

Publisht for Papa by Soedy, familiarly known as Chandler Davis, AS,  
USNR V12, Eliot G42, Cambridge 38, Mass.

Sins the 1st Blitherings som changes hav been made. Du to my en-  
listment in the Navy I now find myself, like so many Papans, with less  
time on my hands than ever befor. (Not that the V12 program is particu-  
larly tuf; but yu see, I'm taking 2 mor corses than the Navy requires.)  
The natural effect of this on my fanzine is a drastic enlarjment.

In respons to popular demand I've eliminated som of the mor trubl-  
som features of my spelling system; but just to make sure nobody can  
read my stuff without a struggl I'm initiating som even less comprehen-  
sibl abbr-ns. I hope yu ar all thoroely baffl'd, especially Langley  
Searles.

The 3rd change is the introduc-n of som original creativ riting.  
Hope it meets mor favor from Papa than it has from pro editors.

PasstheXenojughesaidasheblitheredandblitheredandblitheredandblithered

Dialogue

by Saville Sax

Characters

Helic, a dictator  
Alanna, his mistress

(Helic alone)

Helic

Restless God.  
Joy in action!  
No sleep, no sleep!  
Onward! onward to conquest.  
Today while they sleep  
We strike.

(Enter Alanna)

Alanna

Is it true that you whom I love,  
The child of art and beauty,  
Wheel a sword of death,  
Turn rivers into tears?  
There is yet time,  
Time to repent.

Helic

My dreams are of flowing blood;  
Blood is life, water death;  
So onward, onward to conquest.  
In the channels of the backward tide of history I'll flow,  
Flow irresistibly in the guise of fate.

Alanna

You break the billion garden-sheltered dreams.

Helic

There are no gardens;  
Dead metal rules the living heart.  
I give it life with blood.

Alanna

Hate! hate your dead religion.  
You shout in every ear,  
You churn the air with fear,  
You charge each eye with tears  
Till all become the sky and drown the earth.  
Mothers torn from their children,  
Fathers unarmmed, unlegged,  
Shattered lives in fragments,  
And you care not!

Helic

Nothing lives or is for which I care.  
I do not do such things with hate.  
They are long calm thoughts  
Thrown over the flames of life.  
I feel as if I floated on a river  
With the sky above  
And the wind playing its melody on reeds.  
Yet now the fleeting images  
Transform themselves to flesh and life.  
You know, I often think that if there were a God  
He would not know that he was there;  
Each thing thought would be,  
And being would be there in perfect knowledge,  
Yet not knowing that it was.  
I feel like that sometimes,  
And all the world becomes a dream  
Where touch deceives the eye  
And eye in spite deceives the touch,  
So both confirm the lie  
And all is endless desert of myself. . . .

Alanna

I love you for what you aren't, love,  
The lost promise which is your hate.

Purpose

by Chandler Davis

Smoothly, regularly paddle,  
Dip the blade in up to the top exactly,  
No farther,  
Do not speak or even shift your foot, change nothing,  
Just paddle, smoothly,  
Across the mountain-circled lake into the channel,  
Smoothly, silently,  
Under low-arching branches paddle,  
Hugging the island's edge, but never breaking stroke,

Paddle on, watching the rays from your shadow in the water,  
--You don't know much, but what do you care? you're here,--  
Smoothly, silently, regularly paddle,  
Leave no slightest ripple in your wake as you go.

---

### Spring Superfluous

by Ditto

Why this wild color, earth,  
This green?  
You soil that should be brown and icy-hard,  
Why this green flame that plays along your surface?  
You trees that should be gaunt, stick-figure ghosts,  
Why now this gaudy shroud about each one  
That glows in the twilight when the sun has set  
And blinds the eye with green?  
You flowers, violently red or purple,  
Why this unrestrained, ecstatic beauty?

Before, there was a slow, gray peace,  
Indifferent monotony.  
It is still there, surely I see it still,  
But hard to see it under the foliage  
That bubbling and tumbling flows madly through all space,  
Hiding the rest and always itself obtruding.

---

### The Caves

also by Ye Ed

There are caves which have no end, and there is silence,  
And there are half-seen, whitely-glowing things;  
Black rivers wind from cavern into cavern,  
There is no sound but what the river sings;  
Soundless, a chalky, phosphorescent night-bird  
Flies through the twilight on translucent wings.

The twisted, moveless guardians of the caverns  
Are sometimes living things that turn their gaze  
To watch you as you follow ever farther  
Your threading of this vast and gray-walled maze.  
Others live not; they stand as if alive,  
But it is not sleep which gives their eyes that glaze.

How came you to this place? There is no telling.  
Or is this madness? That you cannot say.  
Who else is here? This question you can answer:  
No one but silence; he will always stay  
To search with you through these long, hopeless grottoes  
For that lost road which leads up to the day.

There are caves which have no end, and there are night-things  
On rivers moving tortuous and slow;  
Gray vastnesses rise to the roof above you,  
Black vastnesses sink infinitely below;

The quiet, unrippled water whispers ever  
A monotone, mellifluous and low.

Yet hear! a mighty shout rings through the caverns;  
One cries, though there is no one here to cry.  
The sound fills all this rock-bound world's gray silence!--  
Still unperturbed the glassy bird-shapes fly,  
Still unperturbed the eadritch cave-things watch you;  
They knew you would cry out, and they knew why.  
Speechless and hostile, bands of glowing cave-things  
Watch you, as they will watch you till you die--  
Till in this monochroic world of lomeness,  
Till, in this world of monody, you die.

Physics: Mass is energy is space is time is mass is energy is space is Gertrude Stein

The Science of Blithering: wherein I expound, ramify, & perorate

I've been traveling a good deal this last year & it's repeatedly struck me how great are the variations in our supposedly uniform national tongue. The Baltimore pronunciation of "out" is found only in a very limited area on the seaboard, and it's so different from what you hear a hundred miles to the west that there's quite a difficulty in comprehension. The Pennsylvania Dutch "Heem" for "him", the Boston "world", whose vowel sound almost smacks of the French "u", and the way Norm Stanley pronounces "hard" as "had", are some equally noteworthy phenomena. Not to mention the several distinct languages found within the city limits of New York.

Maybe I can get a moral out of this. The US is the most homogeneous population of its size in the world; large numbers of people are continually traveling from one region to another, so that it's tough for dialects to arise. If even this country can preserve such linguistic differences as the above, the inference would seem to be that a worldwide uniform language is impossible, or, rather, that if it was adopted it would not stay uniform long.

I have one superstition & only one. In my medicine cabinet there is a cardboard container labeled "Kolynos", & every morning & night before brushing my teeth I go through the ritual of inverting the stupid thing over my toothbrush. Nothing ever comes out; I suspect the container has been empty for at least 2 months. It certainly seems that rather than go on with this procedure for the rest of my life I should take the time some day to investigate & find out if there's anything in there or not. But I'm always in a hurry & after all there's no very strong reason why I shouldn't go on pretending I use toothpowder.

This dissertation too has a moral. The vast majority of religious people have exactly the same attitude toward religion. They don't know definitely what they believe; the extent of their theology seems to be that they believe in something, by jimmie. Furthermore, they sometimes sensibly admit that they don't care whether what they believe is "true" or not. But why should they quit going to church? That'd cost more effort than continuing to go. It's not worth it.

One of the Harvard professors gets off a little epigram as follows. Religion is poetry mistaking itself for science; it attempts to answer unanswerable questions. Reverted that to apply to the unphilosophical masses: religion is indifference mistaking itself for belief because it asks no questions.

Handwritten note: ...

These screwy spelling systems floating around fandom, my own included, ar hardly worth comment, but for once I'm going to weaken & conform to the general fan custom of spouting on subjects no 1 gives a dam about. As follows.

Non of the systems ar logical & consistent. They ar composed larjly of idiosyncracys. Stanley says "bizniz"; Widner says "Eym", & Ackerman-- well, nobody knows what Ackerman is saying. But we shud hang on to our idiosyncracys. If any 2 fan use the same system ther will be a tendency for an esoteric languaf to develop, & for this to becom mor & mor esoteric, until finally a good fan mite rite the 1st sentens in this paragraf thus: "O systs e log & esist." Gah!

Memo to inventors of e-ts: When yu'r trying to imagin a being completely difrent from Home, yet just as well suted to its environment, don't forget that nature's anticipated yu here on erth with the plant kingdom. Plants & animals ar difrent enuf to hav com from difrent planets. Compare the hier forms in both grups.

Plants	Animals
Fotosynthesis	No fotosynthesis
Cell walls; cytokinesis by cell plate	No cell walls; cytokinesis by furrowing
Growth thruout life; mitosis in meristemetic regions; mature body larjly made of ded cells	Limited growth period; mitosis in any part of body; most cells living
Littl extracellular diges-n; vascul-n thru singl cells	Diges-n larjly extracellular; vascular cavitys common
No locom-n	Locom-n

That's all I can think of offhand, but I can make my point without referring to the encyclopedia. Inventors of e-ts to date hav been pikers. Sure, their monsters hav been externally pretty wild-looking, with butiful bugeys & dangling tentacles; but their alienness has usually been just the alienness of the okapi or the dodo. We'r looking at a pretty weird animal when we look at the runofthemill b e m, but, doggon it, we'r still looking at an animal. Let's see somthing as little like either terran kingdom as they ar like each other, & that'll really be somthing. Even if it has got 2 oys & a nose.

I rarely read books or storys on other fan's recommend-n, but in case som Fapans hav a difrent policy on fan reviews I'll report that I got a big charj out of Lionel Trilling's Of This Time, Of That Place, from the Partisan Review for JanFeb 43. No, it's not fantasy. In fact it is hardly fic-n; at least 3 of the karacters ar drawn directly from Harvard students & faculty (or so I hav deduced). But I must men-n it to spite Langley Searles again, as well as becos it's far bd ter than most of the fantasies I've red recently.

Math: Delta 10/ssthane epsilon less than rho less than theta less than sigma less than

Blithering Retorts to the March mailing

Browsing #4-5: Maybe yu cud giv me data on a book call'd Red Snow. Don't kno the othor, but it's about events after evry 1 on erth had simultan-  
ously becom steril.

YHos #9: Reply to Tom Gardner: A new mut-n wud not hav to occur to pro-  
duce a major change in the race. It wud simply be a mat ter of selec-n  
of traits now present, som of which ar the result of recent mut-ns &  
som of which hav been around for quite a while. In hopes of making the  
general principl clearer than I did in the original articl, I'll giv an  
exmpl: length of arms.

Ther was an instructor here at Harvard who cud tuch the loer part  
of his neecap without stooping over. Now environmental factors may hav  
contributed an inch or so of this fenomenal length (altho I don't kno  
how). Still, it is clear that if ther ar, say, 5 genes affecting length  
of arm within normal limits then this man must hav had all 5 genes for  
length. Ordinarily yu'd expect a person to hav at least 1 shortarm gene  
(no pun intended-- not much). This partioular trait isn't very strongly  
prosurvival-- I can't think of any benefit from it exept facilitated  
backscratching-- but if it was, if the longerarm wer selected, then  
within 10,000 years yu mite find evry 1 tuching his neecap, by preservn  
only of the genes our Harvard instructor has, without any new mut-ns'  
having appeard.

I didn't set that smd 1 10,000year maximum for a major change in  
the race becous I thot an extraordinary # of mut-ns wud occur in that  
period, but becous I thot ther is already present an extraordinary amount  
of vari-n in many of the traits which civil-n tends to select. My rea-  
sons for thinking this, I'v given. Perhaps mut-ns will be numerus, ei-  
ther becous of laboratory radi-ns or from som other cos; dependng on  
their nature the speed with which they ar selected will vary. But with-  
out mut-ns man cud becom quite difrent. Notis in the abov exampl that  
even the longestarm'd man of today mite still be missing 1 longarm gene;  
in whi h case evry man of 11,944 AD mite exceed any man of 1944. Sins  
intelligens is doutless govern'd by a much greater # of genes, a similar  
increas in intelligens is still mor likely.

Changes of other kinds may also be mor likely in man than in other  
animals, even assuming the rate of appearans of mut-ns isn't affected  
by civil-n. Why do I say man is signif icantly difrent from the majority  
of other species? Simply becous he is apparently the result of sevrul  
recent mut-ns. Now I don't kno if ther's any tendency for mut-ns to com  
in bunches; if ther is, ther's no dout we shud be looking for a crop of  
Odd Johns. If the tendency doesn't exist-- I still think we shud. Rea-  
son follows.

Ther ar a lot of cases on record wher evolutionary changes hav oc-  
cured of such a nature as not to be accounted for by a singl mut-n. E g,  
the rapid rate at which the squirrels & rats hav produced new variety's  
in recent times. (Dogs I guess arn't a valid exampl.) On the other  
hand yu hav the living fossils, which presumably produce mut-ns, but  
hav produced few successful ls for millions of years. Unless we assume  
that mut-n rates naturally vary (a possibl assum-n at that), ther's on-  
ly 1 explan-n left. The crop of recurrent mut-ns which keep appearing &  
being weeded out of most species mite include som which, altho unfavor-  
abl now & repeatedly eliminated in the past, wud be favorabl after a  
certain new major mut-n. Then after the new mut-n takes place they mitw  
com up agen, in the normal cors of events, & be retain'd, cosing a radi-

cal change in the organism. The living fossil just never happend to hav that 1st important mut-n that wud hav let down the bars on all the minor improvements that ar inherent in it.

Prospect for Hsapiens: Som of the gene changes which ell thru the Pleistocene kept producing nonviabl freaks ar going to repeat once mor, becoss the tendency for them to repeat is inherent, like the tendency toard hemofilia; only this time, becoss of evol-nary & environmental changes sins the Pleistocene, they'r going to produce very viabl supermen.

I'v been amusing myself by working out a statistical method for checking the abov principl. It's an airtite method, if only I had a time machine. So, Tom, if yu want to test the truth of my arguments, I suggest yu offer the use of yor hyperspacial temponaut....

Speer's "oldmaidish misgivings about scandal" ar clearly justified by Laney's remarks elswher in the mailing. Any cult whose members not only put such opinions in riting, but even duplicate them & disseminate them far & wide, ar in danger of frequent & sens-nal men-n in the Hearst press if they ever do anything to catch the public ey. Slan Center wud attract considerabl atten-n, at least in the immediat neiborhood, & to me any advantajes SCenter mite offer (whether or not free lov was included) wudn't be worth the price of social exclu-n.

Light #130: In which Crutch completely silenses all objec-ns that his material isn't as filthy as promist.

Fleeting Moments: The som of these wer interesting, ther was hardly 1 that wasn't mard either by a too-abrupt change of mood or an anticlimactic cliché. I am less imprest with the VYM than wer Edwin Markham, Robert Frost, & Robert P Tristram Coffin.

Horizons 5#2: I'm with yu 100% on the proposal to incorporate forein words & frases into English.

Phanny: With yu 100%, too-- in thinking the talk of Slan Center saving the world is mor than slitley absurd. I still think Awjr was kidding in his original "Pipe Dream" articl; I certainly hope so...My articl in Efty6 may exemt me partially from the accus-n of ignoring interrelationships between cultural & economic factors, I don't kno. Yor analysis of antiSemitism is very penetrating & I think very accurate.

Agonbite of Inwit #4: No, Doc, "agonbite" is rite...I think yor way of looking at the problem of genius is probly nearer the truth than Thompson's. (So does Stanley; see FT #6. See also my comments on Yhos, abov.) I red a study of musical familys which indicated musical genius depended on at least 2 difrent genes in add-n to those for pitch, rythm, etc (absolute pitch is a singlgone recessiv). So the tru genius wud be a fortuitus combin-n of say 25 of the genes for genius. Of coss it's possibl that a favorabl for 1 karacteristic & an unfavorabl for another mite be carryd by the same gene, or genes which wer ordinarily adjacent; which reduces chances.

Yor attack on the hiben-n thinker is unjustifyd. He is simply a genius in sevral traits relating to intellectual power. Of coss he can arrive at rong ansers if given fals date; of coss he is subject to prejudis. So what? He's still mor likely to be rite than we ar....

Liked Michel's articl...Willelm has been kept from enjoying mu-

sic by whatever unmusical person taut him that music was supposed to convey specific pictures.

temponotological

SusPro: Speer points out Boucher's serious ~~temponotological~~ error, yet thinks Barrier 1 of the year's best. For me that ruind the whole story.

Mopsy #16: Now let's get this strait. Yu think "collectivism offers better promis than rugged individualism," yet yu ar antiunion & prodiscrimin-n-- hardly collectivist. Yu decry the "harmful results of encouraging feelings related to loathing & hatred," yet yu publish the S-F Democrat. The natural concl-n is that yu lov to talk like a liberal but just can't bring yorself to be 1.

Sardonyx 3/#3: Wonder if reac-ns to the very candid "Fapafile" had any influens on Russ's decision to quit fandom?

Walt's Wramblings: My alterhobby duplicates yors in evry detail, Walt, so I can't add much to the disc-n. O, ther is 1 thing: I don't share yor fobia for hillbilly music, which I class with commercial dans music, popular songs, Irish ballads, & lite classical as tolerabl stuff that at least may drown out the discord of silens. For serius lissenng ther ar 2 alternativs: 1) hot jazz & boogiewoogie, & 2) "classical", whether/ symphonic, chamber, or piano, Bach, Beethoven, or Shostakovich. My violent dislikes in music ar few: 1) Guy Lombardo & Sammy Kaye I loathe; 2) extravagantly colorful harmon-n somtimes irritates me, e g Harry James's Prince Charming & William Schuman's Symphony for Strings, 2nd movement; 3) I dislike passionately the guy who plays his clarinet in the next room when I want to lissen to the Boston Symphony.

A Tale of the Evans 2/#2: Good, good, an argument. Here is my 2¢ worth. If the hypothetical man who had a l knoledj didn't kno he was omniscient he shud be able to imagin, for he wud not kno that his fantasys wer not within the bounds of possibility. Now this is an impossibl case; the man, knoing evrything, must kno he's omniscient. The argument reduces to the ques-n whether this 1 add-nal fact wud otomaticly stiflo his imaginativ powers.

Well, wud it?

In Garde #9: Liked the karakter-n of the educ-nal system as a conspiracy to discoraj thot. Also the butifully legalistic way yu 1st spent 3 pp explaining that yu didn't exclude Degler, & then took another 2 pp pointing out that even if yu did exclude him it was OK.

Milty's Mag: Doggon it, I still insist that that statement is meaningless about "statistics" shoing "the intelligent man to be the exep-n rather than the rule." Becos what does "intelligent" mean? IQ 200, IQ 160, somebody whom Milton Rothman admires, or what?

FanDango 1/#4: An amazing document. I've never met Laney, but anybody who goes out of his way so far & so often to make clear to evrybody what a "hoi polloi critter" he is, must at least be unusual....

Free lov I've discust abov....Artificial impregn-n, the way I heard it, is usually resorted to by women marryd to steril husbands....

This invectiv agenst us midVictorian fon is most amusing. Laney the stentorianvoist iconoclast, leading us from our books & our chessboards, proclaiming the divinity of the great god  $C_2H_5OH$ , introducing us



to the manifold advantages of sex! Arise, libido libero!...Also amusing is Nancy's deduc-n that free editing of fan articles is OK from the fact that Nancy does it.

FanTods #6: A butiful, long, neat, legibl, interesting, disputabl is su. Cuddsy's colum of prozine quotes was the chargiest humor in the mailing....

Here's what I mean about yor oldfashiond use of articles, Norm. On p 8 yu use "an history", "an higher", & "an hierarchy". I disapprove. ...Pi wud be reduced around both the dwarf star & the rapidly rotating wheel, wudn't it?....

F. A. Brown / 1/11/54

Now for som mor war & stuff, bang bang. I regret having to start with an apology. Altho I've red at 1 time or another all the articles that hav appeard in this disc-n, I dn't hav them all around wher I can refer to them; & when I rote that Efty5 bit I had forgotten that yu had defined "culture". Sorry, Norm; yor defin-n is quite a ceptabl. I hope I won't be guilty of any mor such boners.

OK so ther hasn't been any "purely economic war." The reason is that ther's never been a war which benefited directly evry person in a cuntry, so those who saw they wud be benefited manufactured fony reasons why the others shud fite. Or wher almost evry 1 is benefited, yu find they state their economic motivs, for propaganda purposes, in terms that make them sound dramatic. E g the American Revol-n: "taxation without representation" is clearly an economic ques-n, & altho they don't look it, so ar "when in the course of human events" & "liberty or death". Of cors in this process of putting the coses of the war in emonal terms the propagandists seiz on cultural difrensces, so that ther seems to be som justif-n for yor statement that the latter ar the deciding factors.

Look at it this way. Between any 2 na-ns ther ar always som cultural difrensces, so that given strong enuf propaganda any 2 na-ns mite conceivably be led into war; also in any na-n ther is probly som economic class, however small & unorganized, desiring war. So the ques-n is whether the actual incidens of war correlates mor with the vari-n on the cultural side or with that on the economic side-- a simpl ques-n to decide if we had acceptabl data, which we havn't. My reason for taking the 2nd explan-n is that the averaj individual cares just about 100 times mor about his ovm economic situ-n than he does for som pro paganda he herd on the radio (& it's lucky for the stability of our system that he does). If it is in his economic interest to make som act which, with or without his knoledj, will tend to foment war-- it's almost certain he'll make that act. On the other hand, an act motivated only by cerebral, nonimmediat concepts will be a matter of relativ indifrens, & may never be made. This seems to me to indicate the greater importans of economic factors.

Now to anser a few of the quibbls yu introduced to becloud the is-su. (What was the issu, by the way?)

"British ignorance of the needs of African society" may hav cosd som of the fric-n between the imperials & the colonials. But why wer the blacks subjugated in the 1st place? For economic reasons. Also the fact that difrent societys in Africa (tribal & plant-n organ-ns respectivly) wer desired, for economic reasons p inciply, by natives & British, seems to clinch the whole argument. The British, despite their ignor-ans, which I concede, wer quite aware that the Africans did not want to

be herded onto the plant-ns, but went ahead with the herding just the same, agen for economic reasons.

Why did we fite Germany in WW I? I thot I'd an serd that. Not becos we had any important economic quarrel with her, but becos som segments of our popul-n had economic reasons for wanting war, any war. I also thot I'd made it clear that these segments included mor than "munitions makers." Yu admit that big bisness fattens on war contracts but don't think that that makes it pro-war. Giv me 1 reason why they shud be anti-war? Just 1? Remember that bisnesses which lead the cuntry into war uninten-nally, as a result of carrying out a financially perfectly sound policy, ar included among pro-war influanses, & ar even mor important than those who inten-nally bring on the conflict. Just as it wud be bad bisness for a bank to refuse to loan in a boom period for fear of increasing infl-n, it wud hav been bad bisness for American monopolists to break off trade with Japan befor forst to do so by the pressure of public opinion & (incidentally) the opening of better markets for their products.

Digr-n: I want to make it clear that I don't think of all war as a device of the moguls to bleed the pocr. If I thot the present war ment no mor than that I wudn't be in the Navy now, & that's for sure. What this war does mean mite be worth an articl som time in the future. End of digr-n.

I think I've  
written  
about it  
before

The ques-n of French culture I'v discust with yu sins Efty6, but here is my principal argument in riting: if a na-hal culture "survives" but not "immutably," does it survive at all? Arn't yu talking about the mere appearans of continuity du to use of the same languaj thruout? Maybe not.

As for altruism, let's postpone that feud till we see the next Sardonys.

Beyond #2: Skeptics at Sea is good, but the division into lines suggests a meter other than that which I think was intended.

Sappho 1#4: Gad, mor poetry. Chapper's poems wer uncriticizabl, Gray's also good. Fantastic had a confusing lack of continuity. For the rest, no comment.

Celephais 1#1: I think yu'r cheating a littl bit in the game of 4s if yu consider the square root as a simpl mathematical oper-n, i e an oper-n not requiring any use of the # 4, yet do not so consider the oper-n of raising to the power 2 or 4. Insted of using  $2 = \sqrt{4}$ , it wud be mor logical to obtain 2 as  $4^{\frac{1}{2}}$  (using 4' for the gamma f-n as yu did). Of cors all the succeeding #s will be much harder without that handy device of sticking in 2 or 2' insted of 4 whenever they fit better. To make up for the abov destructiv criticism, here ar som constructiv 1s: the integral of  $x dx$  from 0 to 4 is 8; the same integral from 0 to 4' is 18;  $1/B(4,4)$  is 148. Those shud help, if yu allow their legality, I suspect it mite be possibl to prove mathematicly how hi it's possibl to go in the game, using the f-ns so far men-nd; but I'm not going to try.

Nucleus 5#1: But hatred for the system that educated the Japanese for war is very necessary, nicht war?... "Military cliché"?? O, yu must mean that languaj invariably used in ritten orders.

German: hinüberdurchwiederabweiterherindurchwiederschlagen haben

Circle of Utter Confu-n

Now I certainly won't deny that Campbell is a pretty sharp editor & has given us not only the most consistently good stuff on the market but also a good deal of variety. The occasional stinker which slips into ASF is generally 1 of those stock pulp storys which ar apparently included at Street&Smith's insistens & about which it is pointless to keep complaining. But recently a new othor has appeared, riting Campbell-slanted stuff, not pulp-slanted stuff, but riting it so poorly that it's time to rais a howl. He is Wesley Long.

The good points in his storys ar sevral. His teknikal knoledj is sufficient to make his supersiens plisibl (tho insufficient to avoid scientific errors; see belo). He adds enuf detail to his hyper devices to put them across; & he accents the "device" part & not the "hyper" part. His prose is rapid, & to that extent at least his style is good. These ar clearly the reasons why Campbell accepted his storys.

The faults I hav to find with Circle of Confusion & Latent Image ar difrent. In his eagerness to make sure Jove wud accept them, Long attempted to inject into them 2 mor features which the editor has liked in past ASF storys. The 1st is sociological significans. Specifically, he treats the theme of equality of the sexes. Now ther's certainly no harm in the subject's being brot up. As a matter of fact, it's about time somebody did take it up, in a slitley mor intelligent way than did van Vogt in The Changeling. Wesley Long handles it considerably less intelligently. What ar the 2 new points he makes? 1) If the sexes ar really to be equal, ther shud be no laws giving special protec-n to 1 or the othor; & 2) advantaj mite be taken by som of the removal of restric-ns. Neither point was worth making. 1) If ther wern't any laws providing for maternity leavs, custom wud hav to set pretty hard & fast rules. After all, we hav laws desined to protect workers from industrial accidents; & failure to grant maternity leavs with pay mite present many women with the alternativ of risking serius injury or simply having no children. 2) Sandra Drake, judging from what sens can be red into Circle of Confusion, got away with her escapades, not by virtu of women's equal social pos-n, but by virtu of an influential bankroll. & her stunt of crashing the Lens, as well as her other brattish tricks, was mor antisocial than simply antimale. If he hadn't insisted on tying her case up so closely with the theme of sex equality, Long mite hav made her an interesting karacter-- a poor littl rich girl who thinks she owes the world nothing, & who rationalizes her unhappiness by saying men ru-ind evrything. But when insted she is made a relevant argument in the ques-n of women's rites, & a target for the othor's invectiv, she falls as flat as anything in the storys, & brother, that is pretty flat to fall.

The real t'nabl is that the ques-n cannot be delt with objectivly by any 1 so violently male-chauvinistic as Long is. That he is in favor of a severe KinderKücheKirche program is evident. The women of the spartanly efficient Stations ar represented as the only dedheds aboard. They never weild an ouns of brains, or anything mor closely related to the welfare of Pluto than a canopener. In fact, Enid McBride, whom the slannish hero lov'd with such devò-n, had not an ouns of brains to weild. Well, maybe 1 ouns, or 1½; but Long went out of his way to sho that she was as abysmally stupid as any 1 over the age of 7 & outside of an instit-n. He also makes it clear that that is OK by him; he sets Enid up as the perfect ideal of womanhood, the foil to the hifalutin Sandra Drake. Apparently he thinks of women as household fixtures whose only func-n is to be "Noble because they are Mothers."

So much for that. The 2nd objec-n applies principally to Latent Image. The main interest in that story was the success or failure of the experimental drive; the 2ndary interest, Sandra Drake. These alone could have carried the story quite well enough. But the other, apparently afraid they would not, dragged in the situation of McBride's having to get  $\frac{1}{2}$  way across the system to see his wife. It's perfectly natural that he should want to see her, & conceivably that he would be willing to endanger his own & several other lives to do so. Slightly less credible that the others would allow their lives to be endangered by taking off with a new drive that had not been tested on the ground, & whose properties they could anticipate might be bizarre, & still less credible that Enid would remain for days in just that critical condition when seeing McBride would give her "the lift she needed," & then, when our hero shows up, sure enough get the lift she needed & within minutes be in perfect health. Singly, these things might be acceptable; piled 1 on top of the other, they are much, much too artificial, & detract from the suspense provided by the simple fact that the occupants of the Haywire Queen were in danger of their lives.

Wesley Long fails miserably to make his conversation natural. Like this: when the reason for the emergency flight is explained, this is La Drake's reaction: "'Baby?' sneered Sandra. 'What woman in her right mind would have--' 'Your mother,' snapped Hammond, 'and she made a mistake.'" Now you know she didn't say that, Mr Long; you just wanted to make sure every 1 understood that she was a skunk, & that Hammond, being 1 of the "good guys," was pretty snappy on the comeback. To take another example, Mr Long, I doubt if you or any engineer numbers his equations & uses the verbiage of the Annals of Mathematics, when going through a simple integral orally, & I doubt if a 2nd engineer then customarily asks to have it done out on a blackboard....Minor points, but they add up.

Now for the scientific error in Circle of Confusion. It's a matter of optics. Remember that the distance from object (Sun) to lens was of the same order of magnitude as the distance from lens to image (near Pluto). Therefore the image should be of the same approximate diameter as the Sun. The 600yard diameter of that very destructive image formed on Pluto's surface when the lens went out of order, is absurd. If indeed the focal length of the lens was made small enough to produce an image of this size, the image would not be located many miles out from the lens itself! The only way to account for the situation Long describes would involve a lens whose optical properties varied according to what part of the Sun's disk the light came from. This might be arranged, at least in scientific terms it might, but Long didn't mention it, & it's entirely unnecessary for the original purpose of warming Pluto to a habitable state.

In conclusion: Long certainly could, with a little more care, write the straight scientific type of story at which Hal Clement is so successful; but as far as I'm concerned he might just as well stay far away from sociology & complex plots & character-relationships, which add so much when well handled, but which, when poorly handled, add nothing & may distract the reader's attention from the superscientific side-- or may even arouse his ire.

He: How much does it take to make you dizzy?  
She: Two dollars, and my name's not Dizzy.  
Swisher: Questionable juvenilia.

EM Hull Exposed!

It occurred to me while reading a recent Astounding that E Mayne Hull's dic-n resembled that of a certain wellknown other almost to the point of identity. For instans, ther was the use of colons befor direct quot-ns. Frequently the quot-n wud start a new paragraf. Quot-ns wer also introduced by hanging adverbs, &, if long enuf, broken up by the frase "he finished". The recurrans of certain karacteristic frases was another clu. Curius to verify my susp-n, I rote Campbell. Spake the vois from Olympos: "Penhaps your judgment of literary styles is sound. E. Mayne Hull is A.E. vanVogt." Norman Stanley take notis.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Space Patrol

How about a revalu-n of that age-old prop of interplanetary fic-n, the Space Patrol? They drink, they cuss, they swagger & ar just generally colorful, & it's hard to see what we wud do without them. But the real ques-n is, what wud we do with them? Shud they fite pirats, defend Erth from the Jovian colonizers, or what?

Piracy in space looks sort of absurd. The difficulty of 2 rocket-ship's matching velocitys can hardly be overestimated & is almost universally underestimated by others. To attack the cargo ship near either end of its run, when it is accelerating madly, is an even wors prospect. Damaging it so that it crashes on a planet is a good way to destroy the loot. A good possibility is to put it out of comm-n at such a point as to make it continu in an unaccelerated orbit at a reasonable speed; but this, like all other resorces of the pirat, mite much better be accomplisht by an inside job. Sneak a man aboard the ship with the inten-n of sabotaging it. To prevent sabotaj the forces of law & order need, not the Space Patrol, but a good, hardworking, dependabl Detectiv Corps, who between trips to Venus wud spend their time sitting on their porches reading the 21st century equivalent of the Hearst Sunday supplements.

As for the Jovians, any advans imform-n we got about their imminent attack on Erth wud surely be from our spys on Callisto & not from our asteroid-based scouting fors. No screen of reconnasans ships that we cud put up wud stand mor than a wild chans of detecting the passaj of the largest space fleet. & when we knew they wer coming, wud we dispatch our star-class crusers to meet them? Heck no; the star-class crusers wudn't be able to find them. Our defences wud be close to Erth & the battl wud take place ther, as I believ Willøy Ley once pointed out. But even close to Erth I sort of wonder what form the battl wud take. It'd depend on what the Jovians' proposed attack was to be. & what, after all, cud they do to Erth if they got here unopposed? Eliminating negasferes & other gadgets too unlikely for the Congress to consider when commissioning a Space Patrol-- not much. Our bombers over Germany do a pretty good job, sins they ar able to fly at relatively low altitude & slo speed over a target about which they hav detaild knoledj. Even with them ther's a lot of hitormiss involvd. I don't think we can assume the Jovians' ships, which ar bilt to travel a good # of AUs, ar also equipt for precision bomming. & I don't see how they cud carry the vast amount of kemicals or positrons or stuff needed to poison our atmosfere or any such dastardly stunt. Maybe they shud try suicide dives at the big citys, if any; in which case those that hit their targets wud make spectacular displays, cos temblors which seismografs wud duti-

fully record, & then smolder for a few days, having cost damage equal to about a tenth of the tremendous expense of building them & sending them all that way. The more I think about it the more it seems that wars will probably continue to be confined to the surfaces of planets even after man is no longer so confined. The only sensible way for the Jovians to proceed is to land an invasion force somewhere in Siberia (though even that isn't so darned sensible); we'd fight them with our Earthbound armies after they landed because we'd then have a much better chance than would the Space Patrol.

So what's left for our drinking, dussing, swaggering, & o so colorful Patrolmen? Maybe they better just head for the Ceres hafnium mines, where they can cuss & swagger peacefully till the end of their days.

My gosh, what is this magazine coming to? I've spent the last 3 1/2 pp talking about stef, of all things.

TakebackyourdamnXenofughesaidismfullimfullimfullimfullimfullimfull

Now it comes time to suspend blithering operations for today. I may mention that the increase of size of this zine which I promised on p 1 did not materialize due to failure of contributors to come across. Not being Speer, I couldn't write 20 pp by myself. I may also issue at this time a

Warning

to all those who may send me sample copies of subscription fanzines (as Wilimczyk, Kepner, Liebscher, & Ashley have already done): I am exerting all my sales resistance against you. I don't want to get interested in the subpub field for fear the spirit may move me to get 1 out myself, perish the thought. Besides-- I think Fanzines, though less beautiful, almost always contain better material than subzines. Blitherings excepted, of course.

& until next mailing that is the last feeble blither from

--Seedy