



DISCORD

EDITED AND PUBLISHED BY REDD BOGGS

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GOODBY, DAISY BACON

COGITO

With its February 1962 issue Analog made a change even more momentous than the title-shift from Astounding Science Fiction -- and hardly anybody noticed it on this side of the pale. But somewhere a vast and raffish crew must have spotted the absence of a familiar credit-line down in the fine print of the Analog masthead, and mourned. Bertha the Sewing Machine Girl noticed it, I think, and shed a sentimental tear. So did Lotta the Cloak Model and even Wild Nell the Spy. Strong men though they were, Deadwood Dick, Buffalo Bill King of the Border Men, Jesse James, Kid Wolf, Frank Merriwell, Nick Carter, Bill Barnes, and Doc Savage must have wept unashamed. Even I felt like weeping, for I knew that now Ainslee's, Wild West Weekly, The Shadow, Tip Top Weekly, Top Notch, Wide Awake, and Young Rough Riders Weekly have definitely folded for good. Street & Smith has gone at last to join Beadle & Adams, Frank Tousey, and Frank A. Munsey in whatever limbo is reserved for the old pulp publishers; Analog is now published under the imprint of Conde Nast Publications Inc. Ned Buntline, Bertha M. Clay, Burt L. Standish, Cleve Endicott, Max Brand, and Kenneth Robeson poise for one last moment against the fading sunset, and then are gone forever!

THE NIGHT THEY INVENTED COCA-COLA

The last time I listened to AM radio (one tranquil Saturday when I was anxious to learn whether the thermometer was bubbling above 20°F so I could get my Rambler cranked up again) I was startled to hear the disk jockey start to howl along with the record he was spinning. I hardly blamed him; I felt like howling myself. But then I realized that he was trying to sing, and doing almost as bad a job of it as the braying jack-ass imprisoned on record-wax. I managed to hold out to the end of the record which died away in a quaint gargle not unlike the sound of a Pig-Alley pissoir leaking picturesquely over the curbstone, and heard the breathless disk jockey announce that all this wonderful fun was going to continue for another four hours! I fairly rubbed my hands in anticipation. I estimated that in a round three hours approximately one million listeners whose IQs ran in excess of 99 apiece would be converging on WDGY equipped with buckets of steaming tar and a rail of appropriate length. But I seem to have underestimated the resiliency of the public. Nobody showed up -- not even me. (I couldn't get my car started.)

2 My own resistance to such blather and cacophony is feeble. Three years ago I bought myself an FM tuner and since then have bent an ear gingerly but exclusively to KWFM and WLOL-FM, the two "Good Music" stations in the area. Despite the towering nincompoopery of their public service and information programs, and despite the fearsome technical lapses on the latter station, the experience is at least endurable, and I don't threaten my sound-system with an axe more than twice a week. The only thing that curdles my milk permanently is being called a square by shlubs merely because I prefer "Good Music" to earache.

Only the other day I discovered that I've been suffering martyrdom under a misapprehension. By perusing a copy of the February Twin Cities FM Guide I found out that we squares have our own Top 40, which ought to prove that we are as hip as anybody. Of course the FM Guide doesn't live up to the advertising which strongly implies that it lists all the music to be played on all programs during the month. It lists maybe 40 or 50 percent of the music performed on KWFM and WLOL-FM, but it lists a big enough sample to allow me to bring you the authentic Top 40 "Good Music" hit parade in the Twin Cities for February 1962.

According to the Guide the number one hit on FM is Falla's "Three-Cornered Hat"; in whole or part it is being played seven times during February. Close behind it is Dvorak's "New World" symphony, played six times, and another symphony, Schubert's "Unfinished," played five times. Handel's "Water Music," Respighi's "The Pines of Rome," Khachaturian's "Masquerade," Brahms' violin concerto, Tschaikovsky's "Swan Lake" and the same composer's violin concerto, and a surprise entry, Lortzing's "Undine" ballet music, each played four times, round out the first ten. With this as a hint you can figure out the titles of the other 30 of the Top 40 by yourself. Ballet music and program music mostly.

Unfortunately the FM stations squeezed in a few "extras" by Bach, Vivaldi, and such also-rans, and I hope we squares can bedevil them into taking the significant step of playing nothing but the Top 40, like any progressive station should. Actually my survey has scared me vastly. How long can listeners endure hearing "The Three-Cornered Hat" almost twice a week? That's over a hundred times a year. Like rock-and-roll classical music falls into shreds after many repetitions, and unlike r&r it isn't being replaced by new masterpieces every fortnight. We're stuck with "Three-Cornered Hat" and "From the New World" for the rest of our lives; we ought to economize them.

I sometimes dream of a radio station that broadcasts, in hi-fi and compatible stereo, nothing but utter silence. Till such a station goes on the air, I have only one solace. When radar detects enemy missiles looping in from the Arctic, all radio stations will go off the air. Is an atomic holocaust too great a price to pay for this ineffable delight?

DISCORD: a journal of personal opinion, is co-edited and published every other month by Redd Boggs, 2209 Highland place N. E., Minneapolis 21, Minnesota, and Marion Z. Bradley, Box 158, Rochester, Texas. The first six issues of this publication were titled Retrograde; this is issue number 16, dated January 1962. This fanzine is available for letters or tapes of comment, by trade, or by subscription: 15¢ per sample copy; four issues for 50¢ (no longer subscriptions, please). Artwork: p 6 by Ray Nelson; p 9 by Dick Schultz. Discord logo by Richard Bergeron. The Buck Rogers chapbook has been delayed and is not in the February 1962 FAPA mailing; however, it will be published soon, I hope. A red "X" in the margin below indicates that you bought a copy of the booklet, according to my records. A Gafia press publication.

Roshwald On Campus by RUTH BERMAN

"OFFICE HOURS: 10-10:30 MWF" said the sign on the door marked M. Roshwald in Temporary North of Mines. TNM, one of a number of permanent temporary buildings thrown up just after World War 2, holds the offices of most of the humanities teachers. On Friday, 5 January, shortly before 10 o'clock, I went to Mr Roshwald's office, a copy of Level 7 in hand. At 10:00, a short, dark-haired man with a gnomish face came down the hall.

"Are you Mordecai Roshwald?" I held out my book and asked for an autograph and an interview. He granted both, ushering me into his office, which was small, more crowded than most, but very neat.

"Do you think Level 7 is science fiction?" I asked, meditating on the fact that his book would have been accepted as science fiction had it appeared in a science fiction magazine. Although it is surprisingly free of the naivete usually found in science fiction written by "outsiders," it shows no signs of being influenced by other sf writers.

He answered, "When I wrote it, I did not think of it as either science fiction or a novel. But publishers like to pigeonhole things. It depends on the definition, I suppose. If Brave New World is science fiction, this is." His face was craggy but animated underneath a shock of straight black hair. He spoke in a slight accent, but much less of one than I had expected -- he received his doctor's degree from Hebrew university, in Jerusalem. He speaks English with no trouble, but talks slowly so that he has time to choose precisely the words that will express his thought.

"Have you studied much science?"

"No, I am more of a humanities man. I find that I get along well with scientific men."

"How long did it take you to write Level 7?"

"Oh, three or four months. The first draft, that is. Then it was revised and revised, and that took much longer. It came out in England first, in 1957. Then here, and now it is in a Signet paperback." He added, "Another book of mine is coming out in a week -- again, in England. It is called A Small Armageddon. It is less science fiction than Level 7."

"Is it about an atomic war, also? The title sounds as if it is."

"Well, yes, but not a total war. It is a small Armageddon."

I thanked Mr Roshwald and left. Two more people were out in the hall waiting to see him -- on business more academic than mine, of course. From students interested enough to see the teacher outside of class, one may usually infer a good teacher. From Level 7, one may infer a good writer, and I hope A Small Armageddon reaches America soon.

A GIANT STEP -- BUT JUST A STEP

BY MARION Z. BRADLEY

WITH THE PUBLICATION, more than ten years ago, of "Interloper," Poul Anderson took

his place, firm and unassailable, among the major talents of science fiction writing. Perhaps it was the finest story of that year (1951); certainly it is one of the top ten or so that I remember most clearly and affectionately from the thousands I have read in half a lifetime of science fiction. Although its roots lay in the ancient legendry that has given life to so much of Anderson's best work, it was unquestionably science fiction, and of high quality.

In The Broken Sword, published by Abelard-Schumann in 1954, Anderson revealed that he was a superb writer of fantasy as well, but this novel appears to have been a connoisseur's item. I myself discovered it only by chance, last year, and remarkably little has been written about it in the fanzines. Even among the cognoscenti of fantasy, the Hyborian Legionnaires, the book seems to be almost unknown.

During the long years, however, the memory of "Interloper" was being obscured in my mind by the exasperation of the Hoka stories, written by Anderson and Gordon Dickson for Other Worlds and F&SF. Perhaps it is not fair to blame Anderson for them. These stories represent the decline and fall of science fiction, it is true, and the long disgrace of an art vulgarized by its own popularity. But they also reflect an era in which the editor ruled supreme, where the best editor (according to the publishers) was one who could dream up the yarns he wanted to print, then farm out the actual writing to some chap who could be relied on not to upset the editor's basic conception with too much original creation. The Hoka stories were not humorous science fantasy at all -- just compare them, for instance, with "By His Boostaps," "Alamagoosa," or "Q.U.R." They are that bastard creature attacked by Fritz Leiber in a recent Shangri-L'Affaires: spoof science fiction. They parody their own genre, and they display all the worst features of an art fallen so far that its own masters could no longer take it seriously. Behind the yarns we seem to hear the authors and editor muttering, "God, what jerks the readers are, but they want this stuff, so we'll serve it up hot."

During the Hoka years, the name of Poul Anderson almost reached the status of a swearword with me. This attitude was partly mitigated when I met Poul at the Detroit convention. I keenly admired his speech as guest of honor and appreciated his courtesy and graciousness to me personally. But I couldn't reconcile the author of "Interloper" with the co-author of Earthman's Burden. And then, by pure chance, I discovered The Broken Sword, and finally, Three Hearts and Three Lions.*

The Broken Sword, which Poul himself describes as "an early work... the writing quite bad," has faults, certainly. Based on the Icelandic sagas, it is the story of a human stolen in childhood by the elves and of the changeling reared among humans in his place. It suffers from a

* New York: Doubleday and company, 1961..

certain predictability; for example, there is a scene where Odin appears to the heroine, Freda, and demands "what lies under your girdle" in return for saving the life of Scafloc. Although Freda believes he means a phial which Scafloc has given her, anyone with any knowledge of folklore could have guessed the outcome of this: that Odin, returning, would demand Freda's newborn child. Yet this is presented as a drastic shock to the reader.

Yet it has, in exchange for certain faults of style (and a naivete in the love scenes that made me giggle), the strength and conviction of a writer writing fluently and happily of what he loves. Scafloc the fosterling, Valgard the changeling, Imric the elf-earl, Leea the volatile elfwoman, may be drawn larger than life, but they live and breathe. Poul himself knew them and believed in them so intensely that they convince the reader of their reality and make him forget the overblown, sometimes clumsy construction of the novel as a whole. And despite the tragedy and despair of the ending, it stands out clear and compelling, a finished and complete creation. It is an amateurish work of art, but it is a work of art.

The Broken Sword was a good story which the author did not quite know how to handle as it deserved. Three Hearts and Three Lions is far more competent. Poul's growth as a writer shows up on every page. His words flow freely and with a startling beauty of phrase and vividness of metaphor. The plot is fast-paced, and Poul keeps his reader guessing, with a skill learned in a long magazine apprenticeship.

Three Hearts and Three Lions was first published in F&SF (September and October 1953), but it has been so thoroughly rewritten that I was halfway through it before I realized that I had read it before, and I have an excellent memory, as a general thing, for story plots and small details. Not till I reached the riddle contest with the giant did I remember the serialized version.

The story describes the adventures of Holger Carlsen who, during a beachhead battle with the Nazis, suddenly falls into an alien world, a parallel universe where he is Holger the Dane -- in short, the old Kuttner plot number one. This strange world of giants, elves, dwarves, and other beings of witchcraft is beautifully depicted, with that particular surrealism that makes the reader believe, for the moment, in the tiniest details of the fantastic.

At times the novel falls into a glibness that verges on the worst of the Hoka hokum, a dangerous flippancy that breaks the whole mood, not with healthy humor but with an uncomfortable suspicion that perhaps the author is taking the hero's predicaments with less seriousness than he expects the reader to take them. At one point there is a fight with a fire-breathing dragon, and Holger, burned and much beset, suddenly has a brilliant inspiration and tosses a helmetful of water down the dragon's throat. "Pure thermodynamics -- I just caused a small boiler explosion," he explains flippantly to his awed companions when the dragon falls dead. Burlesque of this sort can break the illusion the author is at pains to build up. Dragons can be funny in fantasy, and often are (sometimes, sad to say, unintentionally). But in a story like this, where the hero is presumably scorched with dragon-fire, such flip comedy turns the menace into papier-mache. In the days of spoof sf Poul was taught to laugh at his own dragons, and this is not good.

(Concluded on page 8)

A CANNONBALL FOR LEIBOWITZ

PART ONE OF TWO

PROBABLY EVERYONE HAD HIS PET HUGO CANDIDATES and many a fan came away from the Season banquet disappointed that his favorite did not win, however starry-eyed he may have been about Heinlein's speech. And probably some were sorry that they did not vote, particularly if their votes might have made a difference.

(This of course cannot be known with certainty until there is a rundown on the runners-up with the numbers of votes each got. It may be academic but I think that in Hugo competition, even as in political, many would like to know how well their preferred candidates did -- whether they won or lost by an avalanche of votes or by maybe three or four of the total cast. Such a rundown would do no harm and might do good in that it might stimulate a bigger and therefore more representative vote next time. How about it, Buz, Earl?)

The competition for the latest Hugos in the "best novel" category was of special interest for several reasons. One is that only one of the three finalists (Pogue Moon) could be called a novel in the traditional sense. The other two (Venus Plus X and A Canticle for Leibowitz) were included in this category because there was no other into which they could conveniently be fitted. I think a fair case could have been made against calling the Sturgeon work a novel, and I intend to discuss below the arguments for and against including the Miller book in that category. There is a more than reasonable doubt in my mind that it should have been made eligible in the "novels" class. To be charitable, one might call both books novel-length formal experiments, though that would not make either of them a novel, any more than is, say, Bradbury's Dandelion Wine.

The other reason is that this particular competition provided a test for something Bob Tucker said in his fapazine Pleiades Pimples (reprinted in Void #22-2 as "Vandals of the Void") to the effect that excellent novels which did not first appear serialized in a prozine are often passed up in Hugo competition in favor of inferior productions which became better known to fans solely because they did first come out piecemeal in F&SF or Analog.

In view of these two reasons, I think it is legitimate to ask, first of all, whether and why A Canticle for Leibowitz was eligible. Then I would like to inquire into certain motives behind this book's getting many votes that it would not have gotten if quality of writing, characterization, plot, idea content, atmosphere, etc., were the sole determinants. Finally I would like to consider it as a representative of an increasingly common genre: propaganda fiction.

Was Canticle in fact eligible for the Hugo for novels? This is neither a rhetorical question nor a quibble. The element of doubt is introduced not by the timing but by the structure. In form Canticle is a group of three separate novelets, the



BY
WALTER BREEN

events in each separated by a lapse of time long enough to preclude the reappearance of the same characters (with the putative, obscure, and improbable exception of the Wandering Jew), save as legends. Each of the three novelets has the unity and (in miniature) the construction of a novel, but the array of them seems on at least some levels to lack it. One would suspect, then, that length in book format, rather than overall structure, is involved implicitly in deciding whether or not a given book is a novel.

Defenders of Miller's book claim that it is in fact a novel with the Church or -- alternatively, though less defensibly -- the Albertian Order of Leibowitz as protagonist. I think it is possible that this is what Miller intended, but one must still ask whether this is in fact the effect he created. If such was Miller's intention, then here (as in Dandelion Wine) is an interesting experiment in form, about which no doubt Higher Critics in years to come will speculate about, remarking on the book's repeating in microcosm the tripartite division of history into ancient/medieval/modern, having three stories in one novel much as there are supposedly Three Persons in One God, etc., etc. But is it a novel?

What is a novel anyway? The Britannica does not even attempt to define it, save as "a prose fiction" (the unabridged dictionary adds, "of considerable length"), preferring Korzybski's extensional method of enumerating works agreed to be novels. One thing is clear from the enumeration: In no instance are these collections of vaguely connected shorter stories; all have the characteristics, the unities, of shorter fictional works but on a much larger scale.

Let us consider the possibility that Miller did intend Canticle as a unity with the Church Militant (or some segment thereof) as protagonist. I think even the most sympathetic reading will compel the admission that each of the three sections is complete in itself and, save for a final transitional few lines, without any real continuity with that next to follow. There are devices which can be interpreted as attempts to establish a continuity: the figure of the Wandering Jew, alias "lamedh sadhe," "Eleazar Benjamin," "Latzar shemi"; the monastery of the AOL; names from earlier parts reappearing as legends ("Saint Poet of the Miraculous Eyeball") or saints-to-be ("Venerable Boedullus," "Venerable Francis Gerard of Utah"); the wooden image of St Leibowitz. They might well form part of the connective tissue of a novel. But -- and I think this is decisive -- they are at once far less numerous, more obscure, less striking, less dramatically necessary, than are the features of parallelism among the three novelets. And they are far less effective. Among the main parallelisms are:

In Fiat Homo, the controversy and skepticism between the Devil's Advocate and the AOL, and between Abbot Arkos and Francis; the War of the Flame Deluge and "edict" of Simplification; the repudiation of learning; and, at the end, the death of Brother Francis and predators feasting.

In Fiat Lux, the controversy and skepticism between Abbot Dom Paulo and Thon Taddeo -- and other minor ones; the War of Hannegan II and the edicts of papal interdict and Hannegan's declaration of independence; the repudiation of electric light (and, by implication, of secular science); and, at the end, the death of the Poet and predators feasting.

In Fiat Voluntas Tua, the controversy and skepticism between Abbot Zerchi and Dr Cors; the War of the Asian Coalition and the "edicts" of the War Disaster Act and "Quo peregrinus grex"; the repudiation of euthanasia; and, at the end, the death of Abbot Zerchi and predators feasting.

These are not minute points snatched out of context for purposes of quibbling; they are major sequences and incidents important in the dramatic development of each

8 novelet. They were also much easier to remember than the earlier-mentioned continuity features, and the cumulative effect of parallelism is overwhelming. The effect they produce is that of three novelets expected to be taken as parallels rather than as parts of a larger whole. One has to stretch and strain and use faith to conceive the array of three as a single whole. The connective tissue is minor and actually unnecessary to the progress of the stories. None of the items named -- and it took considerable search to verify that they actually appeared in all three novelets -- can be called essential. Contributory to atmosphere, yes -- along with many other details which do not appear in more than one novelet of the three. Afterthoughts, when Miller began contemplating issuing the set of three as a single book? Possibly.

In deciding whether the complete Canticle can be considered a successful experiment in form and a deliberate unity, we ought to consider some similar cases. I have in mind A. E. van Vogt's Voyage of the Space Beagle, J. R. R. Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings, and Richard Wagner's "Der Ring des Nibelungen." Each of these is built up out of smaller units supposedly complete in themselves, but the effect of continuity in the whole, of character development, of a single overriding saga, is overwhelmingly greater than it is in A Canticle for Leibowitz. The wholes are in fact at least as easily perceived as the parts. Even leaving aside the close succession in time among the parts, and the continuity of characters, the connective tissue is extremely strong and dramatically important, and the parallelism among the parts minimal, and the necessity of considering each part in context of those before and after irresistible, in these works. An entirely different situation from that found in Canticle.

I conclude that whether or not Miller intended the work to function as a novel-length unity, it is unsuccessful as an experiment in form. The parts cohere far more, formally and psychologically, than does the entirety. The attempt to palm it off as a novel is therefore unjustified.

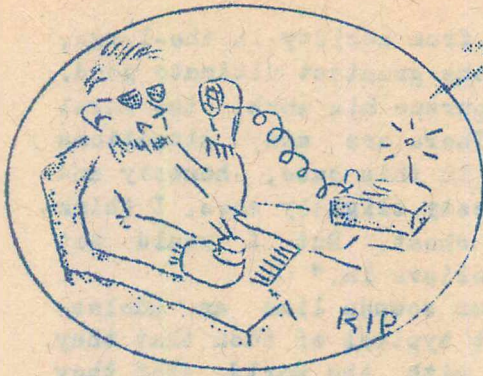
(The second and concluding part will be published in Discord #17.)

A FAN'S LIBRARY CONCLUDED

The sex in this novel is no longer naive, but it has the sort of tiresome superficiality we associate with the unlamented Venture Science Fiction. This is not to say that the story is either salacious or in poor taste; it isn't, and the swan-maiden Alianora possesses a vitality and strength that makes her both likable and fascinating.

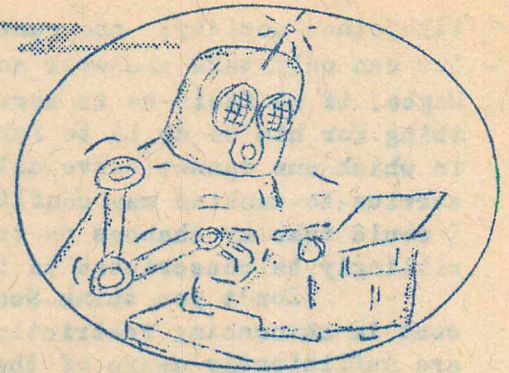
Some fan writers have made much of the comparison of Anderson with Tolkien, possibly because they both write about elves, trolls, and goblins. Strange to say, The Broken Sword, published years before the Ring Hearts and Three Lions, possibly because at that time Anderson and Tolkien were working largely from common sources. In the present novel Poul may have avoided an overlap that might have given rise to the question of undue influence. And the elves of Poul Anderson are the uncanny and fearsome beings of the Scandinavian horror-stories, not the bright and beautiful creatures, probably derived from the Irish Sidhe, of Tolkien.

Three Hearts and Three Lions is far more of a commercial book than The Broken Sword and probably will be much more popular. It is also a major step forward in the unfolding of Poul Anderson's talent. There are passages, such as the final fight with the troll, where Poul forgets the slickness of stories written to please editors, not himself, and writes with chilling power and strength. But as a whole the book retains too many unfortunate remnants of the Hoka era. It is fantasy glossed with a little sugar-coating of science fiction and mixed with leftover spoof and cynical self-parody. Some day Poul Anderson will write, either in science fiction or fantasy, a great book. This isn't it.



'DEAR REDD: ...'

A MEETING OF MINDS



PHIL KOHN

This draft-dodger situation [Discord #14] is rather complicated. I could well imagine a patriot -- or even a communist -- cheating his way into the armed forces to fight Hitler and yet do his best to stay out of today's armies that can only hope (1) to slaughter peasants some place who are mistaken by the state department for communists, (2) to give aid, comfort, and prestige to Franco, Salazar, et al, (3) to be slaughtered by efficient guerrillas when sent to the wrong place, and (4) to mop up after the H-bombs have made the mopping up futile because there is no place left to empty your mop into.

I don't object to arms, but I do object to armies. They exist, first of all, to give army officers the opportunity to humiliate enlisted men in a way millionaires can't afford to humiliate servants who might poison them someday or quit just before the big party. All those quaint army customs (give me honest cannibals for real quaintness) have nothing to do with fighting efficiency, since logic and history prove a thousand times that the most efficient army is the one with the least bullshit. (Germany is somehow a partial exception.) They are used for the purpose of satisfying officers' sadism, at a price much higher than quadrupling officers' pay, and to ensure that the soldier has no mind left to refuse shooting if the high command has decided the time is ripe for a military putsch.

And all this to-do about the death penalty. No serious movement against police brutality (some unmentionable examples in this week's Time, others all the time here in Israel). No serious movements against the utter barbarism of long jail terms. Nobody advocates a 20 mph speed limit enforced by governors on all cars -- yet this would relieve at least 30,000 of the 40,000 sentenced to death yearly in the US alone on the grounds of "those brakes will do for another week" or "one for the road" etc. Anybody who's REALLY bothered by a few criminals (who most likely are guilty of something) being executed should certainly be concerned first about these other matters. And I say, what matters is LIVING, not just staying alive; and that everyone really knows that. (Beth Krinski, Yokneam, Israel)

ANDY YOUNG

Discord #14: You have a damfine rebuttal of Larry Shaw's remarks on conscription. I had the impression that what he was objecting to was dishonesty (a point you nicely caught him up on); so far I agree with him. But I don't agree that anyone has an automatic obligation to the society into which he was born, no matter how kind it's been to him. (Hm, I botched that sentence. My intended meaning was that I do not subscribe to the idea that one is obliged to somehow repay society for not having practiced infanticide on him, or even for showering its benefits on his head.) That, it seems to me, is the nature of any society: to serve its members. If the society is one which the member has chosen to join, then I agree that he certainly ought to do what he can for it. But the individual should have no more obligation toward society-in-the-large than toward his parents: any debt incurred in this way can only be repaid by performing the same service for the next generation.

The individual should have the right to disassociate himself from those actions of his fellows he does not believe in. One can easily resign from a voluntar-

ily-joined society; one cannot "resign" in the same sense from society-in-the-large, but can only take whatever action he thinks will lead to the greatest ultimate good. Maybe, if he feels he is serving mankind by being free to pursue his work, the moral thing for him to do is to fake his way out of the draft. There are many situations in which one cannot serve all his values simultaneously -- in this case, honesty and service-to-mankind may conflict. Personally, valuing honesty slightly more, I think I would take my chances on trying to argue my way out than cheat. But I would not willingly be conscripted to fight for something I don't "believe in."

Don't you think Scott Neilsen in the letter column sounds like an adolescent in advocating restrictions on adolescents? Is it not typical of them that they are sufficiently aware of their inability to deal maturely with the world that they want it restricted to the things they can deal with? (Cambridge 38, Massachusetts)

DONALD A. WOLLHEIM

I don't know against whom Larry Shaw is sniping with his unexpectedly patriotic remark, but your answer may be said to be very neat and diplomatic tut-tutting. Very well put.

I personally do not see why anyone who genuinely disagrees with his country, who does not want to defend it, who is not prepared to risk a little national service for it, would be wanted in the armed services. They would make the worst of soldiers. Most of us felt (I speak of my own call before the draft during the war) that if we weren't actually willing to volunteer for a life as a target, at least if our number fell due, we'd take our medicine and do our best.

The actual ideal of heroic draft-dodging, however, happens to be one of the facts that "made America." Now Larry may not like this, but historically a great many elements of America were made up of men dodging the draft in their Old European homesteads or of going AWOL when in uniform. Practically 90 percent of any Americans of Russian or German extraction who came here prior to 1914 were running from the Czar's or the Kaiser's armies. How many Irishmen ran out to avoid serving in the Queen's army? How many Poles fled to beat the draft for their Austrian or other alien masters? So if their sons or grandsons show some of the ancestral traits, shall we punish them too much? Of course today's world is horribly different, but there may be something to heritage, you know?

Marion Z. Bradley manages to flip-flop with her review -- or hadn't you noticed? Here is a girl who is in most of her claims quite nonconformist, very unorthodox, an advocate of views for which most of the public would scream fury at her. And then she betrays herself by finding aid, comfort, and peace of mind in someone's attack on the attackers!

I remember one thing that impressed me about 30 years ago and has become one of the deep-lying facets of my own personality. Someone, a philosopher or a scientist or somebody, said that any belief that is held by the general public to be true must invariably be wrong. That is a little sharp, indeed, but he bolstered it to my 17-year-old satisfaction with a little list of such beliefs as were held in past centuries: that the world is flat, the divine right of kings, the justice of slavery, father is always right, women are inferior, the night is bad for you, tomatoes are poisonous, and god is on our side. Since then I have always looked with suspicion on any accepted fact or accepted public judgment.

Only recently this was demonstrated by the US attitude towards manned space flight -- that it was far-fetched Buck Rogers nonsense, not to be discussed with a straight face in public. Which was the official and general viewpoint until a certain day in October 1957. And today, for instance, the more people go around saying the next war will mean the destruction of all humanity, the more optimistic I become that we'll all survive. Contrary it may be, but.... (Rego Park 74, New York)

SCOTTY TAPSCOTT

I agree with Walter Breen that the problem of censorship is not as simple as either the "censor everything" or the "censor nothing" brigades would have it seem, but I detect a disturbing parallel which he may not have noticed between advocating censorship of vio-

lence ("technical advice on torture methods") on the grounds that it may get into the hands of sadists, and advocating censorship of pornography on the grounds that it may get into the hands of the sweetinnocentkiddies. Admitting that sadism is a Bad Thing and that it should not be encouraged, I don't altogether see how the publication of violent literature is to be construed as contributing to it. The problem with sadism certainly isn't found in the variety of torture methods used -- if e.g. sadists never used anything but whips, their habits would still be unacceptable -- nor can it be said that a fairly sophisticated sadist with a whole storehouse of different techniques would be more of a menace than his slow-witted brother who uses nothing but old-fashioned redhot poker.

Needless to say, even the stupidest of sadists, if he is plying his trade diligently, will quickly invent some method of inflicting 10 dols of pain (assuming that to be the maximum possible) upon his victims; and once he has reached that level the method used becomes irrelevant. All this means, of course, is that Breen's reasons for considering that censorship of violence might be advisable are not completely valid. I can imagine that someone might wish to argue for censorship of violence on the grounds that it is conducive to sadistic tendencies in what would otherwise be Normal People. But this would be open to the same objections as those offered against the notion that pornography leads to perversion.

I rather suspect that the problem lies not in what sort of things should be nominated for censorship, but rather in the reasons why anything at all should be nominated. It is my belief, and evidently that of a number of other Discord readers, that the solution lies in proper education at some non-public level. As Breen mentions in Discord #10, it is at present inadvisable to allow free circulation of certain propagandistic tracts because it is quite likely that they would fall into the hands of persons incapable of evaluating them correctly. But such incapacity is evidently due to a flaw in the education process. If it were the case that people were properly educated in the detection of fallacies to be found in all totalitarian propaganda, then the need for censoring such propaganda would disappear.

I submit that until such an ideal system of education (or perhaps I should say "attitude toward education") becomes a reality, the necessity for some kind of censorship will remain an open possibility. And probably there are certain kinds of things whose circulation should be restricted under any circumstances. Nevertheless, it seems to me that censorship generally is akin to amputating for a case of poison ivy: it gets rid of the problem, but doesn't solve it. (Seattle 9, Washington)

ROG PHILLIPS

Walter Breen's letter: The fallacy in "Give me the first six years of a child's life and you can have the rest, for all the good it will do you to try to change him thereafter" is that the Catholic indoctrination is somewhat realistically tailored to the human structure both emotionally and psychologically, while the communist indoctrination is not. If the communist indoctrination were, since 99 percent of Russia was born under it, there would be no need for an Iron Curtain and censorship in Russia. We would have Russian zealots on the street corners here, fresh over from Russia to convert us, pink-faced and sincere. Where are they?

The behaviorists are wrong, Walter, and the communists are wrong. Pavlov demonstrated that you can get a dog to salivate at the ringing of a bell, but Pavlov did not mention that the dog wagged his tail in friendship when Pavlov showed him attention and love -- and forgave him his Experiment. This is the difference that doesn't appear in the textbook. The dog was human, you see.

Theoretically it should be possible to tell a kid from zero to six that a commune is the thing, that adults should screw each other for fun, and the offspring should be removed like tumors and taken to the orphanage. That is behaviorism. But here and there a female will illogically not consider the child within her a tumor, and here and there a male and female will illogically form an attachment not in the books -- and if Mao Tse Tsung dies, before you know it Chinese families will again be in vogue. Why? I don't know -- unless it is because the state is too abstract a

12 principle for humans. For bees and ants it isn't. That is what I mean by human structure. An arbitrary indoctrination from zero to six doesn't work. It has to fit the human structure. In spite of Krushchev and Mao Tse Tsung, in spite of Stalin. Not 100 percent, but -- say -- 75 percent. (Berkeley, California)

ROBERT A. W. LOWNDES

Ed Wood's list [Discord #14] of ten stories from the Gernsback magazines is interesting, and generally I agree that they're all readable and at least good, but take another look at that list. Only two of the ten come close to following the Gernsback formula for sf, although Manning's "Man Who Awoke" series might be squeezed in, in part. The rest are varying degrees of fantasy. And of the two, one displays the fatal flaw in that formula as generally employed: a tolerance of outright impossibilities for the sake of imparting scientific facts, without giving the unwary reader any hint of what is impossible. Whenever it was convenient for the sake of an exciting story, full of doubtless valuable information on the nature and habits and possibilities of insects, the square-cube law was simply ignored. So much for "The Mad Planet." I don't recall any fatal flaw in "City of the Living Dead," and part of the "Man Who Awoke" series varies the same theme.

Richard Kyle seems to be on sounder ground, although the Tremaine approach has its flaws too. Yet these are not necessarily endemic to the system, lying in the personality and preferences of the individual editor. Tremaine was willing to go along with almost any sort of mystical nonsense for the sake of what he called "thought variants," and Gernsback's "fairy tale" label certainly fits any number of the "classics" in the Tremaine Astounding. This does not make them any less enjoyable reading in some instances -- but it certainly does make them prime examples of how not to get science fiction respected. (Suffern, New York)

FREDERIK POHL

Thanks for letting me see Discord #15. I enter one cavil. You shouldn't blame Doc Smith for things I do. The condensing of the synopsis of the first half of "Masters of Space" into 73 words was all my doing, not his. The reason for this is that I believe that practically nobody reads all of those incredibly long, painfully complete synopses that have been appearing on most serials over the last few years and therefore have rigorously pruned. If you will notice, the synopsis for Poul Anderson's "The Day After Doomsday" in Galaxy is about the same length. I don't imagine, though I could of course be wrong, that most readers will find that one empty and shallow.

That is a very minor cavil, though. I am grateful for the chance to listen in on what the readers think of what we have been publishing in Galaxy and If, especially when the letters are articulate and astute ones. (New York 14, New York)

ANDY OFFUTT

In line with the current leaning to anti-antis (anti-anti-missile missile, etc.), this is an anti-killer killer. After having read the "reviews" in the November 1961 Discord I feel pretty damned discordant. Now, I've never gone much for killerreviews: always wondered why a feller found it necessary to spend so much time and space feeding his ego by endeavoring to destroy another's work. But a three-page killer! My God! Lowest damned ego I ever saw! So OK, we got the message. So we won't buy the November and January issues of If. I bought neither, never having grown to appreciate E.E. Smith. This letter isn't in defense of Smith. I automatically declare war on killerreviews, and this looonng one is the topper. The old scar across my forehead flames scarlet.

Having effectively destroyed Smith in the first five paragraphs, you devote that much space again to mere rock-throwing. Then, proceeding from this devastation you next passed off a Jim Harmon story with a string of pleasantries: "all the elements of a bad dream...vague characters...obscure motivations..." Nice tight writing. At least it was done quickly, if not cleanly. Shows what experience can do. Took three-plus pages to disintegrate Smith with his own secret weapon; only one paragraph for Harmon.

This of course laid the groundwork for the even swifter (attempted) destruction of F&SF. Only two lines, adding up to: DON'T SUBSCRIBE! I swear to whoever's worth swearing by these days that if Discord #16 is about the decline and fall of the magazine business ("They aren't getting enough subscriptions, faans! Help out!") I'll send you one (1) bomb in the mail. Now if you want to write an anti-anti-killer killer, be my guest. (Lexington, Kentucky)

EC: Like Marley, "Masters of Space" was dead to begin with; the review didn't kill it. The review performed the sanitary task of clearing a dead carcass from the road.

ALVA ROGERS

A short while back Doc Smith and his wife paid us a little visit in the BArea, and as number one Smith fan in the western half of the US, I spent the better part of an evening at Brennans (a Berkeley bistro to which the Little Men adjourn after their meetings) discussing his work with him. The first instalment of "Masters of Space" had appeared a short time before and I had read it with some trepidation. Like you, I'm an old "Skylark" and "Lensman" fan, but I've been a little grotched with his latest efforts. As near as I can remember from our talk, you are more or less right in your assessment of the authorial breakdown of the story. The idea was Evans' and about the first half was written by Tripoli; the rest was finished by Doc and the whole rather scantily polished up before sending it off. Doc himself wasn't too happy with it, but this was Doc's way of honoring an old friendship. He turned the entire check for the story over to Mrs Evans.

Doc also made the rather croggling statement that "The Galaxy Primes" was the story that his entire writing career was an apprenticeship for. It was pretty badly butchered at Amazing, though. (Castro Valley, California)

DAVID G. HULAN

Amen to Avram Davidson. As an officer in that alleged "band of trained assassins" I disagree with pacifists while respecting their right to their own opinion, but I have no use for draft-dodgers at all. And you're wrong about one thing: the sort who spend their military career in the stockade are not the ones who would feign psycho. They're the stupid clods. The army did a survey on this a few years back and the result was that the extent of the trouble a man got into in the army was just about inversely proportional to his grade on the army intelligence test. People in the upper half rarely ever got into difficulties.

I would like to ask Walter Breen just whoinell is going to defend him if it aint us "trained killers"? As it sits right now there are only two ways open: to submit at once to the communists or to train some people to fight. Weapons of today are far too complex to allow men to spring to arms from a civilian status and be effective in time to do any good if there's no "thin red line of 'eroes" to hold the enemy for a while. My section at the ordnance guided-missile school trains repairmen for the Nike Hercules tracking radars, and that takes 26 weeks of hard work to learn.

As for dropping bombs on women and children, it's people who refuse to support conventional forces that can match Russia's (and don't let anybody tell you that the west couldn't do it -- they could if they would) who make this a necessity if we ever do have to go to war. You know and I know that if we are attacked our government will defend itself as best it can, and at present there is no alternative between surrender and nuclear war on a large scale. The only effect exerted by the people who rail against the armed forces is to keep them down to a level where there is no alternative. If we had adequate conventional forces, it would be perfectly possible to get into a war by hasty words and then settle the thing without either side having to dip into the nuclear stockpile. Thus: Russia could underestimate our determination to hold onto Berlin, and push too far. If we had adequate conventional forces, we could meet them with a couple of corps, more if necessary. General stalemate, while they see we mean business. Then negotiations and peace with honor on both sides. What the heck, it could happen that way.

Lowndes and Breen are wrong. It is most emphatically not true that "All violence settles is the question of who can be the more successfully violent...." It sounds great, but there's a yard-wide fallacy. Violence settles quite another thing, as any southerner can tell you. It settles who is to rule. It's true that violence can't settle an argument about abstract terms, but it can render the argument obsolete. Upsetting the chessboard ends the game; whether it settles the question of who is the better chess player is immaterial and irrelevant. War with Russia would prove nothing about the relative merits of totalitarianism and democracy, but it would darn well prove that democracy would have to wait a while if not forever for a chance to try again. Your rebuttal, Mr Breen? (Redstone Arsenal, Alabama)

LES GERBER

Discord #15: "Cogito" puzzled me three ways this time, which is about average. First, although this may be a bit naive on my part, I can't help wondering how much of the first item is completely straight and how much invented. I am sure Marion is more than capable of writing a note to her milkman such as the one you quote, and I can't help wondering whether you managed to obtain a copy of a real note somehow -- from Marion, most likely, although I'm sure you would go to the trouble of writing to the Haskell County Sanitary Dairy if you knew of its existence and the existence of the note in its archives. The most likely explanation, of course, is that you made the whole thing up.

Then there's the title of the first item. Its significance eludes me entirely. So does the title of the item on Chris Moskowitz, which I approve of and endorse wholly, otherwise. Nay, not wholly, I see. I can understand your plea for tolerance if it comes out of the goodness of your heart, but not on the grounds you give, that Chris is new to fandom. Actually, as far as I can see, Chris is not "in" fandom and never has been; but if you want to consider her as being in fandom, then she has been in fandom for at least two years. She was in fan circles at least that long ago, around New York and Newark fandom.

The letter column is largely notable, to me, for the fact that I've met eight out of eleven published writers. I am also suitably puzzled by Andy Young's interlino, even after having read the preceding paragraph over three times. There is some beautiful truth in Gary Deindorfer's first paragraph, about why good fanzines often evoke less comment than bad fanzines. Betty Kujawa said it for me: it's so quiet since Ella left. (For the benefit of those who don't know me, I don't like things quiet.) Avram Davidson has made out a far better case for military service than Larry Shaw could, but he still hasn't convinced me that there is a fair parallel between wartime military service and peacetime military service. I am willing, certainly, to give up two years of my life to the service of my country if it needs me. I am not convinced that I will do anyone any good at all by serving two years in the armed forces. And I wish Avram were correct in stating that I could get out of the military and work in a hospital for two years just by saying I believe military service will teach me the trade of assassin, but it's not so. The form I got from my draft board said I could claim exemption from the draft as a conscientious objector for religious reasons only, which means I would have to become a Quaker. Apparently the government has no respect for atheist pacifists, or anything between a Quaker and an atheist. (Brooklyn 26, New York)

KEN WINKES

In Discord #15 I was particularly interested in Frank Wilimczyk's letter, especially the part where he defended Jim Harmon's "fuzzy thinking" in "The Air of Castor Oil." I was interested mainly because I don't agree. I don't like Jim Harmon's stories and according to Frank's "fuzzy thinking" about Harmon's "fuzzy thinking," any author can write any story in any way he pleases and if it turns out lousy (like Harmon's did) all the author has to do is say he wrote it lousy deliberately, and then everyone will love it, especially Frank. And anyway, I hate "fuzzy thinking"! (Arlington, Washington)

CROWDED OUT by the many letters held over from issue #15 were letters from Jinx and Larry McCombs, Harry Warner, and others; these letters will probably appear nexttime.