd first picked at random for Slant but chickened out of using.

By now it was evident that Willis would win any poll to select the best writer in fandom that was conducted on anything approaching an honest basis. Why?

Because, for one thing, he worked much harder at it than most fans, widening the margin of superiority that his abilities had already created. "I don't get brilliant ideas and dash to my typer in a fury of inspiration," he once explained. "I don't find complete articles and stories writing themselves in my head." He insisted on the importance of the writer imposing form on the raw material to create an essay, rewriting unsatisfactory preliminary drafts, jotting down in a notebook any matters which might be molded into fanzine articles. "Your subconscious will create but your conscious mind must select, and both are equally important. You must have a clear idea of the way the piece you're trying to write should be constructed." Walter holds similar principles for creating fiction: "the technique of free association channeled by logic."

A second factor must have been the light touch which Willis was able to impart to whatever he wrote, whether he was patting another fan on the head in approval for some benevolent deed or blowing to smithereens some fakefan's pretentious idiocy. The Harp That Once or Twice was the epitome of the Willis approach to people and events, becoming the aspect of his creativity that would come in third in any word-association test in fandom, after the subject had been keyed by Willis to The Harp Stateside and The Enchanted Duplicator. The Harp That Once or Twice began in Quandry, moved to Oopsla!, then to Warhoon, appeared for a time in Quark and continues, once again, in Warhoon. The second instalment of the column was credited by Willis with being the last that was "serious", and he is correct in one sense, but wrong in another, for some very serious undertone or moral is usually hidden within his frothiest word-swirling, striking the reader with its logic and importance minutes or days after he has finished the column and has allowed the verbal foam to dissipate through his memory.

Then there's the technique of creating vivid images of reality with words which Willis utilizes whenever appropriate to his subject matter. Between camp and nostalgia, we've heard quite a bit about the golden era of radio. But where has anyone written more realistically than Willis? "The cabinet is polished walnut, the screw terminals on all the components are fashioned like jewels, and the tuning condensers.... Ah, those

tuning condensers. A symphoney in black and yellow, a glory of polished ebonite and brass, with precision air-spaced trimmers consisting of polished brass disks, operated by knurled wheels like golden sovereigns, all so beautifully made as to almost make you weep with the sadness of it. For all that loving craftsmanship is now just junk." That's the same writing mechanism which when applied to a worldcon was equally capable of concretizing intangible thoughts and attitudes: "There was just some desultory conversation. I think everyone was subconsciously expecting Burbee and Laney to appear in their midst in a pillar of fire." "The argument petered out in this morass, it being difficult to say who had won. In a sense Browne did, because he brought everyone else down to his level."

It's difficult to think of any mundane writers whose prose Willis could be accused of parroting. Willis sentences have the qualities of all good writing, in their freedom from cliché, waste matter, and truism. They break some of the rules that we were taught in the third grade. The first person singular pronoun is extremely frequent in some of his essays, but you don't notice it unless you make a conscious effort to count its appearances, and you don't get the sense of egotism that this procedure is supposed to impart to writing. Willis normally writes short sentences, but many of these brief ones are quite complex in syntax, yet are instantly comprehended by the eye, and the reader gets the impression that it wouldn't have been possible to put this thought into a form less burdened with prepositional phrases and conjunctions. This is part of the mystery of the Willis style: despite the tight logic of the organization which runs from the first to the last line of any article, giving it an overall form, no fannish writing is so full of single sentences that are brilliant and comprehensible when ripped out of context. Willis used to fill the back page of each Hyphen with just such remarkable sentences, which he collected from writings and conversations in his circle over a period of months, as if he assessed particular value to the knack in others which he specializes in himself.

There wasn't been much obvious change in the Willis style for more than a decade. Willis wrote during his first years in fandom in a way that was not particularly different from standard fanzine English; the true style began to emerge about the time The Harp That Once or Twice came into the world. It might be possible to find in it elements from the styles of two fellow-countrymen who made somewhat greater reputations in the general literary world: Wilde for the epigrammatic quality of many pithy and funny sentences, GBShaw for the close-packed content which always proves to be related to some kernel of purpose, no matter how it may seem to ramble astray halfway through an essay. But it's impossible to imagine Willis writing like A.E.van Vogt, for instance, whom he has frequently praised as a favorite science fiction pro. The impact of Berry's writing, which had a major effect on many fanzine contributors in the late 1950s and early 1960s, seems to have left not the slightest mark on Willis's style. Laney could be considered an influence only from the sense of attitude, a willingness to be iconoclastic and to take a fresh look at things which aren't really what fandom has long assumed them to be. But where, in or out of fandom, would you find anyone who can improvise as brilliantly as this, on the simple topic of falling behind in correspondence, in a letter?:

"I do seem to have gotten out of the habit of answering letters just for the fun of correspondence. Sometimes weeks go by without me writing a letter at all. All incoming mail is scanned subconsciously from the point of view of whether I can possibly deal with it any other way. Even interesting ones...with them I appease my conscience by as it were giving the writers additional points on a sort of vast ranking system I seem to carry in my head. Good letters are accounted to them for righteousness and I have a nebulous idea -- occasionally put into effect, as for instance when sending out Christmas cards -- that I will do something in return sometime. So, please, when you write again and if you don't get an immediate reply, don't think I wasn't very pleased to get your letter. What's happened is that in 1952 I took on far more commitments in

fandom than I could ever continue to carry out indefinitely. The usual thing when this happens is for the fan to abandon everything at one swell foop, but I didn't want to do that. Even though I've met more fans than anyone except Forry Ackerman, I'm still not disenchanted with them. So I just drew in my horns a bit and one of the first things to go was answering letters. But I know I must somehow find time to stick that horn out again a little, now that I'm going into the columnising racket again. ... I've just got to get letters...to keep me in touch with what's going on behind the scenes -- apart from the sheer pleasure of getting interesting letters. This has been and will be one of my bigger problems, to know whether my not getting fanzines from various fans is due to my decline or theirs."

One curious thing about Willis' prose is the manner in which it tells a great deal about his opinions on the specific subject, but reveals little about his fundamental philosophy and preferences. Even the ardent collector of Willisiana would find difficulty in assembling Willis' thoughts about Irish politics, the best way to settle the problem of war, how we should get along with religion, or the ten best authors of science fiction. The Willis articles are somewhat like the art of certain Dutch painters in this respect: they transmit more clearly than a photograph a section of reality, perfectly framed, beautifully composed as a fragment, but yielding no clues to the remainder of the universe outside the frame or the margins. This could represent one of the secrets of Willis' popularity. There is never any suspecion that he is writing about a huckster in order to propagandize his prejudices about the virtues of capitalism.

Two fan conventions were in the planning stage at the same time, partway through the 1950s. Both had slogans. "South Gate in '58" was the motto on this side of the ocean, and "Snog in the Fog" was the less official catchphrase for one in the British Isles. You wouldn't guess,offhand, that the non-competing events could have their destinies entangled by such differing mottos.

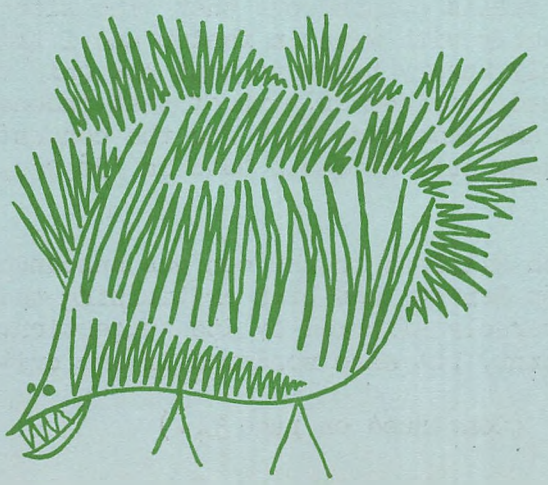
Long, long before, some forgotten San Francisco fan had felt the urge to get the worldcon for the old home town. A small amount of plugging had been done with the slogan, "Golden Gate in '48", but San Francisco made no real effort to become host. Rex Ward lamented to Rick Sneary that it was a shame to waste a slogan, and suggested remodeling it to "South Gate in '58". Sneary considered it a fine jest, since his home town had only 30,000 residents or so, hardly the population that had drawn worldcons in the past. But by 1949, Sneary acknowledged that "the whole thing started as a joke," but "it is no longer one. I am seriously going to try and get the nod in 1957, to have the convention here." The new slogan appeared on a sign at the 1948 Westercon, and a new fan group formed in the same year, the Outlanders, made the dream part of its raison d'etre. In the years that followed, the slogan bobbed up intermittently in fanzines. The Outlanders came upon dark days, Sneary suffered an attack of gafiation followed by pneumonia, and eventually the mid-50s were at hand and it was either time to shut up or put up. Suddenly Sneary found the impossible dream something very probable. John Trimble suggested that it was time to break the metropolitan stranglehold on conventions. Willis pointed out that "The life of the South Gate tradition has coincided almost exactly with mine in fandom and I think of it as one of the eternal verities." Suddenly Sneary began to want not only the worldcon in 1958 but also every event that he had imagined as part of that inconceivable worldcon. "One of our dreams is to bring you and Madeleine over for the convention," he told Willis. "It is a crazy fannish type idea, just as South Gate in '58 was, and yet one means almost as much as the other."

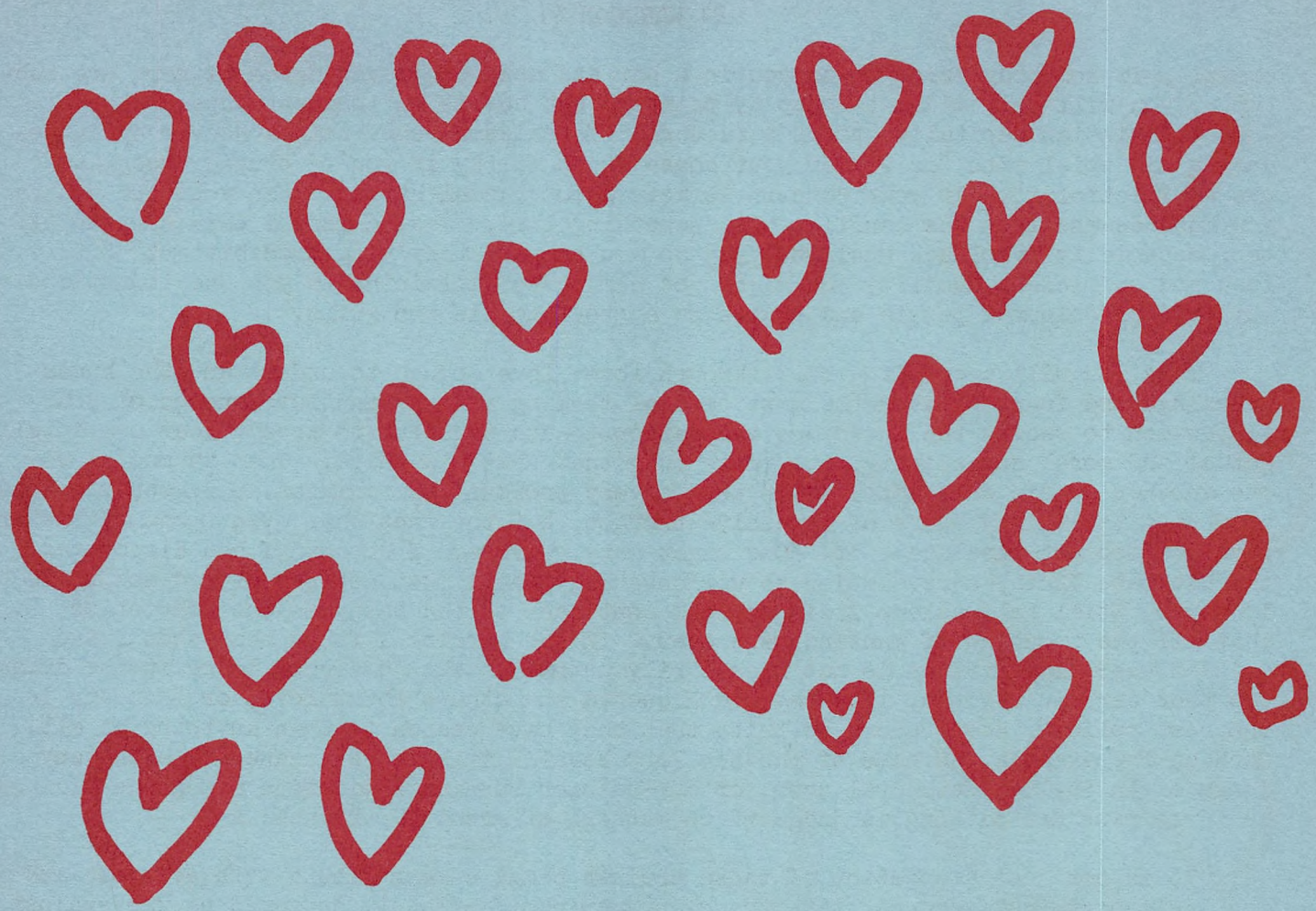
The campaign to bring both Willises to the con was announced by Sneary in mid-1957. Meanwhile, Britisher Ron Bennett had been criticizing the other slogan, fearing that younger fans might be adversely affected by its suggestion. Walter was inclined to agree with Bennett's viewpoint, but also wondered if the criticism wasn't confusing

(Continued on page 31.)

THE HARP THAT ONCE OR TWICE

Walt Willis





Mentioning that I now have the distinction of being the first fan to have the composition of his biography disrupted by the departure of a spaceship for the Moon -- and incidentally drawing attention to the remarkable fact that the most momentous noise in the history of mankind was one that was not heard, namely the lengthening silence between message and reply in communications with Earth -- Harry Warner sent me the third instalment of "A Wealth of Fable" so that I could correct any factual inaccuracies, an unlikely contingency in view of the fact that he seems to know more about me than I can remember, and no doubt also to give me an opportunity to comment on any of the observations he has made about my style of writing, such as the tendency I have to use short sentences. Actually the knowledge that an analysis of my style will appear in the same issue of Warhoon as this instalment of The Harp has made me as self conscious as the man in the old story who, asked if he slept with his beard over or under the clothes, was unable to answer then or sleep that night until he removed the source of his puzzlement with a pair of scissors.

So instead of having you all hanging round like vultures waiting for me to produce the familiar features Harry has spotlighted, I thought that this time I would cut them all out and concentrate on what he says I usually omit, that is my fundamental philosophy. When Madeleine read that particular comment of Harry's, her immediate reaction was, hah you and your old watertight compartments, by which she meant the penchant I have for keeping my various interests separate from one another, for very much the same reason ships have waterproof doors. I accept that my wife understands me only too well, but this time I think there's more to it than that. I have said exactly what I believe about certain serious subjects when writing about those subjects: what I have tried to avoid is referring to those opinions in other contexts. This is because I don't see any point in arguing seriously with anyone unless you are genuinely trying to persuade them to your point of view, and the only way to do that is to establish first an area of agreement out of which you can advance together. To take an extreme

example, if somebody comes up to you in a bar and asks don't you agree niggers are sub-human, you will only widen the gap by pointing out he is an ignorant dupe of the Judaeo-Christian capitalist power structure. No salesman ever sold a Hoover by introducing his spiel with "no wonder your house is so filthy if you're stupid enough to use an Electrolux". If your concern is more about racial harmony than your own vanity you must de-escalate the conflict with something like, "Yes, a lot of them turn me off too, especially the Black Muslims. Why do you suppose they've got so bitter?" With luck and sufficient humility you might get him on to explaining to you the injustices suffered by coloured people and thence to appreciate his own guilt.

This you will accomplish only through love: love enough to understand the human yearnings and fears of even the most bestial-seeming racist, and love enough of your fellow-men to resist the insidious temptation to use argument to assert your own intellectual and moral superiority, to prove only that White is White. That we must love one another or die does not I admit seem a very profound or original philosophy to end up with after thirty years of intensive thought, but the fact that even Lyndon Johnston says it does not invalidate it. One night many years ago I dreamed I had discovered the Ultimate Truth, a revelation so worldshaking that I must get out of bed and write it down. Still half asleep I did so, and went back to bed happy in the conviction that all the troubles of mankind were over. In the morning I found that what I had written was: "The obvious is not necessarily untrue". What had come to me in the dream was that certain sayings, like the one I quoted and others about love, or "Honesty is the best policy", have become so trite that they have ceased to mean anything at all. Much as for example the name of the New York Herald Tribune has ceased to evoke any image of an English Cathedral town, or a messenger running ahead with momentous tidings, or three wise men sitting in judgment on matters of great importance.

It is not just a question of these truisms being common ground with everyone and meaningless on that account, like the clergymen who fearlessly declared he was against sin. There is a very large body of opinion in modern Western civilization which rejects them, as evidenced by the use of terms like "nigger-lover", "bleeding hearts" and "do-gooders" as abuse, and Ayn Rand has even erected a system of philosophy which rehabilitates Cain. Next, presumably, Judas Iscariot, Adolf Hitler and Lee Harvey Oswald. Indeed our whole modern economic system gives the impression of being based on evil, in that prestige and material reward accure to the selfish and unscrupulous. Yet even so the precepts I have quoted are so profoundly meaningful that every now and then some business man like Marks and Spencer in Great Britain is able to outclass all his cunning competitors by simply acting on the fantastically impractical assumption that honesty actually <u>is</u> the best policy.

If it is necessary to defend the thesis that love is good, and apparently it is necessary, I would use the arguments I advanced in the first Warhoon Harp against Heinlein's philosophy; briefly, that man's evolutionary progress so far, and any hope of its continuation, depend on co-operation between men rather than on conflict. I used to think that socialism itself was enough to ensure the survival and progress of Man. It seemed to me in my innocence that since all men had potentialities for love, all that was needed was to develop an economic system which would encourage those potentialities to realize themselves. I still believe that could be done and the principle is one I follow in my day-to-day work as a senior civil servant concerned with the problem of making people behave better. Privately I think of it as Nudgism, the theory that people can be induced voluntarily to do things you couldn't force them to do. The simplest example I can think of offhand is the problem of a patch of park-land in an urban area. The libertarian solution is to let everyone trample it into dust. The Authoritarian solution is to put up notices "KEEP OFF" and punish anyone who disobeys them. The Nudgist solution would be to put a convenient path through it, with garden seats, and offer prizes to any group of neighbourhood children who plant and protect a tree. The Nudgist solution was employed the other day by a building

contractor in Northern Ireland who had found it was impossible to keep children off areas in front of buildings where he had sown grass seed. This time he gave a grass-sowing party for all the local children, entrusted the infant lawn to them, and promised another party when the grass was three inches high. At the grass-mowing party there was not a single footprint on the lawn, and the cost of the two parties was far less than the cost of a fence.

Where Nudgism fails is where the neighborhood is too large for anyone to feel any personal interest in or responsibility for a project, and it seems to me that is why socialism has not fulfilled its expectations. Moreover the constructive development of a modern state is such a large and complex problem as to lead to authoritarianism and bureaucracy which, although motivated by altruism, are indistinguishable in their impact on the average person from the authoritarianism and bureaucracy of monopoly capitalism motivated by self-interest. This has led me to deduce that the only hope for humanity is in the reconstruction of civilisation into admisistrative units small enough for each person to feel that his participation is vital. If I had to label this system of beliefs, I suppose I would have to call it anarcho-syndicalism.

Various science fiction authors have shown how a society along these limes could develop through technological advances like nuclear power stations, but it seems to me it would also require a reduction in population, and this presents me with a moral problem I have not yet been able to solve to my satisfaction: that is the value of an unborn baby. Or, expressed more philosophically, is existence better than non-existence? I feel that contraception is not wrong because no one is harmed by it, but in saying that am I not saying also that there would be no loss if the entire human race were annihilated in one painless flash, because there would be no one to feel the loss?

To rescue myself from this dilemma I am forced to postualte the existence of extra-terrestrial creatures to whom the human race has value, even if they don't know about us yet, and in this peculiar way science fiction has supplied me with a substitute for religion. The theology of the standard religions I feel to be silly and their practice inimical to morality. Each of them relies on an arbitrary authority, either a book or a person or some unverifiable revelation, and on a reward in afterlife for obeying that authority. Once this irrational premise is accepted every conceivable cruelty can be justified as being in the interests of that authority and for the ultimate benefit of the victims, or at least the survivors. The only reason this does not happen so often nowadays is that people don't believe so sincerely in religion, having largely transferred their allegiance to other arbitrary authorities like economic theories, which are susceptible ultimately at least to some sort of experimental verification.

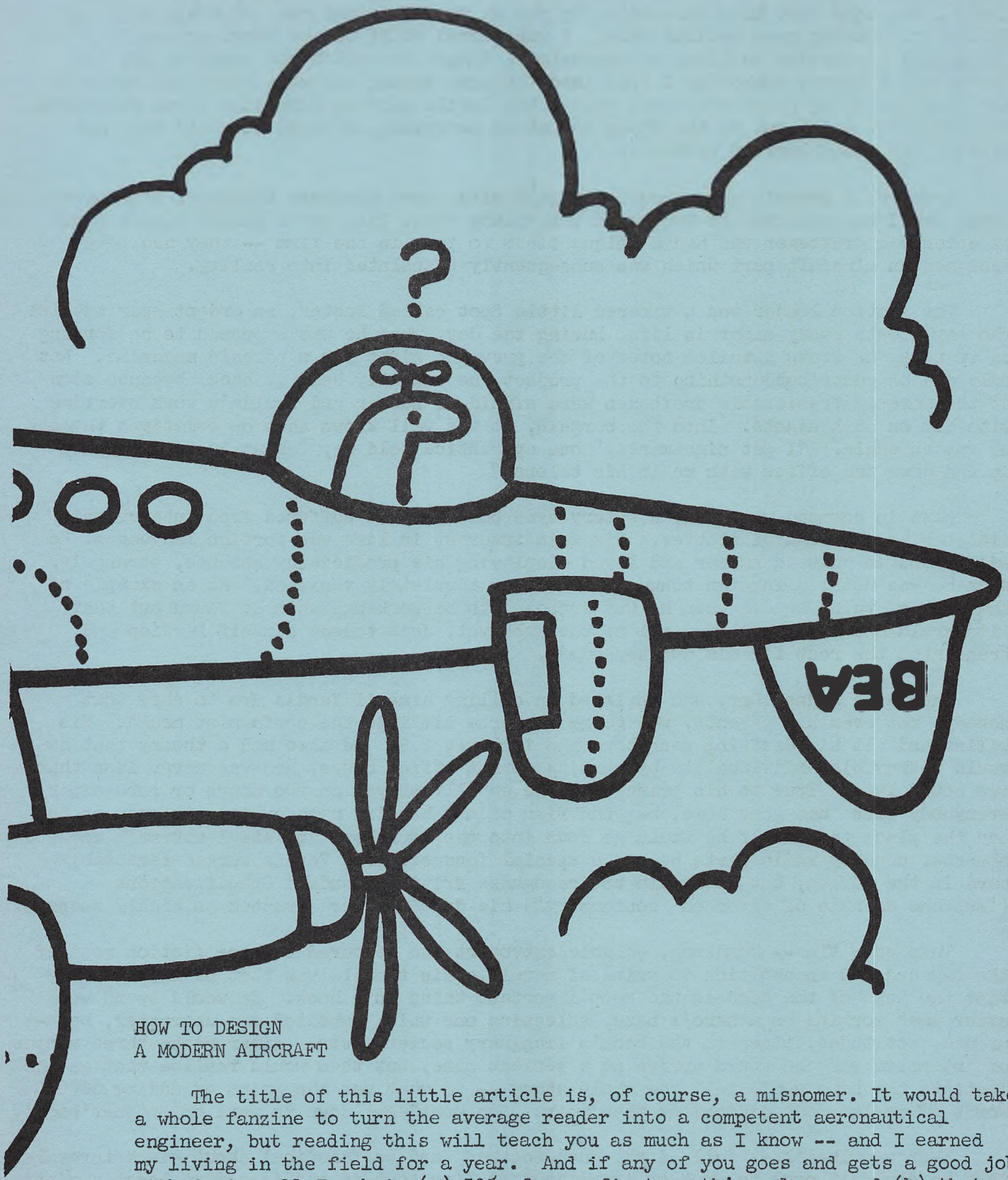
Such a transfer is now taking place in Northern Ireland, belatedly and rapidly, and in a very dramatic way. The degree of personal involvement is intense because Northern Ireland is just about the size of the ideal administrative unit I envisage for my Utopia, belonging as it does to what I think of as the Second Magnitude of population areas. This is a criterion determined not just by the number of people but by the size of the area and the amount of social mobility within it. The First Magnitude is the integrated small town, where everyone knows everyone else. In Second Magnitude areas everyone is known to somebody you know. The whole world is I think a Sixth Magnitude area, but you can form your own opinion by working out the least number of people you would have to approach, in succession, to secure a personal introduction to a particular Australian aborigine.

In Second Magnitude areas people are more likely to re-assess their own fundamental philosophy when the community is in trouble, and in Northern Ireland this re-assessment has been influenced by the world idiological revolution described by Terry Carr

(Concluded on page 40.)

THE MORTAL GAEL

Bob Shaw



HOW TO DESIGN
A MODERN AIRCRAFT

The title of this little article is, of course, a misnomer. It would take a whole fanzine to turn the average reader into a competent aeronautical engineer, but reading this will teach you as much as I know -- and I earned my living in the field for a year. And if any of you goes and gets a good job with Boeing all I ask is (a) 50% of your first month's salary, and (b) that you don't blame me if you encounter any of the Filthy Five.

I never found out how I got the job. I'd been working as a constructional engineer in Bolton, wanted back home, and applied to the Belfast aircraft

plant in the hope that I would be accepted for retraining. But to my surprise and alarm I was told that they were going to put me to work right away on a big military freighter. Having read Neville Shute, I was scared stiff on the first day as I approached the design building -- supposing I forgot to switch the computer off and wasted its battery; supposing I fell into the wind tunnel and went round and round it for ever, mouthing helplessly as I passed the little window; supposing I was responsible for the point being put on the wrong end of an aeroplane, meaning it could only get through the sound barrier backwards...

However, I needn't have troubled myself with these abstruse technical considerations, for I was assigned to work with the Filthy Five. This was a select little group of eccentric draftsmen who had a unique claim to fame in the firm -- they had never designed an aircraft part which was subsequently translated into reality.

The section leader was a wizened little Scot called Buster, an ardent spiritualist who saw ghosts every night in life. During the day, when he was supposed to be forcing us to work, he wrote detailed notes of the previous night for a psychic magazine. Not only did he contribute nothing to the project, he actually held it back, because some of the more impressionable draftsmen were afraid of Buster and wouldn't work overtime with him on dark nights. Into the bargain, it was well known that he sometimes thought he was an eagle. "I get nightmares," one apprentice told me, "about Buster flapping up and down the office with me in his talons."

Next in command was Jack, a watery-eyed bachelor who suffered from tuberculosis, diabetes and a dreadful stutter. His main interest in life was foreign languages. He was fluent in quite a number and loved displaying his proficiency because, strangely, when he was using a foreign tongue his stammer completely vanished. As an example of the sort of thing he did when he was supposed to be working, when he found out that Fitzgerald had not translated all of the Rubaiyat, Jack taught himself Persian and translated the rest for his own amusement.

Then came Sidney Orr, who insisted on calling himself Yendis Rro to show that nobody, not even his parents, was going to force him into the conformist mould. His wallet and all his drafting gear bore the initials Y.R. He also had a theory that he would betray his individuality by working normal office hours, and was never less than two hours late. True to his principles, he usually stayed on two hours or more after everybody else had gone home, but the firm didn't benefit much by it. As soon as he had the place to himself he would go down into the workshops and steal aircraft components, usually radio parts he had a special fondness for. Yendis worked reasonably hard in the office, but as he did not recognize British Standard Specifications ("supreme example of enforced conformity") his drawings were treated as highly suspect.

Then came Vic -- handsome, voluble extrovert who devoured science fiction most of the day and had an ambition to write sf novels. His trouble was that he had a theory that the name of the hero is the most important thing in a book. He would spend week after week working on a hero's name, selecting one which embodied the character, background, attitudes, place in the book's imaginary society, etc. After maybe three months of intensive work he would arrive at a perfect name, but then would realise that to the initiate the name would tell the whole story -- so what was the point of adding 60,000 words of useless embroidery? At that point, Vic would get down to work on another'book'.

Last was Thatch -- tall, dark, buck-toothed, and so fanatical about his motorcycle that he couldn't come to work on it without feeling that it had earned at least a minor overhaul, and sometimes a major strip-down. He spent most of his time nipping up and down between our third-floor office and the yard where his bike was kept. The machine's carburetor was practically a permanent fixture in his hand, and I used to see partys of visiting VIPs staring curiously at it as they went by, probably thinking it was a

strange new drafting tool or a jet engine component.

This then was the Filthy Five, my mentors, and I was to spend a dreamlike year in their company. We were supposed to design a small piece of fuselage structure near one of the plane's escape doors. Buster showed me the door on a general arrangement drawing. I was immediately struck by the fact that somebody jumping out of the escape door would land on a propellor, but being a greenhorn I kept my mouth shut and got down to work, or as close it it as was possible in the company of Buster, Jack, Yendis, Vic and Thatch.

Six months later Buster gathered us around him and told us it had just been discovered that anybody jumping out of our door would land on a propellor, which was hardly compatible with the whole idea of escaping. Every drawing we had done in that six months was therefore scrapped. The Filthy Five took the news stoically enough -- their drawings were always scrapped anyway, and this way at least somebody else could shoulder the blame.

Not being used to the aircraft industry, I was pretty burned up about it, but I started over again, anxious to do my bit in putting one of those big silver birds up in the sky.

Four months later came the news that, with our door in its new position, people jumping out of it would land on people jumping out of another door directly below. Again the door was moved, and all our drawings were scrapped. The Filthy Five accepted this blow with their usual fortitude, even indifference, but I sat down and wrote an application for a job in the firm's publicity department. I got the job but, the aircraft business being what it is, it took two months to arrange the transfer to an office four hundred yards away. In that two months I didn't put pencil to paper once. I was now a full member of the group.

But although they took the continued transience of their door so coolly (the only comment was from Jack: "Them stupid cu... cu... cu... buggers.") its latest migration seemed a kind of death knell for the Filthy Five. Yendis was the first to go. He was caught one night valiantly trying to steal an entire R/T set from a Sunderland flying boat. Our hearts swole with pride when we learned that he would have got away from the enraged security men but for the fact that the set was so heavy that when he threw it onto his pushbike the bike crumpled up in the middle. Yendis resigned next day, and the last we heard he had gone to the US and was in the Army.

Thatch was next, but even before he went I sensed disaster. Ominously, he lost interest in his motorcycle and took up underwater swimming, throwing himself into the new pursuit with a fanaticism which led to his downfall. The sea is cold around Ulster so Thatch realised he had to have one of those one-piece rubber suits. He couldn't afford to buy one, but the solution he hit on stamped him as one of the most original thinkers of our time. The firm had just received a contract for cocooning of naval aircraft. Thatch went down to the hangar where the work was being carried out, got into one-piece woollen combinations and paid a worker to spray him with the plastic cocooning material. Unfortunately, the stuff takes rather a long time to set and a manager happened to walk into the hangar and discover a silver-gray Thatch standing in a dark corner -- buck teeth shining -- like an outsize crucifix. He didn't get fired -- I think the management were bemused with thoughts of what a mind like that could do if only its energy could be harnessed -- but he was made to work so hard that he soon left for England.

Jack made his exit through trying to leap gracefully onto the platform of a fast-moving bus. He got on all right, but broke his leg in the process. Afterwards he told me he was lying there with one leg bent laterally at right angles from his knee

when the conductor came along, looked down at him and said, "You're dead lucky -- you could've broken your leg doing a fool thing like that." The TB and diabetes complicated his recovery so much that it took a year to fix his leg, but while he was at home the firm began sending him all its foreign correspondence,to translate. He did it so well that he never had to go back to the drawing board, but I think he missed his old way of life. I visited him at home a few months later and found the stairwell of his three-storey house filled with a gigantic pendulum arrangement which he used for drawing harmonograph patterns by the hundred.

Vic went to the States where his charm and blarney, distrusted by his fellow Ulstermen, won him instant success. Buster left too -- his wife's nerves finally gave way under the strain of the nightly visitations, and they retired to the south of England, although separate bedrooms might have been a more efficient solution.

The aircraft we all worked on is in service with the RAF now, carrying cargo in 5,000-mile hops all over the world. I often think it would have been a nice memorial if even one minor component could have borne the imprint of the Filthy Five.

A LOAD OF BULLETINS

Herbert Plinge, the world's leading communications satellite designer, has written an article bemoaning the amount of money he lost because in 1947 he thought of, but failed to patent, Arthur C. Clarke..... Latest sf books nominated for the Groogh award are "The Brave Bulls" by Gore Vitals, "Odd John" by R.A.Lavatory, "The Flying Saucer" by T. Disch, "The Mightiest Machine" by Cogswell, "The Square Egg" by Pangborn..... English author K.Amis today stated that, Walter Breen's deductions to the contrary, he is not Simak spelt backwards.

THE STAIR CASE

(in which BoSh attempts to write something in the great Twain/Jerome/Leacock tradition he so much admires even if nobody else does these days)

There's a tendency for some sf writers to bewail the decay of society, the breakdown of the old systems of morality, etc. In general the ones who do this seem to come from London or New York or some such place, and no doubt they are simply reporting what they see around them -- but I do wish they wouldn't assume that local conditions are general. Northern Ireland, in my estimation, is far more typical of the world norm in this respect than London or New York, and society here has not decayed, nor have the old systems of morality broken down.

Happily for the world in general I have been able to isolate the factor which has prevented the degeneration of Ulster society, and am about to make the results of my researchs known to fandom. Thus armed we will be able to rebuild society in those unfortunate places where it has broken down, and to prevent the rot from spreading elsewhere. And happily for us there is no need to leap up on ramparts or do any of the other hazardous things Phil Farmer has been proposing.

All you have to do is stare at people.

At first sight, or even first stare, this might seen too easy -- but note that it is in precisely those areas where people have given up the practice of staring that everything else has started to come apart at the seams. The biggest mistake any society can make is to adopt the attitude that staring is unsophisticated. A good, prolonged, well-directed stare is, in fact, one of the most powerful weapons the forces of morality have ever possessed. As an obvious example, very few people will gladly commit a murder or a burglary if they think they are being stared at.

See what I mean? When you think about it, the stare is revealed as a form of action-at-a-distance second only to gravity itself. Consider hypnotism, the lion-tamer's stare, the basilisk, and that perverted form of staring known as the evil eye.

Not only does the practice of staring regulate public morality, but it also casts a beneficient influence over manners and customs. Every time I go to London I'm grateful for the reminder of what staring has averted in Belfast. I see the most extraordinary things being allowed to pass unnoticed; men with beads and painted faces and flowered overcoats, girls made up like corpses, and so on.

In case anybody gets me wrong, let me say I'm a firm believer that people should be allowed to appear in the streets in any peculiar clothes or condition that they choose. That is their affair. They must not be persecuted or interfered with; but they ought, within reasonable limits, to be stared at. In Belfast we do stare, and this definitely discourages extremes and extravagances. As a result of this general practice of staring we find that people who act in an unusual way in Belfast do so from honest personal conviction.

If a man goes about Belfast wearing a flowered overcoat and carrying a pink umbrella you will generally find that he does so because he believes in it. He does it deliberately and is prepared to be stared at, and to stare back too. He is a man of strong, honest and fearless character. But if you meet a man in London wearing a flowered coat and carrying a pink umbrella, it's a good bet that he does so with no definite conviction. He is merely a weak person drifting with the Carnaby Street current. Knowing that, in a city where people do not stare, he can wear anything anywhere without censure or question, only increases his weakness, and eventually destroys his character.

A word of warning to anyone who may be about to throw himself into the science of the pstare without due preparation. Staring is no mere matter of an empty, goggle-eyed gape -- it is an art. It requires a receptive, interested, sympathetic state of mind. The business of the starer is to know the human heart. Staring, indeed, may be as much a matter of hearing as of seeing -- of hearing the still, small voice of humanity. It is a virtue widely and conscientiously practiced by the wise people of Ulster. And evil will be the day when a cold-hearted generation goes on its dull way with glassy eyes that look neither to right nor left, as happens elsewhere.

But let us in fandom make sure that such a day never dawns throughout the world. Let us act as zealous advocates of this virtue till we persuade the whole world to do likewise. Then people of every nation, creed, caste, colour, age and sex will look at each other, not with envy or distrust, but with a friendly, open-hearted, appreciative stare. --Bob Shaw

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A WEALTH OF FABLE: mountain and molehill. "Consider me nodding wisely at the suggestion we play down the fogsnog angle," Willis wrote in the ninth issue of Ploy. "Apart from the point you make, if we're not careful some of these sex-starved Americans will ask for their money back if we don't run the con like a brothel."

One reader either objected or pretended to object to those two sentences. As a result, the Second Coming of Willis was disrupted, the impossible dream wasn't completely fulfilled, Fapa lost its best writer, and Walter's baggage vanished into the maw of a renegade Greyhound.

(To be continued.)

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"When ray-gun hiss, tarry not to inspect error in grammar." -H.P.Pong.

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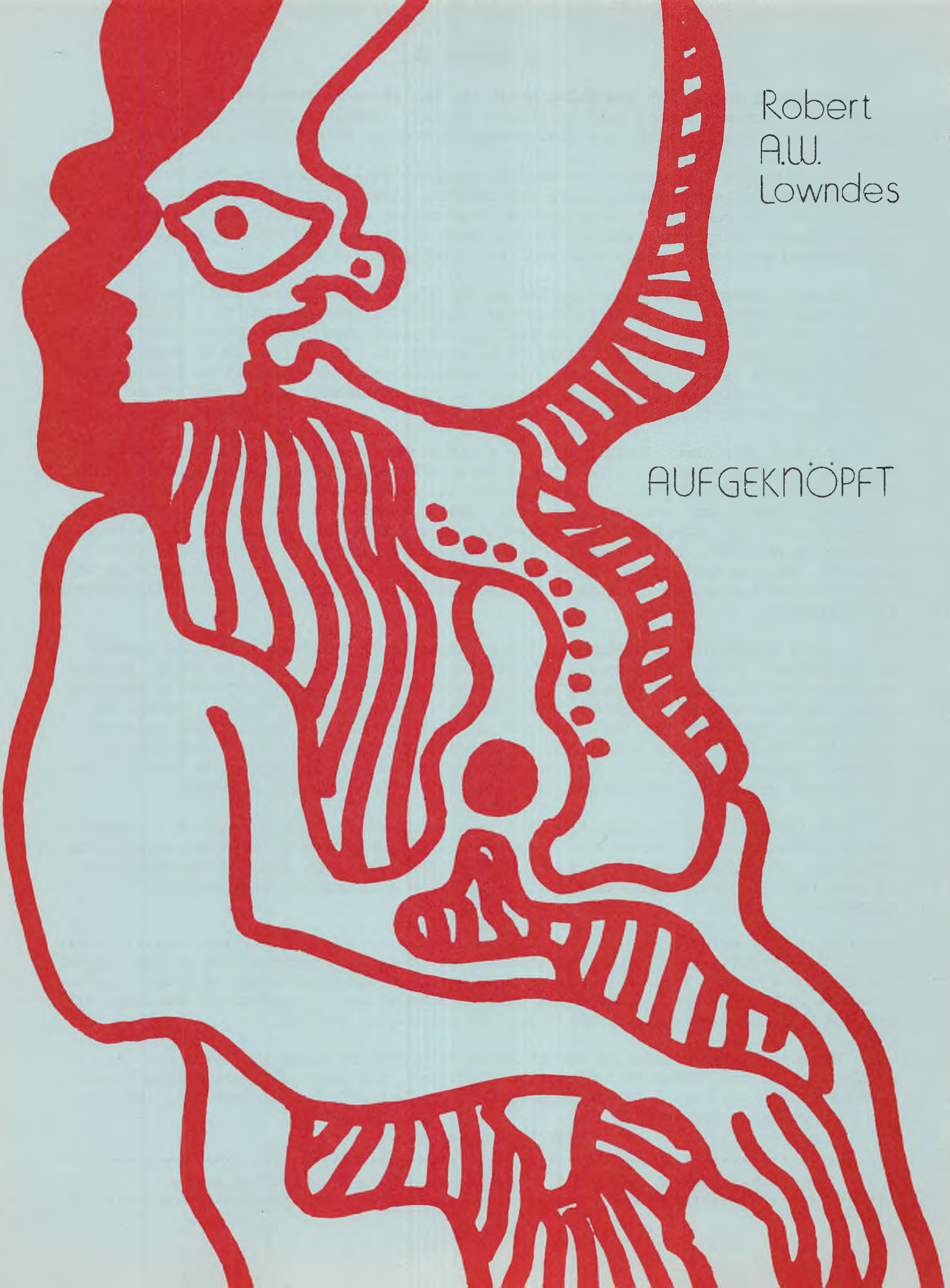

Robert
A.W.
Lowndes

AUFGEKNÖPFT

Back around the end of the nineteenth century, one "Cornetti di Basso" was writing music criticism for the London newspapers, and interposing sharp and pointed comments upon performances and standards of excellence with observations on the proper role and behavior of critics themselves. He concluded, among other things, that when the critic is doing his job he has no friends or lovers at all; his hand is against every man and every man's hand is against him; he can hate you on the sole basis of one performance which he judges bad, and is only to be appeased by a subsequent good performance. Later on, we found out that the personality behind this interesting pen-name was George Bernard Shaw.

And, of course, he exaggerates, as was second nature to GBS. Stop with that and the critic becomes de juro what he may pretend to be de facto: an infallible judge who is himself above criticism. (Not that any critic ever is actually infallible, but those who believe they are often manage to persuade a lot of people that they are truly inspired of something beyond the range of human imperfection and are not to be contradicted.)

Here in the present time, an American music critic, B.H. Haggin has operated for many years on the GBS principle, but with a valuable corrective: he stresses that writing criticism is no less a public performance than writing music, prose, plays, or poetry, etc., or performing the same, and therefore the critic is subject to the same risks that the writer or performer takes. What led Haggin to this was the very understandable fact that within the various arts, unofficial guilds of critics have arisen with unwritten laws to the effect that one critic does not talk about another, except to praise or agree with him; but disagreement is never to be brought to the public. Haggin has a considerable following, and I still admire and respect his work myself, although with various reservations, but you can see why he is unpopular, not only with many lay readers of music criticism (I'm in that category, being unable to read music and playing no instrument) but with the other critics, in general. Some quote him (where they agree, to show their tolerance, perhaps) and some point out his limitations (perhaps in recognition of his point about critics), but most simply ignore him: after all, he doesn't follow the code; he isn't pukka sahib.

If one is going to write criticism that is worth anybody's reading at all, one needs to bear Oliver Cromwell's famous line "In God's name, consider that you may be wrong!" (This quote may not be exact, but I can't find the original; I can only assure you that this version does not change the meaning.) But when you've come to your decision, then you cannot write as if you actually were wrong; you've got to take the risk of being wrong, of making a silly ass of yourself, and speak out as clearly and firmly as possible. Remembering the possibility of error, however, may just possibly save you from that extra bit of sheer arrogance which will defeat your aim even if you are unutterably right. Criticism must risk giving offense, but a snotty tone is not necessary.

I am not, and do not ever expect to be, a professional critic, one who makes all (or a sizeable fraction of) his income from writing criticism. And I don't bother to write criticism, at least for the most part, about things I'm quite indifferent to. Most writing of all sorts runs from the mediocre (which means of medium excellence, not poor or bad) to the very worst; anything above mediocrity is worth talking about. And sometimes it's well worth while to examine the mediocre to the worst in order to see if you can discover, and then convey to some readers where the difference lies.

Mediocrity and downwards to the worst does not make me angry except where it is misrepresented as the best. Bad work from an artist who I am satisfied (sometimes from the internal evidence of the very work at hand) is capable of excellent work, can make me angry at times. Actually, of course, no book or whatever can made me angry: I enrage myself over it, but it itself has no power over me. I don't do this to

myself because I imagine that I could have done it better, but it happens when I am convinced that the artist in question could have done it better -- and not a matter of slight improvements (as I see it) which add up to very little when all is said and done, but essential matters, such as the use of language. (Other science fiction critics may or may not consider this essential, but are sensitive to the use or misuse of scientific fact, so far as we have it; I have very little to say about that, since science just is not my field.)

It was careless use of language in Samuel R. Delany's "Babel-17" at which I engraged myself while reading it; and my impression is that this was also behind Lester del Rey's anger at the book, although he may have had other objections, too. But I make an effort not to write criticism in anger, or, if I do -- it has therapeutic value -- not to send it out until a cooling-off period is over and I've re-read it and rewritten it. If criticism is going to be of any use (and, for me, it's useful when the critic can show me something I did not see myself) then emotional agitation just does not belong in it. The critic's function (so far as the arts are concerned) is to try to persuade reasonably, not to agitate or manipulate a reader's prejudices, ignorances, or whatever. Criticism which agitates may include insights, but it is essentially polemic, not criticism -- propaganda, not art. I mentioned therefore that I had enraged myself while reading Delany's book, in order to indicate that persons who more or less share my own sensitivity to the use of language might possibly enrage themselves, too, For a brief period, I actually hated Delany. After calming down, I remembered that this was a book worth reading despite its flaws; and Delany has appeased me thoroughly since with other work wherein any similar failings are no more than incidental. (I am not a perfectionist.)

For if Algis Budrys exaggerates in his Galaxy column wherein he proclaims Delany as the finest science fiction writer living, but carefully noting that this does not mean that any given work by Delany is the finest science fiction written, I do not believe that Budrys has left us with an entirely wrong impression. (I haven't read the novel he speaks about, "Nova", as yet; but "The Einstein Intersection" appeased me.)

It's perfectly true that I wrote the sentence, "He doesn't know the difference between poetry and prose.", but here is a vivid example of an out-of-context quotation which distorts the meaning. That sentence in context is limited to the time when Delany wrote "Babel-17", and I took pains to imply that it did not necessarily refer to the present (1968).

More important, is the difference between "know" and "know about". A careless reader might have assumed that I was charging Delany with ignorance -- which would have been correct had I said "know about" rather than "know". "Knowing about" something is having the information in your gray cells, available for recall. All of us "know about" innumerable more things than we "know". Knowing is having the subject in your being, part of your nervous system, therefore (if the matter is one involving any sort of action) if one knows, one does. I know something about marijuana and LSD, etc; but only the person who has taken these substances knows them. There is no question, for me, whether Delany knew about poetry and prose and the differences between them at the time he wrote "Babel-17"; the amount and range -- particularly the catholicity -- of prose and poetry he knows about shows through every chapter of the book, which is just one reason why it is worth reading. But at that time he was unable fully to do -- to keep, quite frequently, from writing not prose in a somewhat poetic sort of way, which is legitimate, but from writing prose as if it were poetry.

I may be mistaken in calling this "carelessness" as I did above. And if I am mistaken, then I was enraging myself at Delany unjustly. "Carelessness" here, suggests that the author had not done his homework under the assumption that he didn't need to

do it. But it might have been a matter of esthetic digestion not having been complete. Unfortunately, acquiring vast amounts of information about something does not magically transform you into a knower (thus a doer) of whatever. So my anger may have been misplaced, for my reactions (while similar in kind) would have been less extreme (dissimilar in degree) if this book had not been voted first place (even tied, as it was) by the Science Fiction Writers of America, as the best novel of the year.

It is all too true, as one reader of Warhoon notes, that the difference between prose and poetry is becoming successively less distinct. I see two main causes for this: (1) the deliberate blurring of language by the various communications media in advertising, propaganda, polemic, etc. (2) the unwillingness of writers to learn the language and, in their use of it, preserve the differences. And, as I stated, the key is the difference between the denotative (prose) and connotative (poetry) use of language. Not that denotative language cannot, must never, be used in a poem, or that connotative language cannot, must never, be used in prose. That's like the old strictum that a gentleman should never say anything that might be said by a lady. It is rather that the art of poetry has evolved to the point where connotation, with or without such elements as strict meter, rhyme, etc., is predominant.

At one time, poetry was a means of transmitting information. Rhythm and rhyme, meter, etc., were devices to enable the performer to remember, as well as to get the matter across to the listeners more easily; to stir emotions, so that the"facts" were intertwined with feeling in an unforgettable manner. Exaggerations and embellishments were part of the process.

I doubt that there is any such thing as a single "poetic mode" of writing prose, but you do come across a number of them which are effective and legitimate. Being opposed to strict theories of esthetics, I wouldn't attempt to draw the line and say, "Beyond this point, prose becomes poetry, no matter how it is laid out." But a number of attempts to write in a poetic mode fail because the writer has confused the two media, and instead of coming up with poetic-sounding prose which nonetheless maintains the integrity of prose -- precision of statment -- what we find before us is just sloppy, blurry, slithery prose -- which doesn't work as poetry either, on any level worth paying attention to. No, I don't think you can pick a point in vacuo and call this point the boundary; but you can see where a given exhibit has crossed the boundary and is far enough into the other territory to be fired upon.

And I must confess that I gnash my teeth at such contentions as that "Finnegans Wake" "...is also a symphony, it is also a novel ..." Granted that Joyce's structure makes use of some of the structures and patterns that composers have made use of in writing notes to be played by instruments; and that he has also made use of structures used by novelists (including himself), to say that this makes the book a symphony and/or a novel is to perpetrate the very sort of blur and slither in the use of language that I'm contending against. This is not to deny that Joyce clearly intended the discerning reader to experience something similar in some respects (but not identical) to experiencing a symphony or a novel when reading the book.

In addition, the word "symphony" has become increasingly vague since the so-called "romantics" started slapping the label on almost any long piece of orchestral music that had any sort of similarity to some of the practices one found in the symphonies of Hayden, Mozart, Beethoven, etc. (I just appalled myself by stopping to ask myself: What should I expect to hear in a contemporary work labelled "symphony" about which I know nothing at all? After meditation, all I can come up with is that I expect to hear a work of some length played by a large orchestra, unless the title says "short" or a synonym and indicates that it is for string orchestra, small orchestra, etc.) Gresham's Law operates in language no less than in money, and it

(Concluded on page 58.)

60,000 LEAGUES IN A YELLOW SUBMARINE

Richard Avedon

Walter Breen

I first learned of the Beatles's recent effort by way of their recording of the soundtrack, which is overtly grossly incomplete and largely incomprehensible without at least a memory of the film. (The same must be said of the Lennon-Ono album, and to a lesser extent for most recordings of film scores and ballet scores or excerpts therefrom.) It did bring up the question of whether the older songs -- "Yellow Submarine", "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds", "Sgt. Pepper" -- were merely interpolated, or whether the film itself would prove to have been improvised around a collection of songs, either procedure being risky and the latter potentially more disastrous.

On seeing "The Yellow Submarine", I can at least report that some parts of the enthusiasts' claims are justified, and that a couple of the complaints in Crawdaddy are also justified. (Why, for instance, are the Beatles' own voices not used where they are represented? Why is so much attention given to possibly the poorest song they ever did -- "All Together Now"?) On the plus side, "The Yellow Submarine" is remarkable for what is beyond doubt the most extraordinary use of animation since "Fantasia" and possibly the finest example of large-scale animation technique ever to appear in mass production films.

One may legitimately ask if the film has any purpose aside from exploiting the Beatles' name and fame and one-upping Hollywood in the matter of animation technique. And the obvious corollary to this is the question: what is it all about if anything? Has "The Yellow Submarine" any basic theme or rationale aside from the absurdly naïve plot line?

Well...would it help to know that it is a Quest (deliberately reminiscent, I am sure, of Jabberwoky and Tolkien), and a Quest of the Reluctant Hero (es) subtype? In adopting this frame of reference I am assuming, perhaps overoptimistically, some reader familiarity with W.H.Auden's "The Quest Hero, in The Texas Quarterly, IV:81-93 (1962), reprinted in "Tolkien and the Critics", ed. Isaac & Zimbardo, University of Notre Dame Press, 1968, 40-61.

Come to think of it, the Isaacs-Zimbardo compilation of essays may not yet have become abailable in your local bookstore (even contributors' copies were delayed several months!), and possibly some of you have not yet seen it. Summary of Auden's scheme is thus in order:

A Quest is a search for something of which one has as yet no experience. Its value appears to derive from its validity as a symbolic description of subjective personal experience as though historical; and self-transcending experience at that, even if not in the mystical sense. For there is a kind of self-transcendence in the experience of heroic derring-do, independent of the alleged social value of such action (hence the mystique of the plaza de toros, misguided empty ritual as I believe it to have become), in the confrontation with forces greater than oneself which one must overcome or from which one must wrest a thing of value. Essential elements of a true Quest: the precious Object to be found or rescued or otherwise personally dealt with, reachable only after a long and hazardous trip, and even then only by one who manifests heroism ("some are born heroes, some achieve heroism, some have heroism thrust upon them"...MZB) after passing what amount to ordeals and overcoming the guardians of the prize, without or usually with the aid of preternatural helpers. It is never cut-and-dried, in a given epic or other Quest, that the Object will actually be reached; indeed, in the Epic of the Army of Igor it is not, nor was Jerusalem ever definitively captured in the Crusader epics any more than in the actual medieval wars.

In some Quests the Object is of value to the society to whom the Quest Hero belongs; in others, as for example most princess-rescues (not to mention the Holy Grail), it can become of importance only to the Hero. In a few, e.g. "Faust" and

"A.Gordon Pym", the Object cannot be distinguished from the journey itself; in a tiny minority the Quest itself is evil, e.g. Don Juan, or -- it might be argued -- Wotan's machinations to recover the Ring. In a few others the Object and the guardians are the same, the goal its destruction ("The Lord of the Rings", "Moby Dick"). In still others there is a combination of Objects ("Epic of David", "Iliad") or a certain final ambiguity ("Glory Road").

Needless to say, the classic sequence of elements of the Quest will all be found in "The Yellow Submarine", though deliberately presented in absurd form. I cannot decide at the moment whether the script writers started out intending to do this, but (with Beatle help?) they have overtly done so though on a level and with very much the tone of a story aimed at once at children perhaps a little too young for Tolkien and at hip viewers sufficiently sophisticated to spot the visual puns, sight gags, rapid-fire witticisms, parodies, literary references, filmic technical experiments and innovations, references to other visual artists, etc., etc., with which this amazing film is crammed. I can mention only a few of these even by way of showing that it is not here a matter of reading into "The Yellow Submarine" something not actually present: an allusion to Dali's wet watches in the time-travel sequence; quotations from the "Danse Macabre" (they missed a bet in not bringing in Mussorgsky's "Night on Bald Mountain!") and Grieg's "Morning" for the night in besieged Pepperland and its aftermath; ancient tag lines ("You no look Bluish!") and references to old films (were they really "interfering" when they saw King Kong in the very act of grabbing a Fair Maiden from bed?) -- and so on far into the night.

I earlier referred to "The Yellow Submarine" as a Quest of the Reluctant Heroes subtype. This is of course the kind who "have heroism thrust upon them"; and significantly they are shown as in various ways attempting to evade their destined vessel. The reluctance even goes so far as to occasion delay and evasion in rescuing Ringo from the undersea monsters. Frodo Baggins is probably the most famous, today, of Reluctant Heroes; and his original reluctance is reactivated at the very top of Mount Doom. But the filmic Beatles are shown as of less capacity -- and correspondingly lesser achievement.

Though we do find an exact parallel between them and Frodo in one sense. At the outset, Frodo, first hearing from Gandalf about Gollum, cried out "What a pity that Bilbo did not stab that vile creature!" At the end, he has grown enough to forgive even Saruman. At the outset of "The Yellow Submarine", the Beatles are depicted as insensitive enough to disregard King Kong's violence toward an innocent girl, and to contemplate abandoning one of their number to the monsters; but the act of compassion of one of them in rescuing Nowhere Man from Nowhere prepares the ground for their eventual redemption of Pepperland by an act of compassion forgiving even the sadistic chief of the Blue Meanies, when one would have expected them to drive them off with their fleeing armies.

The parallel with Tolkien goes farther still. The Quest in "The Yellow Submarine" is for rescue of a land on which the Shadow has fallen; a land ostensibly alien to them. Elvish music's subtleties were as lost on hobbits as were the classical quartets played by the Mayor of Pepperland and his friends on the filmic Beatles; and the Shadow on Pepperland is explicitly manifest as a silencing of music,a Calvinistic banishing of all instruments, a suppression of all Yea-saying and of as nearly all human movement as can be managed, a graying of all colors even unto trees and gress, a destruction of all flower growth. For orcs we have Blue Meanies, shown as literal monsters of color not too dissimilar to that of some uniforms, in symbolism too obvious to require elaboration, taking pleasure only in violence, subjugation, destruction of whatever is not like themselves.

The grayness of the Shadow is clearly the illusion of fear. After the filmic Beatles

have shown the Pepperland people the contrasting reality, even the Meanies can no longer again decolorize the land, even in the final battle. The lethal Glove, a flying mailed fist and accusing pointer, is redeemed by having not the H but the G knocked out of it, becoming an outreaching hand of love.

It is possible to analyze the film, symbol by symbol, but this serves little additional purpose once the basic idea is seen. (I take it that the discovery that the filmic Beatles are indistinguishable from the bubble-imprisoned Sgt. Pepper band means that the Quest is a symbolic rescue of the imprisoned inner self or higher self from illusionary processes -- a kind of common residual idea brought back by the Beatles from their LSD and meditational experiences.) But here is one of the limits of any analysis, for the film's effects depend so much on humor as to put analysis into the uncomfortable and nearly futile position of trying to explain a joke so that others can see it and still appreciate it. Humor can here -- even as with those other masters of the pun, Shakespeare, Joyce, Nabokov, Walt Willis -- overlay or garnish a serious purpose, and there are layers of this kind in "The Yellow Submarine" even aside from the obvious and the ingroup witticisms. The purpose will not be found in the plot line; this has the effect -- probably with reason -- of improvisation overlaid with incidents and sequences emergently created and revised until the whole thing took shape. One result of any such technique of collage/assembly/group creation is that the overall line suffers by comparison with almost any brilliant individual sequence, and "The Yellow Submarine" is no exception.

At the heart of this problem was the attempt to make the plot line fit some of the whimsical words in the original "Yellow Submarine" song. This was probably an error, but a felix culpa at that, considering the beauty of the film so inspired. The song was originally intended for children and may never have had any important symbolism aside from the basic (and ancient) image of life as a journey in a fragile vessel. It took public fancy immensely since its initial appearance in the "Revolver" album, as the most whimsical of all Beatles songs. Symbolic meanings were quickly attached to the vessel in many quarters: a rock group's love-bus was given this name; a pacifist organization, the Workshop in Nonviolence, designed and distributed buttons showing the Yellow Submarine with flowers growing from the conning tower and a Ban the Bomb symbol prominent on its hull; Yellow Submarine voyages were equated to innerspace trips, etc.

Inevitably, as the Yellow Submarine journey is defined as a trip, many of the visual puns have to do with such matters. There is a major series of jokes on bad-trip monsters; like some psychedelic journeys, this includes a period of traveling forward or backward in time, at one point of which audiences are invited to check their own heads: how long is 60 seconds subjectively? The light-show effects speak for themselves, although during the various songs they give the impression of having been created in deliberately different styles by different animators, that for Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds unexpectedly being splashy retinal circus rather than phantasmagoric flows. In one sequence the flashing control panel lights form a kind of affectionate parody of their counterparts in "2001". At the redemption of Pepperland the people are turned on by the music, dull bluish grays abruptly becoming live colors. And so forth: all relatively obvious but logical enough --some obvious things need to be said anyway. This is for instance why "Headland" is least affected by the Shadow of all the regions the Yellow Submarine people visit...

Which suggests that it is not after all vain to expect to find some kind of allegorical element in the story. At first this appears as a plea for greater involvement in direct experience (what Esalen Institute is all about, among other things) and against sickling o're everything with the Pale (gray) Cast of Thought. Such a view could be taken as drastically anti-intellectual; and in fact the chief representative of intellect on the journey, or rather of intellectualism, is Nowhere Man, a pathetic

part-bird, part-bunny Mensa type who yammers and half-creates (even to elaborating reviews of his own books) but gets nothing tangible actually completed. He is pilloried in a cruel song, but is nevertheless compassionately accepted as a fellow member of the Quest, displaying heroism at the end; and considering his display of competence in diagnosing the engine trouble in the Yellow Submarine, the group would hardly have been able to continue the journey without him. There is even an episode in the Sea of Holes (Holey Land?) where Nowhere Man is identified with Pooh stuck in the Rabbit's Hole. But considering his eventual role, and that of the Lord Mayor with his classical string quartets, the approach of the film cannot be taken as wholly anti-intellectual.

Nevertheless, it is specifically the Beatles' profession of continuing faith in the Love ideal even after the scattering of Uncle Tim's sheep out of the Haight Street flock.

This would seem to be a repudiation of political activism as a way of accomplishing what social reforms need to be done. Music is essentially apolitical and any attempts to make it a propaganda vehicle have inevitably impaired its quality and effect.

Nevertheless there is a more or less political implication. The Quest has been a battle against overwhelming odds, albeit a battle suceeding by mostly nonviolent means. The progress of the battle has not only transformed or redeemed the lives of the citizenry of Pepperland, it has constituted a means of redemption for the filmic Beatles-cum-Sgt. Pepper Lonely Hearts Club Band. They have become more compassionate and withal reunited with their alienated other halves/alter egos. Are we then to conclude that the battle against evil itself becomes a self-redemptive act?

In epics this has sometimes been implied, even outside the Norse frame of reference where it is the road to Valhalla and union with the gods. But surely we are not living in a society now where epic values exist as such.

Or are we?

Silence as you will the squawks from the bible belt radio stations about how great and noble it is to fight for Jehovah and flag and motherhood and apple pie. Silence, if you can, the yells and yammers of the political activists on all sides of the new left. Silence, if you dare, the memory of the pacificts in the Spanish civil war, crushed between fascist hammer and communist anvil, and the memory of the Hungarians who died in 1956 awaiting help that never came, and the memory of the Czechs who died a few months back under Soviet rifle fire. And there still remains, uneasily, the realization that Gandhi's methods worked only because Gandhi knew his opponents better than did they themselves, and that love and flower power still failed to prevent the New Community from being swept off the streets of San Francisco by police nightsticks.

Despite all this, I personally am still committed to nonviolence; but I begin to wonder if this posture is always as well implementable as the Quakers would have us believe. It is not every enemy that can be put to flight by eleven men and a piper... or by a rock group with its amps turned all the way up. --Walter Breen

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THE HARP THAT ONCE OR TWICE - conclusion: in his remarkably perceptive article elsewhere in this issue. In Northern Ireland at this very moment the past and the future of Ireland, and perhaps in miniature of the whole world, are locked together in struggle in an arena so small that every ideological concept is personified. The conflict involves religion and politics, racial prejudice and patriotism, love and hatred, and I hope in the next Warhoon to indicate how the fundamental philosophy I've outlined stands up to such a test, if it does. --Walt Willis.

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THE SNAKE PIT

Hopefully the debate on "2001", the most heavily debated subject of the year, is dying out in these pages. I have several letters from people who confess they don't want to read anything more about this movie and then proceed to add another three pages to the controversy. These letters are being forwarded to the interested parties but the following is being published inspite of its dominant subject matter. I think it's fascinatingly written and I'm a push-over for lucid writing that has silky texture and baroque flair.

ALEX EISENSTEIN: Jim and Ted lay bare the rheumatoid bones of Walter Breen's interpretive failure, as well as his apparent lapses of visual acuity (detailed mainly by Blish). However, the latter critic's-critic perpetrates a few minor errors in his otherwise-keen delineation of Walter's incongruous perception of the actual events in the film. For example, Dave's head only once appears to undergo buffeting during the ftl journey -- the rest of the views are almost-subliminal still-shots, in bluish tones, of Bowman screaming insanely, his head drawn back or twisted at very odd angles and possibly distorted by special lenses. These images are reminiscent of the strange facial apsects occasionally depicted by El Greco, and the subliminal quality is strengthened by randomly off-center appearances on the screen: by the time one's eyes overcome their central transfixion, the silently screaming image is gone and the visually magnetic roller-coaster ride has resumed; the apparitions of Bowman's contorted visage are always observed peripherally, their import perceived only as a gradual conviction that creeps over the viewer with ghostly stealth. Very tantalizing, and quite effective.

Blish's second mistake is his identification of the cover scene appearing on both editions of the novelization: I am fairly sure it is not from the sequence of the hyperspace ride -- there is no blur of vibration evident; the scene is in full color; Dullea's face displays not a trace of anxiety, much less stark terror; and the colored lights reflected in his face-plate obviously derive from the luminous instrument panels of his space-pod -- the tell-tales of hyperspace, the streaking walls of vivid light, are entirely absent from the reflection. I imagine the scene is actually a close-up from Bowman's very first venture outside the Discovery, on his way to replace the AE-35 unit, although the scene might possibly come from later footage.

I think I know where Blish picked up this unfounded attribution -- the caption to the last plate in the paperback makes the same error in describing the same subject (another view of David Bowman's face within a space helmet): "Mission Commander David Bowman watches in wonderment as mysteries of the Universe, unimagined by man, unfold before him." The reflection in his face-plate is a dead giveaway this time, though the caption writer missed (intentionally?) its significance; the helmet here certainly mirrors nothing but the banks of oblong functional-elements that line the interior cavity of the HAL 9000 computer. The only "mysteries of the Universe" that Bowman could witness in this scene are those expounded by Heywood Floyd on the TV screen that is set into one wall of the chamber.

Another thing -- I don't recall any super-nova in the sequence of surreal images and effects. However, the globular cluster presents an ambiguity of cinematic relativity: it may be viewed as approaching rather quickly, or as exploding rather slowly; the central core of stars seems to gush ever outward with an almost organic flow, and the stars never seem to approach the viewer as the cluster expands -- they remain the same visual size, more or less, after they well up from the dense central region. Perhaps Blish mentally dichotomized the two contradictory aspects of this "globular cluster"? (One young fan-ed, Doug Smith of Richardson, Texas, has suggested that the "globular cluster" is really a depiction of the "Big Bang" origin of the Universe: this would explain the explosive quality of the cluster; the backwards order -- from cluster to nebula, rather than vice versa; and the fluid, amoeboid form of the nebula, which contains a multitude of whorls among its meandering wisps...rather

than a single spiral galaxy from the present stage of our Universe, perhaps this amorphous, gelatinous mass represents the formation of a whole super-galaxy, coalescing from the gaseous remnants of a glowing quasar flung off by the detonating "cluster")

Blish's note on the musical background for the film was interesting, not to mention enlightening, except for the mercifully brief technical discussion of "Also Sprach...": not being a musician, composer, or even student of the field, I find musical theory and jargon mostly incomprehensible, though I am not generally insensitive to the effects of music, abstract or otherwise. Despite my lack of scholarly knowledge, I can state with assurance that Blish is wrong in his opening assertion -- "2001" is definitely is not the first "talking" s-f motion-picture to use existing compositions for accompaniment, rather than special scores. The first Flash Gordon feature film (edited from the serial version known as "Space Sentinels Conquer the Universe") utilized passages from Liszt's "Les Preludes" throughout.

Many of Blish's reactions to the music in "2001" are resonant with my own, though I was largely unimpressed by the use of "Blue Danube" for the orbital mating-flight. The incessent sounding of "Danube" bored me more than the occasional strains of Kachaturian heard later on. However, I agree with Blish's indications of the suggestive purpose of the latter music; it does seem to imply a prolonged, endless drifting. I also perceive the waltz-like elements in the motions of the orbital station and the earth-shuttle, but I cannot appreciate the association on an involved, subjective level -- the relation is too cute, and the music itself too inappropriate emotionally for the subject matter (an automatic reaction, I guess, for an ardent spaceflight enthusiast -- I can't see the sky as a metaphorical ballroom; it doesn't set right with my psyche).

I am quite struck by Blish's reactions to the last Ligeti selection; it created other associations for me besides, but the sound of the "music" -- what it was, as aside from what it connoted -- nagged my brain. Where did that sound come from; how was it made? A serendipitous discovery confirmed an initial reaction that was very like Blish's impression... I presently live in a trailer, in which the bottom of the bathtub is raised quite a bit above floor-level, creating a sizeable hollow between it and the floor (not to mention an unmentionably shallow bathtub -- Growf!); I ran a little water into the tub, and lo! this eerie, twangy, chiming reverberation greeted me. Familiar, somehow... and then the similarity to Ligeti's disturbing tonalities dawned upon my awareness. The actual composition seems appropriate enough to me -- it suggests the chill qualities of the bedroom and bath; it possesses an under-current of madness and hollow mockery, or of the drained and weary aftermath of trauma. It's a twitchy piece, and I think it fits the initially twitchy atmosphere of the sequence in the rooms.

I have two factual objections to Blish's "Placards" in Wrhn 25, and both concern the paragraph on "The Time Machine." To take the last first -- I am unfamiliar with the form Eloi as a Hebrew word for "god." Elohim is indeed the standard plural title of "Jehovah" -- generally, I've been informed that there is no singular case for the word, "God" being a plural entity because "His" nature is infinite. Other constructions are El (a short form) and Ehohanu (meaning "our God"). The only Hebrew word for "God" that ends with the "oi" sound is Adonoi (these are not the official modern transliterations, but are renderings of Ashkenazic pronunciation). Now, I'm not much of a Hebrew scholar myself, I must admit...but I wish an obvious -- you should excuse the expression -- gentile like Blish would mention his sources for such an unusual revelation. I hazard that Wells used "Eloi" instead of "Elohim" because he hadn't any notion that "Eloi" was a Hebrew word in the first place.

"The story...deals with a large group of hapless characters who live quiet lives until...a gong sounds, after which they must all rush incontinently to the nearest

exit." Even overlooking the fact that "exit" should read "entrance,"I still dispute this as a description of the original romance of "The Time Machine" in any of its published versions. Blish's generalized anecdote matches the George Pal film production more than the actual work by Wells. In the Pal version (scenario by David Duncan), the "gong" is a battery of spear-like air-raid sirens that rise out of the White Sphinx and mesmerize the Eloi into walking a somnambulistic death-march through the doorway of the Sphinx, down to the mechanistic catacombs of the Morlocks. If Jim Blish can show me a passage from the book which describes a similar occurence, I'll chew up a whole Berkley-Medallion edition of "The Time Machine" (if it is soaked in blackberry brandy beforehand -- I must have some concession to my palate).

Breen throws away his two most interesting observations on "2001". The coincidental planetarium show on Stonehenge sounds like a much more plausible source of inspiration than Walter's hokey astrological portents and occultist arcania. Ironically, Walter is the first person to note in print that the fancy furniture of the bedroom is Louis XVI in style (Doug Smith also makes this observatinn). I think this is an important fact -- not the particular period, but the fact that the furnishings are ornate period pieces... with a difference. Everyone commenting on Walter's analysis picks up the Louis Seize identification as a convenient tag, yet no one makes anything of it -- least of all Walter! I shall not go into the matter here -- it constitues a large fraction of my editorial for Trumpet #9; all who are interested may read it there (from Tom Reamy, 6400 Forest Lane, Dallas, Texas 75230; additional discussion of the film by Harlan Ellison and Richard Hodgens; also, I think it's our Hannes Bok issue, with portfolio and cover by the late fantasy artist).

It is strange, the things that people see in the film that simply aren't there; equally strange are the things that everybody seems to miss. There is the matter of the fetus that appears in the middle of the surreal fantasia (I prefer such a term to "psychedelic light show") -- and I'm not referring to the Star-Child that appears at the very end; the infant-like creature is definitely not a fetus, nor does it really resemble a newborn. The creature doesn't even display the facial roundness of a four-year-old child -- significantly, for it is no longer a neotenic organism (Man is, according to some biologists -- a creature that literally never attains adult form before senile decay sets in).

The fetus of which I write appears in glowing scarlet; it rises onto the screen like an eerie, infernal sun. Until the head of the fetus becomes fully centered on the screen, the image looks quite abstract, yet always it contains a suspicious organic quality. The red-limed embryo follows soon after a superficially similar abstraction--a flurorescent, emerald oil-slick that flows listlessly over the screen, subtly and continuously changing its initial pattern thereby... It's an exquisite exercise in nonobjective, fluid design, a lovely abstract mural; it may mask, by association, the true nature of the image in red. Still, I am amazed if I am the only one who saw the scarlet configuration for what it was. Didn't anyone else notice it? And what about the globule of semen (!) that appears elsewhere in the sequence, trailing a fine strand of slime? No one saw that, either?! I wonder if, or how, James Blish would explain these two latter images as "recognizably stellar...effects"? I am not striving to be Freudian -- these images actually appear in the picture; perhaps they are meant to be indications that the Star-child is incubating even as Bowman continues on his scenic tour of God's Country. (The sperm mass may have been simulated by a drop of liquid soap or somesuch -- I can't prove that it is really semen, but that's what it seems to be. The scarlet fetus is definitely a fetus, or a clever rendering of same--it cannot be identified as representing something else, as the viscid globule might.)

About the art in Wrhn -- it mostly leaves me cold, although the design on page 37 of #25 contains a good deal of linear interest...the convolutions on page 16 of #24 are attractive, but only half-realized. The spaceship on the cover of #24 has

possibilities, but many of its elements conflict with the overall shark-like design -- at that, the fins are too organic for a spaceship; too undulatory even for a shark... New spaceships for old? Certainly! In this regard, what do you think of Freas' spaceship designs since he returned to the field? {Freas' spaceship designs? Returned to the field? -rb} Although much of his latter-day illustration is quite dull and uninspired, his ship designs are quite dazzling -- a few failures here and there, but many of them are strikingly successful as objects that move. The fantastic involutions he works into some of 'em make them real eye-grabbers, but seldom does this impede their soaring qualities.

Where the Hugo is concerned, however, I feel that the standard design should be retained -- I agree with Ted White's remarks up to the point where he starts heaping paeans on NyCon's plastic atrocities. The Hugo as a symbolic rocketship loses something without that gleaming silver surface; a transparent rocket just doesn't make it as a timeless symbol. Ted couldn't have ruined them much more if he had commissioned their manufacture in fire-engine red...

If the Hugos, in an alternate world of probability, had been proposed yesterday, and I were my alter-ego in this other-world-of-if, I would, given my druthers, choose a design somewhat similar to the stylized rocket that once adorned the Galaxy Five Star Shelf, or perhaps one of Kelly Freas' designs from the mid-fifties, with a dagger-nose and flying-buttress tail-fins -- something many-spired. I doubt that even my third choice would be patterned after the Oldsmobile hood ornament; yet that choice made by Ben Jason was not such a horrible one. It is not, truly, reminiscent of the V-2, except in basic shape -- the lines are much diffeent, and the Hugo makes the V-2 look squat. The choice was not of a particular rocket, but of a generalized rocket-symbol, one already designed by professional artists of industry. Now the modified, enlarged design has become a tradition in our microcosm; it has varied in minor ways through the years, and even undergone radical alteration, but always it has returned to its basic state, the one which is most readily identified, in the minds of fans, with the title of the award. I think the identity of the symbol should remain stable; the physical award is not all that unbeautiful, despite Bester's iconoclastic disregard -- incidentally, I wonder where he keeps his I.F.A.?

I'm not opposed to a competition for new Hugo designs, though; on the contrary, I think some interesting material might come of it. But I don't think any proposed designs should be substitued for the present one. The image of Hugo-ness would be diluted thereby...I think I'll design a real Louis Seize Hugo, just to show you how grotesque such a thing would actually be if it did exist. {Please do!-rb} (3030 W. Fargo Ave. Chicago, Ill. 60645)

JACK GAUGHAN: The cover on 25 was beeootifull. My first reaction was one of horror at seeing fan-art go the emasculated way of so much contemporary illustration (witness a magazine called New York which is too too precious) but #25's cover was saved by your own very good taste in these things. Nice job! It should knock fandom for a loop! (New York) {I wonder. Most people who've commented seem to find it fascinating -- much like a Cobra about to strike. But the vast majority quite clearly don't know what to make of it. It seems the perfect atmosphere for a lynching -- which I have hopefully forestalled by quoting you before someone yells for a rope. The acid test will appear in Shaggy 75 where I've contributed a whole portfolio of collages. :: While I've got you here, Jack, I wonder if you have any explanation why something like 50% of all fanart looks like rejects for the first edition of "Tarzan of the Apes"? Here is a field with absolutely no limitations, where the artist is free to explore any idea or direction that comes into his head and seemingly the first thing that does is an emulation of J. Allen St. John. In its own way I find this as startling as would be the playing of nothing but rag-time at the world con masquerade ball. And yet we have fan artists who make entire "careers" out of playing this one note. -rb}

LARRY WILLIAMS, former editor of Cinder and #2 Best New Fan of 1962, writes: It's due to a very strange and amusing set of circumstances that I'm now writing you. After about six years out of fandom, I've finally come across some evidence that it still exists. The evidence is in the form of a copy of Wrhn 23.

For about the last three years I've occasionally had the desire to get in touch (or try to) with somebody in fandom and find out what's been going on. So everytime a friend would comment on his "love" for science fiction, I would ask him if he'd ever heard of fandom. Usually the answer was, "Heard of what?" So I'd give up. But yesterday I was at my boss' house for Thanksgiving dinner. I commented on the huge quantity of books he had in his basement den and he told me there were even more, and stranger, books upstairs. These he had hidden in his closet -- and they were mostly old Amazings and Astoundings dating back to about 1940. I said "Wow". After we'd returned to the den, I braced myself and asked the question, figuring my chances for a breakthrough here were better than previous -- but still a little leary of his reaction. He said yes, he had heard of it and in fact had participated for a while around 1949-51. He knew the name of Boggs, Bergeron, Tucker, Hoffman, etc. He had been a member of Fapa. He still received fanzines occasionally, but usually put another stamp on them forwarded them to some guy in Minneapolis who he knew was more interested in this sort of thing. One he hadn't sent on, though, was Wrhn. It was in his file among the old Hyphens, Quandrys, and Rhodomagnetic Digests. He name is Dick Elsberry, and he is the manager of the midwest office of General Electric's News Bureau, a sub-section of the company's Advertising and Sales Promotion Department. I work for him.

Fanzines don't spark much interest in Dick anymore. He's much too busy. He gets requests for material from somebody in St. Louis who publishes a fanzine called Odd. One request recently said, "Coming up is the 20th Anniversary issue of Odd. Wouldn't you like to have something in it?" Dick wasn't exactly brimming with enthusiasm over the idea. He remarks that if he did write anything, it would probably be called, "Fandom: Why?" A pretty good summary of his feelings.

My feelings are mostly nostalgic. I was pretty young, though not as young as I thought until I looked as some old Cinders last night. It seemed like much longer ago. Looking over the old fanzines made me realize what a lazy, and lousey, writer I was then. I noticed that most of my editorials began, "Here's Larry Williams, composing on stencil again." I doubtless expected all the Cinder readers to excuse my lack of polish as being due to pressing deadlines. The deadlines were pressing for a while, since I was getting a lot of letters and articles, but not that pressing. I took most of my pleasure in being able to produce a final product and mail it out. I didn't really want to bother with writing anything myself, which is too bad because I could have used the experience. However, I loved nothing better than collating and stapling the first copy of an issue, fresh off the Wilimczyk Press, and then just sitting down and looking at it again and again and congratulating myself. Boy, that was fun! I'll bet it's that way for most really young fans (I was 16 when I quit). {Ga. I'm 33 and still feel that way! Hm. -rb} They love the feeling of achievement. I must admit I enjoyed "having published" a little more than publishing. I was quite sure, even then, that I liked "having written" much more than writing -- all of which explains my desire not to let my editorial get in the way of completing an issue by laboring over it too much.

I must admit too that while I revered such Big Name Fanzines as Wrhn, and Xero, and Discord, I didn't ever read much more than the very light-weight material in any of them. I always said that I was planning to read the "heavy" articles very closely and compose a serious "letter of comment," but that was a bunch of horseshit -- a rationalization for my lack of interest. I just liked to publish!

I want to thank you now for helping me convince myself that what I published was

good by contributing those two pretty covers and several lengthy letters. You made me feel important, which was what I was actually seeking.

Re Wrhn 23: I don't think Lowndes ever made his point very clear. He states that he read the book ("Babel-17") because he was curious as to why del Rey would actually get angry about it. And he ends his article with a statement that it is the type of book that makes you angry. I don't see why. Perhaps I'm of a calmer personality. I just can't get very worked up because writing hasn't been completely thought out, or because there are some small, though avoidable, errors of scientific fact. I might not think much of the book, but I wouldn't get angry. A book is aggravating to me when I feel it totally mistreats a subject, such as when it professes to be factual, but is actually a distortion filled with opinionating. My journalism training is at the root of this feeling. If it is Mr. Lowndes' wont, probably because he is a writer, to be driven to rage when a book isn't done as well as he could do it, then I'll accept that -- but I think both he and del Rey are being pretty silly. Another point: his comments are so calm and quiet, it was a surprise to me to discover, at the end, that he agreed with de Rey!

Willis' Harp was fun, as always. I've looked at a couple of his old columns in Quandry, and am impressed with his continuing ability to take me by surprise. By this I mean that he is funny when I don't expect him to be. I'm reading along, enjoying his meanderings, and suddenly, in the most subtle fashion he turns a phrase that is terrifically funny. And he's been doing this for about 20 years! A wonderful gift.

(From a later letter:) Elsberry did mention two things in our conversation which might interest you. He said the thing he would do, should he publish again, would be reprinting the good material in the old fanzines he has. "That's how to become a famous fan in about six months", he said to me. I listened attentively of course, for he is my boss. He also recalled being asked by Walt Willis to write a report on the Philcon, a statement made more credible (I didn't question it in the first place, actually) by your statement that "WAW remembers his Chicon report in Opus". He said he had planned to do it, but had intended to take a different viewpoint than other conreporters. He was going to write it as he felt an outsider would view it -- a reporter from Time for example. That would be an interesting conreport, would it not? I'm not a bit surprised by your admiration for his writing. As I noted in my last missive, I'm not particularly pleased with my job. The one saving grace has been Dick. He is the type of person who warrants the worn-out cliche, "He makes it look easy." I held him very much in awe when I began work as a just-graduated Missouri Journalism major "with a great potential." He is a "natural" writer. He was editor of a weekly magazine at the University of Minnesota called Ivory Tower. He won an award for an article he wrote in a couple of hours just prior to deadline. He just needed to fill two empty pages!. (74 Maple Rd. Long Meadow, Mass 01106)

DAN GOODMAN commenting on Wrhn 23 discusses the aborted novel based on "The Harp Stateside": The excerpts from Walt Willis's unsuccessful novel are quite good, but I'm afraid I see little resemblance to "Trustee From The Toolroom". Which only proves, I suppose, that Walt Willis is not Nevil Shute. Or perhaps it also has to do with differences between the two subcultures being fictionalized. :: Shute was dealing with a group built around a specific hobby. Either one makes miniature machinery, or one does not. Fandom is a collection of hobbies: amateur publishing, amateur literary criticism, amateur writing -- all further subdivided. It is possible for people to declare that true fans are required to show enthusiasm for astrology, rock, beer, pot, or any of fourteen brands of politics, without being slapped down. :: Keith Stewart of "Trustee From The Toolroom" writes for a magazine acknowledged by all devotees of a certain hobby to be most valuable in its field. No fanzine is, or has been during my six or so years in fandom, acknowledged as the best currently being published. Considered best by a majority of fans, perhaps -- but never by all fans or even by an

overwhelming majority. :: Why? The Miniature Mechanic is concerned with a definite hobby; it has the same general slant as do all other zines devoted to that hobby. Fanzines -- how do you compare Quip, Amra, and Kipple? :: If Willis' novel holds together as a novel, I see no reason for it not to be salable. And if Ted White says it's good, then it should be salable. Perhaps I don't understand even what little I thought I did about publishing?

JERRY LAPIDUS: As a relatively young fan I'm not very familiar with Bob Shaw, but from what I've read of him (primarily in Wrhn) and read of his -- Bob Shaw for Taff! :: I think I'm beginning to be drawn back into the fannish past with Harry Warner and Mr. Willis. My reaction on reading my first Wrhn articles on detailed fannish history was an extreme "So what?" But as I get further and further along, I seem to become more and more engrossed with the activities of fans in days past, as well of course of those of today. Much of it, of course, is due to a growing appreciation of the respective writing styles of these two gentlemen. And I'm getting to like Shaw's rambling columns, too; it's like a not undesirable disease. (54 Clearview Dr. Pittsford, N.Y. 14534)

RICHARD M. HODGENS: If your aversion to current sf&f were really a matter of reality, you would not admire Picasso's work, would you? I might add that your own work -- not to mention your politics -- also reflects a taste for unreality... It's just that current sf&f isn't as good as it might be, I'm sure. Why not try something classic, such as "The Blind Spot", which is extraordinarily entertaining -- and should, more-over, help you appreciate the sf&f you're missing. :: I like "The Rats That Ate The Railroad" very much indeed. {The Rats piece was a chapter from "The Improbable Irish", in case anyone has forgotten, which Mr. Bloch discusses somewhere in this issue.--rb} (25 Appleton Place, Glen Ridge, N.J. 07028)

PHILIP JOSE FARMER: Mr. Blish mildly takes me to task for some statements in my Baycon speech. As usual, Mr. Blish is cool, logical, restrained, scholarly, informative, and stimulating. I won't argue with him about McLuhan. After all, I used McL's pronouncements only as a basis for what if speculations regarding the 1929-39 period of sf as prophesy. I should have made it clear that I was not proposing that McL was some sort of contemporary Moses inscribing an electrical tablet on a global-village Mt. Sinai. But I think Mr. Blish may be wrong when he cited Mozartian music as an example of art which is entirely devoid of prophetic content. I see no reason why Mozart or Beethoven could not have been prophesying or why some of the music of the 20th century is not prophetic in the McLuhanian sense. Perhaps interpreters of modern music will arise and will tell us what it is prophesying. :: Also, Mr. Blish's remarks about R. Wagner and the limitations of an artist -- his necessary noninvolvement in politics, etc -- and the remarks about A. MacLeish, etc, were appropriate and justified. I say were. They do not apply now. The situation of the world, the entire world, is different now. This is not 1845 or 1938. Man faces extinction, a not-so-slow poisoning, and every man, rice farmer, truck driver, engineer, poet, composer, student, assembly-line worker, is required to be involved. :: Lowndes' reactions to my "Riders of the Purple Wage" were predictable. If anyone would have asked me, I would have foretold fairly closely what he would say about the story. What else can be expected from a man who maintained (seriously) that Edgar A. Guest is the greatest of 20th century poets and that Douglas' "The Robe" is a far greater novel than "The Brothers Karamazov"?

WALTER BREEN: I assumed Dave's pod was to land on Jupiter because it was plainly in orbit during much of the trip, and the vast yawning chasm in flaming red seemed to me an acceptable explanation for the famous Red Spot. The globular cluster, spiral galaxy, "nova explosion", etc., are all common LSD visions even among people unfamiliar with the photographs of the physical realities. "Water glass" was a typo and I realized it only when I read the article in print. ("Sentinal" was your spelling, Richard Bergeron, not mine; I knew the term only from an article in Science Digest or some

similar publication, not having seen the book by the time the article came out.) Anyway, go see the film again and unless it was cut out you will find a sequence where after the wineglass smashed on the floor it is intact on the table and once again picked up. As for Dave's alleged visibility in the psychedelic trip sequence, I remember the eye (which is shown abstractly as though part of another landscape), but the famous helmeted head shot comes only at its start and in the version I saw must have been cut out, as repetitious footage, from the later sections of the trip. Even minus these deviations, the symbolic material in the film is hardly affected. I myself spotted the logical jumps -- eg, why the decision to send a probe to Jupiter? -- and assumed that the links had ended up on the cutting room floor. I assumed that HAL's failure to control the pod when Dave was alone in it was a failure of intelligent behavior in a computer already malfunctioning enough to be guilty of paranoid murder. (New York)

BOB SHAW: Good editorial, although I think you aren't quite fair to fiction. To me, good fiction is fact, but raised from the level of the particular to the universal. A factual report of say a politicians's reactions in a certain circumstance can be very entertaining, but it is like a demonstration of a piece of arithmatic -- where a story can be like an algebraic formula which delineates how all politicians of that type will react in that general class of situation. The big thing, of course, is that the author should have enough experience and vision to write his formula in valid terms. When he hasn't, it usually shows and his work leaves me unsatisfied, but when he has it's like skaking hands with Truth. There are some authors, like Forester with his Hornblower stories, who almost overwhelm me with the feeling. "This is true," I doublethink, knowing all the while that it's fiction.

Harry Warner continues on his supernatural way. One thing I left out of my sketch of 170 was the Hypothetical Observer made famous by Walt Willis in his Christmas cards--and I see now that he would have more than a slight resemblance to Harry. Now that I think of it, there were times I used to halt on that last flight of stairs leading to the Fan Attic and glance over my shoulder with the feeling that I was being watched. Hi, Harry!

If I had to take sides with either James Blish or Phil Farmer on the question of the sf writer's obligations to the world, I think I'd side with Blish. I liked the way he put his case and his ideas suit my temperament -- nothing appeals to me more than a call to inaction. It would be nice to do a long article relating the views expressed by these two with the ideas expressed in their works of fiction, but I haven't read enough Farmer stories lately, much though I enjoy his gimmick of always giving his hero the initials JC and having him dismember his girlfriend at some stage.

I enjoyed Walt Willis's nostalgic piece about Irish transport. I was discussing the reasons for the disappearance of the railway in this country with some friends going down to Bangor in the train the other morning. One of us thought the advent of the automobile had caused the failure, another said it was due to the trade unions clinging to out-of-date methods, and the third said the management were at fault for not modernising. I didn't get a chance to speak my piece because an inspector came round just then checking the tickets, and we all had to hide under the seats. (As I stenciled this paragraph, I just realized that it contains another paragraph written entirely in implications and that two of the implications are contradictory! -rb)

I see that the discussion of 2001 still rages. I'll have to get hold of a copy of the book and see if my application of Occam's Razor to the film shaved off too little or too much. It's interesting to note though that nobody is mentioning the real reason for the light show sequence. The basic, rock-bottom reason -- obviously -- is that all those pretty special effects were available. Otherwise, why spend on all that time on a mere detail like transferring the scene from Jupiter to somewhere else? All they had to do was emulate that excruciatingly corny technique used at the beginning

("The dawn of Man") and flash on another label. But these effects were available, they looked nice, and they took up a fair bit of running time, so the decision was made -- this sequence will represent a ftl trip. But what I would like to know is, what justification is there in science or pseudoscience for declaring that a supraluctic trip would register on the senses as a flight through a night-time cityscape followed by a series of colour-reversed landscapes? To be fair, hyperspace is a difficult subject for even the most experienced cameraman (at ftl speeds his film would run backwards) but I think a pure light show would have made a more acceptable portrayal. It wouldn't, for example, have confused a lot of people into thinking the astronaut was landing on Jupiter.

On another aspect of the same subject, I was talking to Ken Bulmer recently on the phone and his only comment on 2001 was, "If only..." Two words, but the way he said them summed up a life-time of genuine love for science-fiction. In the fabulous days of the Epicentre (when the gas oven was lit for heat on a winter evening, the air was thick with the choking aroma of pulps, and the talk was vaulting from galaxy to galaxy) nobody ever dreamed that local boy Arthur Clarke would get this chance to show the rest of the world what science-fiction could be. Well he got it. (6 Cheltenham Park, Belfast 6, Northern Ireland)

(-You certainly should have included the Hypothetical Observer in that drawing of 170 -- especially now that it turns out to have been Harry all along. I recall your first installment of "The Glass Bushel" started out with a description of his hard life and times. From Hyphen #1, May 1952: "The hypothetical observer is bored. He stifles a yawn. He gazes at the sky and wishes he was back in his hypothetical bed. For years now he has been posted outside Oblique House and nothing has ever happened. He is beginning to think nothing ever will. No Zap guns, no outburst of fannish hooliganism -- nothing but quiet respectability and adult good sense." Hmm, Harry, are you sure you were standing outside the right house? :: My comments on fiction were a drastically boiled down version of a long letter to Bob Lowndes and if the reduction left something to be desired it probably was fairness. Few pepple bother to comment if I don't make at least a few fuggheaded remarks which can be struck down. I expected this letter column to feature long lists of names from science fiction in reply to my confession of interest in mundane biographies and the defiant request for nominations of characters who could compare with Burton, Picasso, or Duveen. Not one name was submitted! :: I can see fiction as a heightening of the truth, as it is in "The Enchanted Duplicator", but I have to know as much about the subject as the author for the truth even to be apparent (otherwise I must take everything at face value and I can never know what is influenced by the author's ignorance or dramatic licentiousness) whereas in an exposition I can make my own judgement on whether the argument is valid and turn to other sources for further information if interest warrants. As I said last issue, I find the parable "a suspect form at best": it's always weighted in favor of the author's bias (since he's making a case) and I can't guess how much the story is guided by truth or bias (because we're only given conclusions -- not reasons -- unless the author takes time to lecture the reader and then he might as well write non-fiction). And the 'givens' of the characters and situation create their own truth -- another confusion. Consequently I insist that fiction function on a more important level: entertainment... without which no author is going to have an audience for whom to be able to push his favorite buttons. However, I've observed a very unfavorable range of comment from Malzberg to Willis on the state of entertainment in modern science fiction, which leaves me with little reason to haunt the newstands. And then there's the competition: I'm obsessed by the things which interest me and usually have four or five projects developing simultaneously which command my divided attention. I like few things more than a piece of fiction that can keep me up all night riveted to its pages because it creates a whole new world of interest. A book like this is a treasure indeed because the mind reels and soars under its spell and it's a totally absorbing experience. Unfortunately I can never guess what story is going to prove that interesting. "The Voyage of the

Beagle"did and still does on rare rereadings. The Foundation series did many years ago though last year I couldn't get half-way through the first book. But any of the projects I'm involved in will have the effect I can only find rarely in fiction and then can never predict when I will find it. (Why waste the time searching when there are already many interests clamoring for my attention?) Harry Warner's history will be such a book because it deals with an area of life which fascinates me. Norman Mailer dealing with the psychology of the Democratic convention was engrossing as a tour de force of technique, an anatomy of police terror, and a study of events I might have been involved in myself but for an assassin's bullet. If anyone can supply me with a guide to finding this sort of kick in fiction (and I know it exists for I do encounter it on rare occasions) I'll be most thankful. Until then I don't have to read reams of fiction looking for the sort of thrill that makes fiction reading worthwhile. I can find it continually in the interests that obsess me whether it be sitting down to do a series of collages for Shaggy and suddenly noticing that six hours have vanished and it's four in the morning, or studying the ingenious linoleum cutting methods of Pablo Picasso who can do an eight color picture with one block (Hi, James White), or... :: The question naturally arises why I publish a magazine which contains discussion of fiction. The answer is that Wrhn's writers are free to write about almost any subject (you didn't know you were limited, did you, gang?) but I hopefully feature people who can communicate interestingly about any subject that interests them: from "Nova" to the romance of transportation. I discussed this in the letter to Lowndes and I'll quote here in lieu of explanation, if I may: "Re your comment that 'there are some critics who would rather have you read their interpretations of a book than the book itself', I find myself usually preferring to read the critic than the book -- especially with sf criticism which, in fanzines at least, often explores the subject or a subject from the book more interestingly and fully than the author has and often has a good deal of technical information on the art of writing. I find Atheling and Knight especially valuable in this regard and enjoy them immensely but have read very little of what they review. This accounts for the perhaps seemingly odd situation of a fanzine editor publishing reams of copy about fiction he has never read. Science fiction has much more interest as a source of speculation than for itself." :: Re my comments on relevance and the parable, note the following remarks by William Manchester:

"Remembering Dos Passos, Farrell, and Steinbeck, I thought the novel should be my vehicle.

"For ten years I devoted myself to serious fiction. During that decade my work was received politely, and I acquired an academic reputation. But the great audience eluded me. I had chosen the wrong path. John F. Kennedy helped me correct my error. He pointed out to me that this is an age of direction, not indirection -- that men today are passionately interested in events themselves, not parables of them.

"During our talks I never dreamed, of course, that a national tragedy should signal my first communication to contemporaries in a language and form they would grasp.

"Yet the President would have understood, for he understood both the desperate need for audible voices and the incredible difficulty of making oneself heard in this baffling uproar."

I think entertainment can still be heard (JFK doted on Ian Fleming). I don't think the parable can be. -rb}

WALTER BREEN: On 2001 there is one comment which should have been made publicly by Clarke, rather than merely being told by him in private conversation. Talking of "Prelude to Space", he said that he had written his last materialistic book. So much for 90% of the hypotheses about 2001. And the claim that Dave was in another galaxy, that the psychedelic streaming voyage was merely ftl and that he remained alive through all the changes, fails to hold up logically. For if we see earth looming over the horizon at the very end as Dave manifests as the embryo in the bubble, then the distance there must be the same as the distance from earth, and one would have required

another prolonged ftl journey to traverse the interval physically. But there was not even enough clock time elapsed since he got into the Louis XVI room to allow this, nor are any light phenomena of that kind represented. Hence, my conclusion originally that the episode was taking place in the Inner Planes (afterlife), thus that Dave was no longer in his physical body but was able to change shape, or find it changing for him. I possibly should have spelled this out, but I'll have to do so anyway in the final version of "The Blown Mind On Film". (New York)

ROBERT BLOCH wants to start World War III: I'd now like you to run an article by Harlan Ellison giving his critical evaluation of Amazing and Fantastic under its new editoriship. (2111 Sunset Crest Dr., Los Angeles 46, Calif)

MICHAEL DOBSON: Harry Warner is excellent. However, he mentions that Walt thinks he got "The Harp That Once Or Twice" from "Ulysses". The quotation seemed familiar, and so I looked it up and found a poem by Thomas Moore, an Irish satirist who lived from 1779-1852, entitled "The Harp That Once Through Tara's Halls", which might be the point of origin. The poem goes:

The harp that once through Tara's halls,
The soul of music shed
Now hangs mute on Tara's walls,
As if that soul were fled.
So sleeps the pride of former days,
So glory's thrill is o'er,
And hearts, that once beat high for praise,
Now feel that pulse no more.

No more to chiefs and ladies bright
The harp of Tara swells;
The chord alone, that breaks at night,
Its tale of ruin tells.
Thus Freedom now so seldom wakes,
The only throb she gives,
Is when some heart indignant breaks,
To show that she still lives.

Tara, near Dublin, was a residence of the early Irish kings. :: Although I don't know Bob Shaw, I shall indeed support him for Taff on the basis of his work in Wrhn. (214 Lafayette St, Decatur, Ala. 35601)

ROBERT A.W.LOWNDES: The highest spot for me, this time, was Walt Willis' marvellous tale of the rats that ate a railroad, within the context of an essay that was utterly delightful all through. Bob Shaw's stuff also hits me most pleasurably, and there's no need to go on at length about the Warner series: it's holding up, and can go on forever so long as it does. :: It's good to see a calm and clearly reasoned reply to "Farmer in the Sky" (otherwise known as "REAP"). One difficulty that an awful lot of us, if not all of us, have is the tendency to jump to one extreme in order to avoid the exact opposite extreme -- which any one of us may find entirely repulsive. The "Art must serve the needs of the people or perish!" or "Art must be prophetic!" line is the polar opposite of the "Art is entirely useless!" or "Art for art's sake!" line. I suspect your typing finger slipped at one point, Sir Editor, since I doubt that Jim would have let such a slip get by before sending the mss. out to you: after all, it was Blish, a few months ago, who introduced me to Mozart's "Serenade #10 for 12 Wind Instruments and Double Bass" K. (361., you have it "Serenade #14). {And so does Blish. -rb} (Most recordings, I find, use a version wherein the double bass part is transcribed for counter-bassoon or another wind instruments, and change the title accordingly; I haven't as yet heard any of the alternate performances so can't comment). But notice: this (to me) lovely work does indeed serve the needs of many people, and if you consider all the meanings of the word "prophesy" (of which, "to predict the future" is only one), the work can be called "prophetic" too. It has no specific use for any one person or group -- yet I can imagine a more cultured-type group of revolutionists listening to it and deriving from it stimulus to their ideals and "hopes for humanity", etc. -- which in action may devolve into their perpetrating any and all manner of atrocities. And in a sense, almost anything that Mozart (or any other composer) wrote was "for art's sake". ... My entire purpose, you see, is to suggest that any of these slogans may have some value if interpreted broadly enough, but a narrow, exclusive, intensive interpretation of any one of

them leads logically to horrors. :: And going from music to fiction -- offhand, I cannot think of any work of fiction which I consider really great which cannot be considered "prophetic" in some sense; and some include prediction, some include "early warnings" (or late warnings); but I cannot think of any "great" work of fiction which was written with the sole and express purpose of prophecy. Fingale requires that as soon as I typed that last sentence a possible example would instantly leap to mind, although I'd pondered for a goodly time before typing it. Hail Fingale! Yes, the book of Jonah might well be an exception, I've been told that religous Jews have considered this prophetic fiction, rather than prophetic history, for some centuries. :: Of course, there's nothing wrong with publishing stories which do come up with imaginary solutions to our far-from imaginary current mess (the mess varies; the currency is constant). Calling for them, as Fred does, is most likely to bring forth still more propaganda science fiction -- but I wouldn't excoriate him 100% for it. If just one author, who can write that story for no other reason than that he has this story in him, but who hasn't written it as yet because he doubted that there was any market for it, sees this assurance, then the announcement was worth making. We're going to continue to have mediocrity as the stardard fare, anyway. Hail Sturgeon!

Ted White's article concludes with the usual interest, although we're far from agreement on specifics. I congratulated Poul on "Eutopia" simply because it was a story where I should have seen the "surprise" way in advance (as I have seen it in innumerable stories designed that way) but didn't. Giving the feeling that Watson expresses when Holmes explains. This is the sort of situation where it really is fun to be fooled, no matter how foolish you feel afterwards for letting the author divert you from the obvious. Agreed that it might have been more significant if Anderson had worked it for a different effect, in which case what should have been obvious would have been made explicit much earlier -- but would it have been as much fun? And more fun was something that this grimly serious, intense, over-earnest anthology needed a bit of -- even if Phil Farmer's novella certainly had it! Was pleased to see that three of the stories I voted for in the Hugo sweepstakes made it this year; Ellison's Farmer's and McCaffrey's. (Delany's "Star Pit" I found intensely moving, and had to wrestle with conscience before letting myself see that it had more, and more serious, flaws than the Dragon story, and was not right -- Chip's already been done dirt enough by being voted a prize for a story with serious flaws -- for the Hugo. A scroll of honor would have been appropriate on both occasions.) :: Since no one else has said it, so far as I know, I'll say now what seems to me the only really dangerous thing in or about "Dangerous Visions": the editor's and contributors' notions that they are being dangerous and daring, when nearly all of them are doing nothing more than overreacting to straw men. And while I still either enjoy or admire a number of stories in the book, enough to recommend it, I consider its greatest value is that it makes a wonderful "How Not To Do It" manual. (New Jersey)

JOHN FOYSTER on Wrhn 24: Your comments on Famous Science Fiction drew my attention to the fact that none of Mr. Lowndes' publications are distributed in Melbourne at the moment and if they are not distributed in Melbourne then it's a safe bet that they aren't distributed in Australia. A couple of early issues of Magazine of Horror were on sale, but no more than that. This is a shame when the Ultimate magazines leer at one from every newstand. Since I've kept intending to subscribe perhaps this will jar me into taking action, even if it means breaking my life-long stand on this matter. I'm glad that you plug Lowndes here, and run his column, for I feel that he is overlooked when fans think about people who know where science fiction is at. Earlier this year I forked out a few back issues of the Columbia magazines, intending to do a piece for ASFR, but I realised that I just didn't have enough issues and that I wouldn't be able to do Lowndes the justice I think he deserves. The piece you mention, "Science Fiction As Delight", sounds like the sort of thing I enjoyed most.

That's a cheap trick of Harry Warner's, I think: fancy giving you this piece as

a five-page ad. for his Advent book. I suppose he thinks that just because this is tremendously readable stuff we'll all go out and order his book. (Could you print Advent's address in the next issue, by any chance?) {If Warner will tell me what it is, I will. -rb}

I thought for a moment, that Walt Willis was going to join Harry Warner in defending the fine old tradition of writing about science fiction only when there was nothing better to do. All the other articles in this issue are about sf. Most of the leading fanzines seem to concentrate on sf to a greater degree than was the case in Wrhn's last incarnation. It's a sad thing, but only part of the cycle: I'm going to hang on until the other side turns up.

The Top Ten fanzine lists had an omission that was surprising to me, but I see that Terry Carr included it in his WeAlsoHeardFroms. I've only read about a dozen copies of Le Zombie but, with no disrespect to any of the publications which Terry, say, lists (most of which I've seen several copies of), I'm sure that Le Zombie should be up in there. I'd rank it way ahead of NuFu, for one. But Terry's list, and Ted White's too, both concentrate on the years after 1950, whereas Lowndes dealt exclusively with an earlier era. What's needed is balance, but perhaps sf fandom has reached the stage where it is no longer possible for someone to look the whole thing over and say: "This was best".

On #25: I suppose I wasn't alone in looking up at the sky tonight and in particular in looking at the moon. In Australia it has been a hot dry day, and Venus and the moon were almost in conjunction. The earthlit moon glowed softly, almost as though weak Venus were the cause of it all. While hot Apollo raged on one side, soft Aphrodite cooled the other, and the new embraced the old. I wonder how true it is? Can it be that the little boy was not born in Bethlehem in vain? I read that it is costing over $180 million to finance the bare mechanics for this trip, but if one dollar of that money comes out of what might have been 'defence' expenditure, if one life is saved, then it will have been worth it. Could this be the beginning of a New Age? Probably not.

Your suggestion of the way in which you write is terrifying. I pause between paragraphs in order to read the section of fanzine upon which I'm supposed to be commenting, or to turn a page in the book I'm reviewing, etc., but if I ever sat back to have a quiet little think in the way you seem to do then I'd never get anything finished. I will admit that sometimes, when writing on-stencil and suddenly changing my mind about the sentence structure, I have to sit and think very fast about how to get out of it and still have a legit. sentence on my hands. But taking time off to think: that's dangerous -- creeping serconism in a particularly vicious form.

When you say you can't read fiction I assume you mean all fiction and not just stf. You only mention having recently read (ie, several years ago) "Stranger In A Strange Land", so you may have been thinking exclusively of stf. Perhaps this is because you live in a world of fantasies and fictions (assuming you are in advertising, as you seem to be). But really that's not necessary, for the attitude you express is one I've heard from several very different people. It isn't something I can easily understand: I can barely waste my time reading 'non-fiction'. By reading non-fiction, let us say, you can learn one man's opinion (explicit) about some small aspect of the world. He is probably objectively wrong in about one third of what he says. But in fiction we find something entirely different. If you read the right kind of books you can learn far more about one or two people, and probably about yourself, than you can in a whole bookshelf of non-fiction. "Remembrance of Things Past", for instance, tells us more about human beings than the entire works of Fraud. But there's far more to it than that. We can learn so much about Proust and how he developed by reading "Jean Santeiul" as well as ROTP.

If I want to have some feelings about the years just after the first World War I recall USA, rather than any history text. And USA also told me a lot about myself only a year or so ago. I first read it when I was sixteen and then again ten years later. And up until then I didn't think I'd changed much. But I had to face the fact that either Dos Passos had changed or I had, and I was reading exactly the same volume volumes. I couldn't get that from a work of non-fiction, I think. :: Hell, Dick, if I want to know something useful I might look it up, but I am certainly not going to carry it around in my skull: that's just inefficient.

James Blish's article was rather rambling, though interesting: I'll venture to suggest that the deaths of Wilfred Owen and Guillaume Apollinaire will be remembered from WWI just as much as that of Gaudier-Brzeska -- but I'm trying to sell this package to a Pound man, aren't I?

Walt Willis was enjoyable reading, and I've a little theory about Walt's non-mention of "At Swim-Two-Birds"..I have often complained to John Bangsund about his practice of holding material until it is cobwebbed and then publishing it as though it is fresh and new. Now if this was a piece Walt wrote for the old Warhoon it would be easy to understand why he wouldn't mention Flann O'Brien's death or "At Swim-Two-Birds".. 'Fess up? (12 Glengariff Dr., Mulgrave, Victoria, 3170, Australia)

(That's possibly the most original and unrewarding criticism of Walt Willis I've yet seen. If the O'Brien piece was written for the old Wrhn that doesn't explain why he wouldn't have mentioned the "late" Flann O'Brien or touched on "At Swim-Two Birds" when he deceided to use the item in the new Wrhn. He could have easily up-dated by referring to the author in the past tense and made other easily penciled in additions. As a matter of fact Walt learned about O'Brien's death when he sent a copy of the mss to MacGibbon and Kee for forwarding -- as he told me when I wrote that I'd sent a copy of the issue to the publishers. Walt's missing the first of O'Brien's books doesn't necessarily indicate the article was written some time ago though missing the last of them could imply something of the sort. And finally, what difference would it make anyway? The article was still brilliantly written and singularly uncobwebby. :: I'm interested in your complaint to Bangsund since it's the first time I've seen this criticism leveled at Walt. I can't think of anything he's written which seemed dated at the time of publication -- I trust you're not referring to fanhistorical or memoir writing? Since 1965 he has had only four pieces published to the best of my knowledge -- one in Lighthouse and three in Wrhn -- none of which were palmed off as "fresh and new" since they were. I don't believe Bangsund's arrival on the scene predated 1965 by very much so I wonder at all this Willis material you've "often complained" about and, indeed, am eagerly looking forward to reading it if it exists. :: Yes, my impatience with fiction extends to non-sf as well and I'm not so dense I don't recognize I'm including a large area of art. The second I enjoy it I'll have plenty of time for it. Between stenciling your letter and composing this reply I somehow became ensnared in Arthur C. Clarke's "The Coast of Coral" -- a fascinating collection of tales about his adventures on the Great Barrier Reef. I can't imagine a single piece of fiction which would have caused me to put aside this issue as did Clarke's incredible foolishness in offering himself as dinner to the denizens of the reef and his eerie explorations of this alien world. :: I wasn't advocating memorizing the contents of non-fiction books (something I seem to recall as an important part of formal education so I find it interesting to note a teacher condemning this as inefficient). I was citing the benefits of absorbing information on a sub-conscious level for later use on a creative level in ways and with effects impossible to predict. I certainly didn't memorize a single page of "The Coast of Coral" yet I'll wager I've drawn more benefit from it (and incidentally learned a lot about a fascinating part of the world) in ways I can't even guess at than I ever could from a whole set of Amazing Stories which would place on file in my subconscious a vast array of nonscience and bad writing which might have influences in ways too ghastly to contemplate. I'm certainly not sneer-

ing at fans of crack-pottery: I only demand entertainment from my reading not learning and advocate that anybody read anything that interests them (and don't see how they can do otherwise anyway). Similarly I can't see myself getting much out of Dos Passos, etc, when there are things I would much rather be doing while they are speaking in the form of a reflection. As Buck Coulson says in the current Vandy: "I see no particular reason for reading fiction that is just like real life; I'm in contact with real life every day anyway. Why bother to read about it when you can live it? Talk about escapism..." Want to know how I make sure I fall asleep on trans-Atlantic flights? Yep, you guessed it. :: I question if anyone knows enough about mental processes to label as "inefficient" carrying information around in your head. On a conscious level this may be so for many people but we can barely begin to guess what mental levels are at work and the way we use information forgotten on the conscious plane. With gentle treatment the subconscious can be persuaded to work for the conscious part of the mind: practically all the problem solving by which I earn my living is done without conscious thought -- if I actually had to think about advertising I'd be so bored I'd soon quit the field. I just feed in the problem and the answer is forthcoming in a few days and the same process works in my hobbies. I wonder how much of that I could get from a work of fiction? Very little, I assume, since I have difficulty even reading the stuff. I'm positive it's my loss. Can anyone help? Perhaps cold sitz baths? -rb}

ALEXIS GILLILAND: One quibble: you describe Mayor Daly as a"Machiavellian boob". Either one or the other, but not both. Since the '68 election didn't shake his hold on Cook county probably Machiavellian is best. Boobs is as boobs does and while Mayor Daly looks the part, a boob he ain't. :: Probably the Russian "Apparatchnik", which denotes the small man running the big machine would be best. The -chnik- gives it a slightly sinister sound. (2126 Penna. Ave. NW, Washington, DC. 20037) {I see what you mean but I felt (a) anyone who had as tight a grip over that convention as Daly did had to be Machiavellian and (b) anyone who could blatantly pack the galleries with sanitation workers in full view of 30,000,000 viewers had to be a boob. He may have controlled that convention and his own fiefdom but more than any other person he cost his party the election. -rb}

GEORGE FERGUS: Breen appears to think of fiction as a game in which the author tries to conceal what he is saying, so that the critics are elevated to the status of translators or high priests of some (oc)cult of the obscure. The tragedy of artists who are unable to clarify their ideas is that there are always critics ready to misinterpret them. Breen seems successful only at losing the thread of both "2001" and Phil Dick's writing. I wish that Kubrick and Dick would take the hint and return to producing works that say things clearly and directly.Even ambiguities must be clearly delineated if they are to have the desired impact. But then it is sadly true that in too many cases stripping away the obscurity would also expose the lack of profundity. If you're obscure and ambiguous enough, you can fool all of the critics all of the time. There are at least half a dozen different intepretations of "2001" extant, and in each case that I know of the entire point of the film seems worthless. :: Your admission of how little sf you actually read might have blown my mind were I in a less lethargic mood. I get the impression that you feel you outgrew sf twenty years ago, and every time you try a new novel which has seen a lot of comment in the fan press, your judgment is reinforced. (Of course it could be pointed out that the reason such novels are controversial is that half of fandom dislikes them.) Bob Shaw isn't an old friend, but I picked up "The Two Timers" anyway because Bob has written some good sf like "Light of Other Days" and "Call Me Dumbo". Though his previous novel "Night Walk" was not impressive, it was quite entertaining as adventure sf. Disappointingly, "The Two Timers" turned out to be not only the worst book so far in Terry Carr's Ace SF Specials series, but hardly worth troubling with at all. It's a standard old mystery story written in that excruciatingly painful-to-read style known as "mindless suburban". The good sf idea that was present was squashed under an avalanche of ridiculous psi phenomena, ominous shooting stars, strange changes in gravity, etc. The characteriza-

tion, while not badly done, did not succeed in making me care much about what happened to anybody nor in rescuing great gobs of the book from being quite dull. Yet you say you enjoyed it. I daresay there are lots better sf novels, and maybe you ought to backtrack to about 1950 and start catching up. Is it that you're reluctant to plough through the 90% that's crud? It seems to me that if you ignore those writers who are consistently awful (and have a lot of non-sf on hand to turn to on those occasions when you've read 4 lousy sf novels in a row and can't bear to try another) you can cut the crud down to less than 50%. Which isn't half bad. (3341 W.Cullom Ave.Chicago, Ill. 60618)

{Me again. I doubt you could find a more simple and clear writer of fiction than Heinlein or one more variously debated and interpreted in sf. Perhaps the fault is in the form and not upon ourselves. (Your turn, BoSh.) :: I did enjoy "The Two Timers" very much but possibly due to delight that the author was giving such a good accounting of himself (I thought it very well handled though would hesitate to offer that as indication of anything after my admitted lack of knowledge in the field but it may mean something for I later found some of the points I made in a letter to Bob echoed in Ted Sturgeon's review). I did note a logical gap in the book large enough to shove 7th Fandom and Bill Donaho through which no reviewer seems to have noticed. Possibly I'll review it but not until everyone has had plenty of time to read it because the hole is in the very crux of the ending and I don't want to spoil it for anyone. Those who've read it and wonder what I'm talking about will have to wait... I can't help it if you're not as perceptive readers of fiction as I am. Ted Sturgeon praised its "Most notable ...insights into the complexity of married love" and called it "a most mordant contemporary parable" which seems to leave me in the position of appreciating a parable. Marion Bradley rescued me with "Entertainment -- but of a very high order" so apparently I can safely assume it was a very entertaining parable. In a recent letter Bob tells me that Victor Gollancz has bought it for hard cover publication. -rb}

JIM YOUNG: All the things that Doc Lowndes has been contributing impress me. It's too bad, that Famous SF has done so poorly. I hope it can pick up, and eventually make it to a bimonthly status. It was really one of my favorite zines...for a good part because it had so many fannish (even if sercon) items in it. His editorial writing has excited me, inspired me, and kept me going...all at the same time. (His FSF editorial about "taste and science fiction" really explained some things for me...some things that have been floating around in my mind. Like how I should react to mundanes who tell me: "Science fiction? That crap?") I appreciate the Lowndes tremendously. (1948 Ulysses St NE Minneapolis, Minn.)

STEVE LEWIS: It isn't easy to say exactly why I haven't written to say thanks for sending Wrhn's 24&25, but thanks it is. It may be that your writers (excepting yourself, as you say) are professionals that makes it difficult to reply to their words without a great deal of effort (and sometimes that effort is in reading their words). It may be the editorial opinion of science fiction, though how that could affect what I find interesting in your contributor's columns is beyond me. It may be my opinion of fannishness in general (when fannishness supercedes the purpose of it all), though certainly another glance through shows that shouldn't really annoy. Interesting. (2074 Pauline Blvd. Ann Arbor, Mich. 48103)

ED SMITH: Harry Warner on Willis in 25 was second only to Willis on his native peoples. Being of Irish descent, I am very interested in the "old country", and besides, Hyphen was either the first or second fanzine I received when I came into fandom. It is said that what you first read influences what style you develop. So far, nothing has happened, but I'm waiting. (1315 Lexington Ave. Charlotte, N.C. 28203)

ERIC BENTCLIFFE: Nice to see BoSh writing for you as well as Walt, when will James join the Wrhn staff?? {Now, why didn't I think of that! -rb} Harry Warner's piece was interesting and fitted well with the aforementioned writings. One of these days I must

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AUFGEKNÖPFT - conclusion: seems as if every year more and more words and/or phrases, expressions, etc, are becoming useless for meaningful exchange because they no longer have any particular meaning at all.

It's a losing fight for the most part, particularly in these days of collective ideologies where the loudest voices are those which proclaim that the artist should "serve the needs of the people" or "act as early-warning systems" or some other slogan. (Not, mind you, that the artist or writer positively should not, no never, serve public needs or prophesy -- proclaim warnings; but rather that this should not be the beginning and the middle and the end of his function: prophecy often is a by-product of great art.) Nonetheless, I maintain that preserving the integrity of language, in its differing forms of presentation, should be part of the function of any writers worth taking seriously. But this can only come from knowing, rather than "knowing about" the language.

I think the author who does know the difference between poetry and prose, among other things, will be on the same side I am, whether or not he says he agrees with me.

-Robert A. W. Lowndes

pen a piece about the Shorrock residence. Norman and Ina have held open house every Sunday for the Liverpool Fans for around 17 years now, and some very interesting and amusing things have happened during that period. You've never lived, by the way, if you have never had Sunday tea at the Shorrocks -- ask Steve Stiles. Everyone who turns up brings something different to eat, and some of the edibles are very different. 'What, Bessarabian Lungfish, again!!' is oft the cry. (51, Thorn Grove, Cheadle Hulme, Cheadle, Ches. England)

DICK FLINCHBAUGH noticed the cover: I liked the way you handled the face. Instead of cutting out the whole face you did some chopping of your own making your own profile for the girl. You didn't follow the original photo when you cut the face out but cut a smaller, petite face out of the original. It's rather nicely effective around the neck where there is no gradual shadow on the front side and one gets the feel of a ringed neck. A discoloration in the skin instead of just shadow. The eyes then: it's quite dramatic how those butterfly wings blur into the rest to make a unified picture. Even though one is able to pick out every individual part which you used they blur easily into a single form which reads quite realistic. The strangest thing about it, and probably the least intentional is the slight twist in the whole thing. Those eyes just don't fit right to the profile and this kinda keeps wanting me to turn my head which is quite disturbing...reminds me of the time I was on some junk speed (I think maybe it was something like I chewed up one of those Vicks nose sniffers) and my torso seemed to me twisted in relation to my neck up and my pelvis down... it, the twist is very slight, amost unnoticable but yet you're always aware of it...anyway I wish I'd done it. (Rt 1, Box 403, Seneca, Penna. 16346)

(Unquoted comments are forwarded so please write again. We'd starve without letters.-rb)

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