SAYRISTI!
C'EST

DR FAUSTENSTEIN

NUMERO ~~1~~ ~~2~~ 3A

NOM D'UN CHIEN!

"You can do anything you want,
if you're prepared to do it badly."

— Peter Jones.

This is

DR FAUSTENSTEIN NO. 3A.

written and produced by David Redd.

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If Dr F. drops dead before your sub expires, tough.

The editor will make every effort to ensure loss of or damage to all unsolicited manuscripts, especially if accompanied by S.A.E.

Cover (1979 Twll-ddu Fan Poll Award Winner) by Cheapo.

Next issue: let's see now, which year shall I pat?

which are actually his own * Simple human attributes makesingenious jokes.

20. BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN ('3o's, Whale).

Anachronisms destroy belief, e.g. safety-pins and modern hair-styles in the 1800's. Overdone comic relief invites laughter at horrific effects in wrong places. Sympathetic character vitally necessary to maintain interest; mere murder is pointless, but threat to blind musician is tremblemaking. Frankenstein as a sympathetic character is borderline, but by the time he re-enters plot we are pitying (off and on) the monster. (Note how the Hammer "Brides of Dracula" seemed silly all the way through because no character was developed sympathetically. You could see the strings on the bat; the self-cure of Dr Van Helsing should have had better prior explanation; Miles Malleson and Mona Washbourne hammed superbly, making the others (except Peter Cushing) look like amateur students.) The tilted camera angles for the experiment worked well-- what would be the written equivalent? The monster's mate: glimpse of eyes chilling, bridal dress an illusion-killer, jerky movements good again. Suggestions generally preferable to statement (musician sequence best when subtle.).

21. MAIGRET & THE MADMAN OF BERGERAC.

Mystery clues can be honest, false or misleading. The best "red herrings" point in one direction while actually being evidence against someone else 180° away; here, the prosecutor's pornography collection apparently implicates him, but turns out to have given the doctor (true villain) a chance to get a hold over the prosecutor. But nature of clues must vary, otherwise solving the puzzles becomes monotonous. (Hence the "simple" clue of Francoise's obviously-faked attack.)

22. WHOSE BODY? (Sayers).

(a) Rather than let tension die down after a minor peak, the next scene (slightly higher peak) is an immediate transition to an exceptionally gripping incident.

(b) Tension produced when grim facts unfold and one (but not all) of characters is "innocent" of truth comes from both reader's knowledge and wondering what hero will do-- n.b. contrast very important.

(c) "Angles" -- nearly every scene given a fresh treatment.

23. TO BRIDLE PEGASUS (McCaffrey).

(a) A scene really should be clear at the start-- the assumption that every character is male unless defined as female confuses the reader when after over a column of dialogue, the character is specified as female. (Delany's TOWERS OF TORON opening also unclear.)

(b) A sentence overlong on facts can be paced by the inclusion of a harmless or even (better) suspense-making filler phrase between two facts: "...Pat Tawfik, Pennstrak's speech writer who was, in actual fact, his Talent guard."

24. DESECRATION (Jhabvala).

Putting a "what happened to them all" epilogue at the

HUMANOID BOOGIE

Or, Close Encounters of the Pembrokeshire Kind.

A major review of an important new documentary work -- no, not Norman Mailer's latest opus, but a special treat for Pembrokeshire readers. It's THE DYFED ENIGMA, by Randall Jones Pugh and F.W. Holiday. (Faber & Faber, 1979. Price £5.95.) Any foreigners out there who don't share a liking for Pembrokeshire or for UFO had better skip forward to the sf reviews which follow. Although, why don't you read on and share the fun?

Yes, our sky was full of UFOs back in 1977. Flying spheres, silver machines, faceless humanoids, evil-smelling mists, frightened animals, stalled automobiles....Pembrokeshire had a marvellous year. Pugh and Holiday describe the Dyfed wave of UFO sightings, similar to the more recent Lincolnshire incidents or the well-publicised Warminster sightings. This book is a detailed account of the unearthly goings-on, although lacking the humour and cynicism with which most residents treated the tales. Certainly, something worth describing was taking place, whether genuine UFO visitation or contagious hysteria is none too clear.

One factor (not mentioned in the book) gives me doubts. Right at the start of the main sightings, Randall Pugh announced to a local paper that he expected an upsurge in UFO activity, and he hoped witnesses would contact him....

The authors make considerable efforts to remain objective, and conscientiously mention facts which less scrupulous writers would omit. For example, one of the fifteen schoolchildren who reported seeing a flying saucer at Broad Haven admitted hearing of an alleged UFO landing in Yorkshire only a few days previously. And the Coombs family of Ripperston Farm (whose numerous 1977 experiences of UFOs and humanoid visitors have been reconstructed in Clive Harold's paperback THE UNINVITED) had seen a supposed image of Jesus Christ some years earlier. Such witnesses were surely predisposed to seeing something unusual.

However, even if you discount all UFO reports from schoolchildren, adolescents and old maids of both sexes, there remain an impressive number of sightings by seemingly reliable witnesses such as technicians, professional people and industrial workers. Two farmers (both with B.Sc. Agricultural degrees) observed a classic flying saucer landing at their farm. A visiting solicitor saw a golden pencil of light in the sky above Fishguard. The wife of a helicopter pilot saw a wingless aircraft of unknown design. A quantity surveyor saw coloured fireballs over Pembrokeshire on three separate occasions.

The list of sightings seems endless, and the book by no means mentions them all. A particularly valuable feature of THE DYFED ENIGMA is the frequent use of tape-recorded interviews to describe the incidents in the witnesses' own words.

A typical night sighting: "....We saw this thing about tree-top height above us--it was hovering over us. It was a rugby-ball shape and a sort of orange-red colour. It was about five to six times the size of the moon...swinging rather like a pendulum but at the same time moving forward...."

A witness near Broad Haven described how "A brilliantly white object was hovering and moving slowly from my right to my left. It was not high up in the sky but just above the hedge....It looked rather like a barrage balloon and there was no sign of propellors. The main portion was cigar-shaped with a fairly big tail.... it was a white, solid mass, quite clearly defined. There was no sound from it."

Many of the UFOs seemed content to cruise low over the landscape, virtually hedge-hopping. The Coombs family, admittedly prone to seeing paranormal phenomena, appear to have seen something more para than normal back in October 1977. They reported that while driving along the coast road one afternoon, they saw a small, silvery disc travelling low above the sea, heading towards the Stack Rock (a nearby offshore islet). Mrs Coombs: "We saw the object go straight into the rock. There seemed to be doors that opened and closed, and it went straight inside...." Then she thought she saw two humanoid forms moving on the rock. Back home, the family was telephoned by a neighbour who could see silvery figures walking on the

Stack Rock. Five of the Coombs family went to the cliff-edge for another look and saw two man-shaped beings "further over the rocks from where I saw them first." One of the figures seemed to be climbing non-existent steps. Clinton Coombs: "He was going up and down these steps all the time....and then he went down and he just disappeared into the rock." A week later, Clinton was alone in the lane overlooking the Stack Rock and he saw four windows "like glass but they were set in the rocks."

The Stack Rock is only four miles from Broad Haven, where the famous saucer sighting by 15 schoolchildren occurred the previous February. (Less well known nationally is the fact that thirteen days after the first school sighting, a similar or identical UFO was reported in exactly the same field first by a teacher and later by two canteen ladies.)

Sightings of silvery humanoid figures--on the ground, floating in the air or merely peering through windows--became fairly common in 1977. Sometimes UFOs were visible when the strange visitors were around, sometimes not. One teenage lad claimed he was leaning over a gate gaping at a landed UFO when a tall, large-eyed humanoid approached him; the young man aimed a blow at the being, connected with nothing and ran for his life. (I don't blame him for running.) An equally frightening incident occurred a month later at Milford Haven. The sequence of events in this incident seems to have been as follows:-

1. Easter Monday. 8.30-8.40 p.m. Michael John's TV goes dead.
2. Michael's sister sees a red glow over house roofs.
3. In a nearby lane Michael's nephew Mark Marsden (12) sees a red glow at ground level.
4. 8.50? Silvery-suited humanoid figure jumps out of hedge at Mark.
5. Humanoid pursues Mark to the village street light, then retreats.
6. 9.00. Mark reaches home, safe but crying and frightened.
7. 10.00. Alwyn John (Michael's brother) sees round fireball hanging in sky.
8. (Some days later.) 5 children including David Marsden (10) see a silvery football-size object moving across a nearby field. Frightened, they run home.

Again, I don't blame the youngsters for running. It's an interesting story, although I'd like to know if anyone outside the John/Marsden family also witnessed the Easter Monday incidents. Did Pugh & Holiday check with other neighbours neighbours for sightings of red glows and fireballs? They don't say. Pity. If the authors' theories about the origins of UFOs are to be taken seriously, it might be important to record both the location of a UFO and the location of its observers. Patterns might emerge.

In fact, it's not too easy to discern patterns in the case-histories listed in THE DYFED ENIGMA. As is all too typical of ufologists, logical layout and analysis of the data aren't exactly conspicuous. This doesn't help the open-minded reader trying to make sense of it all. No chronological listing of reports, no overall map locating and classifying 1977 sightings, no attempt to plot courses of observed UFOs, no clippings-file of previous West Wales sightings. The authors suggest that UFOs come from parallel dimensions coexistent with ours--a theory based partly on relativity speculations but mostly on the widespread folklore of fairyland, the "people of the mounds" and so on. Their suggestions here are rambling and a little embarrassing--embarrassing not because their theories are wild (we expect that) but because their arguments are weak. Believe it or not, the folkloric "evidence" for a parallel universe is far stronger than the authors manage to convey here.[1]

Their only really worthless passage, though, is the section comparing "ley-lines"--imaginary straight lines connecting ancient sites--with the locations of UFO sightings. This is total rubbish and damages the credibility of the rest of the book. (By their own "people of the mounds" hypothesis, the only valid ley-lines would be those connecting three or more prehistoric burial sites, all

such known sites being listed in the Royal Commission on Ancient Monuments survey of the area. The authors' optimistically-drawn lines connecting old mounds, hill forts, cattle enclosures, Baptist chapels and any convenient crossroads within twenty miles have no place in any sensible study.)

I have a different objection to the following passage: "An interesting fact about UFOs is the way a "wave" seems to develop in one locality and then moves across the country. It is tempting to see in this a relationship with what the Irish used to call "the wandering sighes" or trooping fairies which were said to shift from place to place." My objection is that the "fact" herein is not a fact but is a generalised assertion. If we had a map of Western Europe marked with the dates and locations of outbreaks of frequent UFO sightings, the movement of UFO "waves" (if any) could be assessed at a glance. It's premature to seek parallels in folklore before the nature of the present-day phenomenon can be clearly defined;

Pugh, a veterinary surgeon, documents several cases where animals (dogs, cows, horses) have shown fear reactions and personality changes during UFO incidents. This still isn't the hard evidence for UFOs we sceptics are seeking, but we're getting warmer.

Today, when the Pembrokeshire sightings have virtually ceased, all we have left to go on is the collected testimony of the witnesses. Was every one of them mistaken or a liar? Some, perhaps, but surely not every one of them. I find it very hard to explain away reports as detailed as that of Captain T.J. Sulivan (B.Sc., Civil Engineering). One night he saw "an object (about a half to three-quarters of an inch in diameter at two feet--arm's length) travelling very fast (a sighting of about half a second over twenty to thirty degrees of arc) which definitely had no tail (such as is seen on objects burning out on entering the atmosphere) passed through the sky. This object, which was circular in shape, appeared to look like a two-dimensional view of a spheroidal open lattice-work--the latticing appearing as tracings of light having the intensity of some of the weaker stars. At the time two things appeared odd. Firstly, the object must have been more than fifty feet away--it went behind a building--and therefore was travelling fast.... Secondly, there was no characteristic trail as seen when meteorites or satellites burn up...."

A trained and responsible witness. And a circular tracery of light, speeding across the midnight sky. Was it mere late-night imagination? Or was it a real object on a real journey? I can't find an answer.

So, while THE DYFED ENIGMA is by no means the last word on UFOs or even on the Pembrokeshire sightings, it is a very readable and interesting account of the 1977 incidents. Compared to the average UFO book, this one is intelligent, carefully compiled and well worth investigating.

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(1) Folkloric evidence includes various Pembrokeshire legends of ephemeral islands, mortals stumbling into the fairy world, fairy folk shopping at the local markets, etc. I take particular interest in the legend of Pwll, an early prince of Dyfed who lived at Arberth east of Cardigan; apparently Pwll went hunting in nearby Cwm Cych and agreed to change places with a prince from a similar medieval culture in some other world. (Check the Mabinogion for the details.) Of course, when considering folklore you have to weed out the stuff about changelings (due to genetic disorders), doppelgangers (schizophrenia) and other explainable matters, and see if anything coherent is left. But none of this is discussed by Pugh and Holiday, and I would guess that it is better omitted from a consideration of UFOs.

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beginning of the short story avoids an over-extended ending, allows the final section to focus on personalities and motives rather than traditional narrative events, and sets the mood of the story while implying that the subject is people (rather than the melodramatic events and background), hence serious. (Same technique in MORPHINE (Bulgakov).)

And now the sf reviews. No time for editorial chat just now, so on with the action:-

MICHAELMAS, by Algis Budrys. (Fontana 1979)

Ace TV journalist Laurent Michaelmas learns that a missing-presumed-dead astronaut has turned up apparently alive at a sinister private sanatorium. Is the man produced really the dead astronaut? Gradually Michaelmas uncovers a bizarre geopolitical conspiracy concerning the astronaut's next mission. Or rather, the conspiracy is uncovered by the supercomputer Domino which helps Michaelmas to secretly control the world's affairs.

In summary none of this sounds very original, the plot being reminiscent of Budrys' earlier novel WHO? (surely the only Badger Book ever reprinted in Penguins--eat your heart out, R.L. Fanthorpe). Original or not, MICHAELMAS is very much better than you'd expect from the above summary. Slanted towards the international executive market with enough success to gain praise from Newsweek, this is one of the very few sf novels you can hand to a general reader without explanations or excuses.* We follow Michaelmas on his investigations through all the complex processes of newsgathering, press conferences, wiretapping and more arcane matters. I was hypnotized and only grew restless once, during the endless reminiscences of the back-up astronaut. (The pages would have been used better in tying up loose ends ready for the finale.) But overall, a superior and well-told future detective story.

Years ago, Budrys generally disappointed me with his fiction--the words were competently enough assembled but seemed lacking in substance. (I offer as an example the short story WHAT THEY'RE UP AGAINST which begins like J.G. Ballard and finishes like Mack Reynolds. That's cruel, even if you like Mack Reynolds.) But fortunately there are no such disappointments here; the book is Budrys all through, from the beginning with Michaelmas trying to break out of his lonesome mood, to the ending where the word "touch" has acquired a new and terrifying meaning for him. Budrys has finally come up with the winner we wanted him to write. Buy it.

THE ANARCHISTIC COLOSSUS, by A.E. van Vogt. (Pan 1979)

Quite a contrast with the previous book. If you have to read sf you might as well read van Vogt; if you have to read van Vogt you might as well read this one. It's almost indescribable. The central situation is a portrayal of a do-your-own-thing society where wilder excesses are prevented by automatic surveillance, but the action centres on a ludicrous alien-possession plot and on various crazy conspiracies. Plus a relatively restrained threat to destroy the world. However did I manage to enjoy this nonsense? Admittedly I was on the edge of my seat wondering how much worse the plot would get, not to mention the style, or the characterisation, but somehow this book does recapture some of the delightful insanity of van Vogt's earliest melodramas. For old times' sake I don't want to be too unkind to it.

Of course, his superman heroes have been getting dopier with each new book. Witness his THE BATTLE OF FOREVER, in which the hero's friends literally beat him over the head until he agrees to save the world if they promise not to hit him any more. However, in THE ANARCHISTIC COLOSSUS the entire cast are as dopey as the hero. There's a scene where the hero jumps on a canteen table, his boots smashing up piles of trays and dirty dishes as he reaches up, dismantles part of a public-address system and makes a close examination of its circuits. Only after seven paragraphs of dish-smashing and circuit-tracing up on the table is anything unusual noticed by any of the other 16,830 men in the canteen. It's no wonder the book contains the disclaimer "Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, is a coincidence." You can say that again. I cannot honestly recommend

* Another is John Brunner's THE LONG RESULT (Fontana) which, following on THE BRINK and THE WHOLE MAN indicated that Brunner might well achieve the mythical sf/mainstream merger. Fontana are improving again.

this as a successful novel, but it has to be seen to be believed. Steal it.

IN SOLITARY, by Garry Kilworth. (Penguin, 1979)

A promising opening. The birdlike alien Soal have colonised the earth, and the few remaining Earthmen are forbidden to have any contact with each other except for specified periods such as mating; thus virtually everyone dwells in lifetime solitary confinement. Naturally our hero joins up with a few others to plot a rebellion against the Soal, and the book describes how the aliens are finally defeated. Some good scenes squelching around the mud-flats of an altered English Channel....in fact, leaving this imaginative setting for some relatively ordinary Polynesian islands was a bit of a let-down. Taking us not away from the familiar but towards it is the wrong direction for science fiction.

However, the generally spare and vivid prose style works well, with a refreshing absence of padding. Nicely told.

From about Chapter 19 on there's a sudden switch to old-fashioned melodrama, more suited to Scion than to Penguin, as war is waged against the Soal. From this point we are no longer "in solitary" and the original atmosphere of the novel is lost; a wry little antiwar message is no substitute.

Even before the change of mood, I was getting worried about the hero. In traditional sf the hero is either superhuman or stupid (except in van Vogtian sf where he is both superhuman and stupid), and unfortunately the hero of this book comes in the second category. He does nothing right himself, and all his lucky breaks are due to the efforts of others. Maybe Garry Kilworth is too sensible to believe that one man could save the world? And the hero is virtually off-stage for the final departure scene, which gains its effect from the reader's understanding of men and Soal. It's the best part of the book.

Despite my nit-picking, this book is reasonably good value for money. Try it.

ISAAC ASIMOV'S SCIENCE FICTION MAGAZINE, JULY 1979.

My latest theory of magazine reading habits is that people turn straight to the book reviews and ignore the trash preceding them. Presumably that's why the reviews in IA'ssfm (gasp) are preceded only by Asimov's editorial.

Book reviews, features, poems, articles, puzzles....and even a few sf stories to pad out the back of the book. I could say a lot about the stories, little of it complimentary, but my most general complaint is that most of them are simply unfinished, or else clumsily written. (I agree, we have to publish some lower-quality stuff to encourage new writers, but there should be room for high-quality material in the magazine as well.) Stripped of inessentials, my review is simply "Most of these stories are lousy. Why?" All right. Why?

I made the comment "unfinished" with some care. Four of the six stories are without proper endings--classic "half-stories" in that each one stops suddenly halfway through the plot. One of the four was a story I genuinely enjoyed until the last page: ON THE SHADOW OF A PHOSPHOR SHEEN by William F. Wu. This is quite a strong yarn about future gamesmasters playing each other in computer-simulated re-runs of famous battles (the outcomes of the reruns decide industrial disputes). I would have rated the story Very Good, if Wu had omitted his last page and written "To Be Continued" instead. Half-stories disappoint because they don't deliver everything they promise. Wu's story was fine as far as it went, but just see what else he could have given us:-

1. Winning the final battle was too easy for the hero--the nation backing his opponents would certainly dispute the result.
2. Hero has a mental link with injured former gamesmaster whose advice helps him win--if his partner recovers, hero will no longer have his advice. How will he shape in battle then?
3. Can he build a relationship with the new lady gamesmaster he fancies with his partner reading his thoughts and commenting?

4. The Games are becoming important for settling political disputes, so the players should be seen facing the problems of bribery, sabotage, fighting for unpopular causes and so on.

All of these ideas were abandoned before they could be used. You see how the editor has cheated us by not demanding a full ending from the author? Four out of the six stories in this issue are incomplete, and that's too high a percentage for comfort. (But I do like the Schomburg illustrations, and Derek Carter's illustrations for the Wu yarn are intelligent and moody, like the text.)

Presumably the magazine is aimed at younger readers who lap up old ideas and don't notice the crudities of the storytelling. This theory doesn't explain why two of the stories rely for effect on sf in-group jokes, but it does provide the only credible reason for the popularity of Barry B. Longyear's yarns about Lord Allenby (Yanks are suckers for a title) and his circus (now there's juvenile appeal) on the planet Momus (read U.S. Mom for full effect) I notice that their convention calendar listing begins "Now that school's out..."

Another delightful item is their subscription coupon:-

" ☐ Enclosed is £7.50 for six issues.

☐ I enclose £7.50."

All in all, the Asimov name looks to be a real money-spinner whatever it gets attached to: Asimov's SF Adventure Mag, Asimov's Anthology, Asimov's Choice, Asimov's SF Calendar, Asimov's SF Notepaper, Asimov's SF ballpens, Asimov's SF shoulder bags, Asimov's SF pillowcases, Asimov's SF jockey shorts (bimonthly)... in fact Asimov could well move into the big league along with Snoopy and the Mr. Men. (Watch the Wall Street Journal for further thrilling details.)

AD ASTRA Volume 1, Number 4

As I see it, the difference between this magazine and the one above is that AD ASTRA is trying to please everybody, and ASIMOV'S is trying to make money. Sure, it's not really that simple, but that's the general impression I get. So what is AD ASTRA? It's a sort of cross between NEW SCIENTIST, SF MONTHLY and STARLOG, and in 36pp (black & white) you get a surprisingly varied set of features.

The fact: good informative articles about the NASA space shuttle and Patrick McGoohan's THE PRISONER; books, record and film reviews (some too short to be intelligible); and wide-ranging news items(same flaw. Saying anything precise enough to be useful in a short space requires a specialist writer given time to think--which AD ASTRA can't afford, obviously.). Some waffling about astrology, constellations, sf, and a couple of comic strips. Something for everybody.

The fiction: quality highly variable. An Ian Watson short story which would have been called Kafkaesque if critics hadn't discovered Borges, and a couple of fillers (one of them by Dave Langford but doesn't do much for him.).

A bit thin, but the quality's improving each issue (a full-colour cover this time--looks good) and if you haven't bought at least one copy you ought to. (P.S. Sorry about all the parentheses in this review. They breed fast.)

ARIES 1, edited by John Grant. (David & Charles, 1979)

Both cover and contents are pretty murky and have ensured the swift axing of the series--there will be no ARIES 2. Mr "John Grant" (Paul Barnett) has already wisely fled from D&C. Meanwhile, for the record, here's a quick rundown of the stories:-

THE MARBLE OF GOD'S COLD LIPS (Garry Kilworth). A better-told rewrite of Poul Anderson's man-into-tiger THE STAR TIGER, but Anderson's ending didn't do justice to the idea and neither does Kilworth's.

THE EDGE OF TIME (Bob Shaw & Malcom Harris). Disappointing arrival-of-lost-spaceman tale, lacking Shaw's usual narrative power.

IN THE VALLEY OF STATUES (Robert Holdstock). Crafty attempt to slip in a mainstream study of artistic temptation. Gains bonus points for being more readable than his sf novels, and shorter.

THE INSECT TAPES (Robert Scott Rohan). Bizarre humour couldn't stop me falling asleep as hordes of mindless insects invaded the starship. They were welcome to it.

THE AGENT (Christopher Priest & David Redd). Future spy struggles with human emotions and an inhuman secret weapon; Redd struggles with Priest's failed beginning; Priest struggles with Redd's failed ending. Nobody wins.

FLIES IN AMBER (Robin Douglas). Light but disturbing mood piece, best left undescribed as a service to the 40% of readers who will appreciate it.

SEX PIRATES OF THE BLOOD ASTEROID (David Langford). Of which Langford writes "whatever you do do not read my story....I repudiate it utterly." Needless to say it's the best story in the book, with at least 55 rib-tickling jests including 44 astounding scientific gimmicks. Belongs on everybody's bookshelf.

PRIME CULTURE (Steven Spruill). Alleged white-hot U.S. talent spins lukewarm yarn around fantastic original idea:- colonists on alien planet overcome by unsuspected micro-organisms. Belongs in a 1955 NEBULA.

AND ENGLISHMEN (Terry Yapp). Interesting concept: how present-day society might evolve into the terminal-butterfly society of THE TIME MACHINE and THE MACHINE STOPS. Unenthralling choice of storyline, but food for thought.

TIMESLIP (Colin Wilson). Omitting the plot-summaries which pad out his non-fiction, Wilson achieves surprising density of background and atmosphere as his protagonist encounters believable psychic phenomena. Plot falls to pieces, but otherwise extremely convincing in its details.

MT (AND HENCE TO BE FILLED) (Eve Devereux). Matter-transmission gimmick yarn suspiciously similar to Langford's effort in AD ASTRA 4, only funnier. Langford denies authorship; accuses Barnett; prosecution under Crimes Against Literature Act postponed for further investigations. Belongs in a 1929 SCIENCE WONDER STORIES.

At this point the anthology stops. It's bound to become a collectors' item, though, because come next June it'll be remaindered--once the contributors have bought up and destroyed the unsold copies there'll be hardly any left in existence. Grab yourself a copy while you can.

SCIENCE WONDER STORIES, AUGUST 1929.

THE MOON BEASTS (William P. Locke). Brief picture-show of lunar scenes near end, but mostly a dreary plod through dreary landscapes. On finding the moon-beast:- "How do we know if it's dead or alive?" -- "How about tickling it with a bullet or two?" Great spirit of scientific enquiry here.

THE RADIUM POOL, PT. I (Ed Earl Repp). Mostly a dreary plod through dreary landscapes, with bizarre phenomena and non-human nasties livening things up in Death Valley; fairly promising debut.

THE ETERNAL MAN (D.D. Sharp). Portrait of scientist seeking and finding eternal life: genuine feelings but crude writing. Belongs in ARIES 1.

THE ALIEN INTELLIGENCE, Conclusion (Jack Williamson). Clumsy, eager melodrama of lost race, mysterious science, human sacrifice, unknown monsters and just a little dreary plodding through dreary landscapes. Wise old Uncle Hugo offered Honest Jack "standard space rates" for this serial; only later did Honest Jack discover "standard" to mean a microscopic ¼¢ per word.

THE FEMININE METAMORPHOSIS (David H. Keller, M.D.). Silly secret agent foils silly conspiracy of women trying to eliminate all men by extremely silly methods. A tip-top Ripping Yarn, despite the long boring bits between sillinesses so typical of Ripping Yarns.

THE PROBLEMS OF SPACE FLIGHT (Capt. Herman Noordung). Wise old Uncle Hugo, not trusting his authors to educate his readers, here serialises a fact article about the uses of earth satellites, effects of Coriolis force in a spinning spacelab, the best colour for spacesuits (white), and so on. Very good for 1929.

MT (AND HENCE TO BE FILLED) (Eve Devereux). Matter-transmission gimmick yarn suspiciously similar to Langford's effort in AD ASTRA 4, only funnier. Extremely rare in this edition.

SF FOCUS, AUTUMN 1979.

I opened this one with fear and trembling. Would this "writers' view" magazine show up all the flaws in DR FAUSTENSTEIN's policy? Yes and no, I found. FOCUS gains a point for having a better cover than DR F., but loses it again for including an sf poem. The fiction...well, as this is an amateur magazine (i.e. non-paying) I assume the fiction is crud, and so haven't read it.

You read this one for the articles, of course. All are intended to be useful to present or potential writers of sf; if not useful, then interesting. A good but short market-report column, and a good "Talking Points" miscellany of short articles including Ken Bulmer's perceptive hints for new writers and Garry Kilworth's plea for thorough research. Somehow the other pieces seem a little lacking in red meat. None of the articles gives away any trade secrets about writing sf, although the history of WAR IN 2080 is quite an education. I'd like to see more mention of foreign-language markets, which new writers find very mysterious.

Also (since editors Chris Evans and Rob Holdstock are asking for comments) I'd like more technical advice on writing, but there'd have to be a clear division between (a) commercial tricks, and (b) artistic ability. Only the individual writer can then mix the right proportions of (a) and (b) to suit his own talents. But, a warning: a description of some way-out writing tricks such as van Vogt's 800-word scenes might ruin some youngster's career forever. You can take it for granted that the kind of writing-features I run in DR F. are the kind I'd like to see in FOCUS now and then.

The ads for sf bookshops didn't win any trade from me. Maybe a brief directory of bookshops listing their specialities would be more useful, giving categories such as general sf, old pulps, antiquarian, mainstream also, etc. And how about updating the old SF HORIZONS survey of useful books about sf?

This has been more a list of omissions than a considered review, so I'll close by saying that I genuinely welcome the appearance of SF FOCUS. It concentrates on writing rather than criticism, and it's something which has been needed for years. I hope the editors get the support they deserve.

PUBLIC APOLOGY

In issue no. 2 of DR FAUSTENSTEIN, mention was made in one of our articles of "Redd's turgid story SUNBEAM CARESS." We understand that this wording was incorrect, although printed in good faith. The section should have read, of course, "Redd's turgid classic SUNBEAM CARESS."

We apologise unreservedly for the shock, horror and dismay suffered by Mr Redd as a result of this error.

((It has been a long time between issues-- so long that you've probably forgotten writing your comments, if you did write at all. Read on and be amazed.))

CHRISTOPHER PRIEST CONFINES HIMSELF TO A SHORT RESPONSE

You are in danger of provoking a long response from me by talking about short story sales (as this is a well-known bee in my bonnet), but perhaps I'll confine myself to (a) agreeing with almost everything you say and (b) telling an anecdote about the life of one particular story of mine.

To agree with you first, then. Short-story writers are under-informed about their rights. Money is mysterious. But having given it much thought, I don't believe there are sticky fingers involved. It seems to me to be a matter of competence, or the opposite.....let me reveal to an awed world the Mysterious Story of A Story.

In the dreadful dying days of Vision of Tomorrow, I was approached by Philip Harbottle, who told me that the "spotty-nosed Herberts" who read his awful magazine wanted a story from me. He gave me a commission of £40 to write a 10,000-word novelette, which at the time I planned to call Earthrise. I duly wrote the story and delivered it to him, but by then it had become known as Real-Time World. A few days or weeks after this, Vision of Tomorrow did the only good thing it had done in all its time, and went out of business. I was busy at the time, and didn't do anything about my story, but presumed it had been returned to my agent.

Then I got a phone-call from Ted Carnell, saying that my story would be in the next issue of New Writings, and that he was sending the cheque to Harbottle that morning. It took me several seconds to realise that the story he was talking about was Real-Time World, and that Harbottle had actually offered it to Ted. I rang Harbottle and asked him wha t the hell he was playing at. He said it was now his story (or Ron Graham's), and he had the right to re-sell it. I told him he had bought First British Serial Rights (and he agreed), and that Ted Carnell bought Volume Rights, and it's illegal to sell things you don't own. He maintained that he did own the story, I told him to fuck off, hung up on him and haven't seen or spoken to him since. Ted Carnell was perfectly happy to make the sale direct through my own agent...and the story duly appeared in New Writings - 19.

The difference between Serial Rights (use of Copyright material in a periodical magazine, like Vision of Tomorrow) and V lume Rights (the use of Copyright material in a book, like New Writings) is distinct in both law and practice...so both Harbottle and Carnell really should have known better. But at least Carnell had the foresight, and courtesy, to let me know what was going on, whereas Harbottle hadn't. To this day, I wonder how many more ex-VoT stories he re-sold.

Anyway, after Ted published the story, it was selected by Donald A. Wollheim for use in THE 1972 ANNUAL WORLD'S BEST SF, or something with that kind of punchy title. The "contract" was raised between Wollheim and my then agent in America, and signed by them. The relevant part of the letter read:

> I agree to pay the sum of $100 for non-exclusive permission to include this story. I agree also to grant the author a pro rata share of all royalties and fees that may become payable after the sale of the initial printing of this book in English or in translation anywhere in the world, or in book club or other editions following the publication of the original paperback.

As this was the first time I had sold something to a "best of the year" anthology, I was quite pleased...although I couldn't help thinking that $100 wasn't very much for a 10,000-word story.

(In fact, when the book came out, I discovered that Real-Time World occupied exactly 29 pages out of 290 pages of text, or 10% of the total. Therefore, it seemed that Wollheim had advanced a total of $1,000 to the authors.)

About a year later, I received, through the agent, a cheque for £8.58. (Or rather, a cheque for less than £8.58, because commission was deducted. But £8.58 was the amount paid by Wollheim.) This was for the British hardcover edition, published by Gollancz. If my story was being paid this, then presumably the whole book was being paid £85.80. If Wollheim was taking the "usual" 40% cut, this meant that what Gollancz had paid him was £143. Even in 1972, this seemed a very low advance from a top publisher. However, Wollheim offered no explanation...or at least, not to me. I just got a small cheque. Not being very experienced in these matters, I let it go.

Then a few weeks later, I got a second cheque through the agent, and this had a gross value of £21.25. Thia was for the Book Club edition. Operating the same principle, all the contributors together would have received £212.50...which after a deduction of 40% for Wollheim, meant that the Book Club had advanced him the sum of £354.17. In those days, the exchange rate was about $2.40 to the pound...so this converts to an advance of $8.50, or thereabouts. Again, this seemed at the time to be a rather low advance from a big publisher, and again I let it go.

Perhaps all these figures are fair enough...but I suppose my main beef is that I had to work them out for myself. Not a word of explanation was forthcoming from Wollheim. I have to guess that he took a 40% cut, but only because the majority of American editors take 40%. (This is never questioned, incidentally, but am I alone in thinking that a 40% cut to the editor of a reprint anthology is too high?)

And my other complaint is that to this day I have not been sent a complimentary copy of either subsidiary edition.

The central principle of my long and boring SFWA article is that the writer of a short-story is entitled to the same contractual protection, and the same courtesies, as the author of a novel. Ie., he (or she) should be given a detailed, explicit and binding contract He should receive full accounting of the income the book containing the story earns. He should receive complimentary copies of all editions containing the story.

I haven't actually sold all that many stories to anthologies, but even so, I have yet to come across a sale which has been free of petty irritations. None of them are horror stories, so beloved of anguished writers...they're all caused by laziness or indifference, and more often than not they simply aren't worth my own trouble in trying to get them sorted out. But petty or not, they shouldn't be happening.

One last (short) example. A couple of years ago, Terry Carr published one of my stories. He sent me complimentary copies of the US edition. Some months later, I saw a Gollancz edition reviewed in a newspaper. I rang up Gollancz, and asked if I could have a complimentary copy. (I was the only British contributor.) They said the complimentaries had gone to Terry Carr. So I dropped a line to Terry, and asked for one. He didn't reply...so a couple of months later, I rang Gollancz again. They said the book had gone out of print. Ie. no complimentary copy. The end.

((Publishing a short story collection is less economic than publishing a novel, obviously. Ten writers, say, means ten contracts, ten possoble hassles, ten times the complimentary copies....in short, ten times the work. No wonder publishers and editors cut corners. But for the writer, putting in the same amount of marketing effort as for a novel but for only one-tenth the return, there's less incentive to tie up deals properly. The money is so small that nobody can afford to look after it. Although, if somebody did invest some time in looking after it, would the money turn out to be not so small after all?

((It occurs to be, on your book club deal the split might have been 50% original publisher, 20% Wollheim, 30% authors. The book club fee looks more reasonable then. But I agree, you should have been told.))

DAVID S. GARNETT REPLIES IN FULL TO OUR QUERY LAST ISSUE.

No, they didn't.

BERNARD M. EARP REVEALS THAT PEOPLE HAVE BEEN TALKING ABOUT ME BEHIND MY BACK. OOH!

Quote from Dave Langford: "David Redd, the secret Master of Haverfordwest." If I was the Master of Haverfordwest I'd keep it secret too.

Steve Higgins and family came to see me on stage (G.B. Shaw's "Arms and The Man.") I played the Russian Officer the smallest part in the play, though it did give me the opening for this season's worst ad-lib one night. "Stop waving your weapons about, men. You're frightening the ladies." ...Meriel's comment on Andrew Stephenson's Loc reminds me of Shaw's remark "The only criticism an actor will listen to is ten minutes unadulterated praise."

.....your overview of Astounding/Analog.....on the name, yes Astounding has more of a nostalgic sound and even has more zap to it but I'm sure that Campbell changed the name with the very good intention of getting away from the gosh wow type of image, and he was right damn it. I have a very vivid memory of trying to tell a science instructor in school that I knew something because I'd read an article in Astounding. "Science fiction magazines boy, but what we teach here is real." This was the same teacher who once asked us to name any industrial use for magnets and when I suggested in Nuclear Fusion research said "No, I meant in food factories to pull out any metallic scraps in the food."

Now I'm not saying that if I'd named something a little more upmarket he'd have listened anymore closely but Analog Science Fact & Fiction does have a better air of responsibility about it and may just have the effect of saving some other child's blushes.

Not that the teachers had it all their own way it seems. I was talking to a young lady recently.

"What do you do?" "I'm a teacher."

"Where at?" "Breightmet."

"Hey, that's my old school." "Yes I know, they still talk about you."

"Gee, after all these years it's nice to be famous." "No, notorious."

((You're not the only one. Recently I was accosted by F.F. Nicholls the well-known English master and radio Brain of Britain or whatever--he was wondering whatever happened to Greg Pickersgill. F.F. said "He was pretty odd, but he was a genuine character and you don't get many like that these days." Good thing too, otherwise our old school would never have survived. The truth is that whenever Greg returns to H-West he remains hidden in his ancestral home seeing absolutely nobody, only venturing out for alcohol late at night with his collar turned up. But, talking of Analog...))

JOSEPH NICHOLAS'S COMMENTS WERE VERY INTERESTING LAST APRIL WHEN HE WROTE THEM.

In Dick Geis's SFR there was a short interview with Ben Bova in which he gave some of his reasons for resigning the editorship of Analog--amongst them being Conde Nast's apparent unwillingness to part with any money for the revamping of the magazine's physical appearance; they felt it was selling well enough as it was and didn't really need a facelift, an opinion that seems tantamount to an outright denial of the validity of their own sales figures. I personally think that Analog is selling mainly on the strength of its long-established reputation; hanging over it still is the obsolete and unwelcome shadow of John W. Campbell.....a shadow that--to give him his due--Bova has been trying to erase, although not with any great success (witness tthe letters from all those turgid right wing types who wrote in demanding refunds on their subscriptions because an occasional story or two has mentioned something as disgusting as *S*E*X*).....perhaps the frustration it caused eventually became more than he could stand, and he decided to move on out to where he could buy and publish the stories that he really wanted instead of the stories that a bunch of senile old retards (who probably form the bulk of the magazine's readership) wanted. So to expect anything different from Stanley Schmidt is probably futile; he too will find himself hemmed in by the intransigence of Conde Nast and the prejudices of the readers.

((Schmidt started by losing his assistant editor and being shunted into crummy backstreet offices. The omens are not good. N.B. More lettercol in the editorial, later.))

25. SUBB (MacApp)

(a) Swift cut from one action scene to another and explain during narrative; this keeps reader following action and catching up on undescribed events, so he doesn't ask questions about purpose of (filler) action etc.

(b) A too-easy tying up of loose ends merely annoys the reader, as when the book's villain is suddenly removed: "He's dead. You hit him too hard." -- an ending lacking in ingenuity, relevance and difficulties.

(c) Descriptions made "interesting" by contrasts, e.g., "Flat except for one central hill."

26. THE SQUARE EMERALD (Wallace).

How information withheld adds to power of story: "Mayfair Gossip" newspaper's true nature is hinted at, but not revealed until final mentions... Too-full description at first would have made final scenes flat. This mystery story is really a gradual discovery of information withheld.

27. PEANUTS (series)(Schultz)

Delight resulting from neat plotting: a sequence about Snoopy reading WAR AND PEACE one word a day gives way to another plot wherein the action happens to pass Snoopy and Woodstock still reading WAR AND PEACE. Delight is heightened by dovetailing recognition, appropriateness to both plots and the simultaneous surprise & familiarity.

28. WRITING FOR TELEVISION IN THE 70's (Hulke).

Full of good advice; hints applicable to general writing incl.—

Good dialogue both states facts and conveys character (e.g., manner of speech, comments on facts related, etc.)

You should listen to how people talk: in the north they say "Can you not?" in the south "Can't you?" Midlands late night "drink" means beverage, in London it means alcohol. Civilian might say a sailor is on H.M.S. So&so; navy personnel will say in. Left-wing: "the Soviet Union," "a Chinese," "Mrs Joan Smith," "Britain." Right-wing: "Russia," "a Chinaman," "Mrs John Smith," "Great Britain."

Confidant needed for explanatory dialogue can give maximum value by providing internal conflict, e.g. hero careful, sidekick rash.

Scene closing "We're taking you in. Come on!" less effective than the sinister "Come on. You're going for a ride in a motor car."

If it's a kids' show and the story includes a ship sinking at sea, save the ship's cat.

29. EVERY GOOD BOY DESERVES FAVOUR (Stoppard)

Good comedy/irony mileage from treating one situation in terms of another -- cf. the Goodies' standard plot-formula for TV comedy in shows such as mechanical excavators treated as prehistoric monsters. Subtlety comes from choice of situations.

30. THE EXPERT: DEATH IN THE RAIN (N.J. Crisp)

Regular artists (series characters) were all involved in ways arising naturally out of their respective jobs in life: a pathologist examines victim, G.P. "treats" victim's father, Det.-Chief Insp. finds suspect. Using the other characters, author has managed to write his own original play within the series framework, while still involving the main characters.

SORRY ABOUT THE TWO BLANK PAGES. NORMAL SERVICE IS NOW RESUMED.

THE AGENT

Another Story Of A Story.

(And yes, C. Priest Esq. is involved again. Dare you read on?)

INTRO.

It began with an unfinished MS which Chris brought to the Milford SF Writers' Conference; he'd managed 4,000 words of a commissioned 5,000 but couldn't think how to end the thing. Another Dream Archipelago story ("They're all I can do now," he moaned.) it was very Somerset Maugham in mood....hotel awaiting troops, tropics, planters, passion, night insects and grinding out cigar butts under heels, great stuff for TV. I liked the way his hero casually strolled out from dinner and cruised across a time-zone, and at the workshop session on the story I suggested a really good ending: "The bloke fancies this girl and uses the time-zone to sail back with her to the islet for a dirty weekend but the time-zone breaks down, they're trapped together and he doesn't fancy her any more!"

Nobody likedit.

A sensible person would have given up there, but sensible people don't come to the Milford Conference. I decided to finish Chris' story for him. I would nip up to my room between workshops, scribble away for an hour and then saunter back to remark "Another 500 words done" or something equally insufferable. He took it remarkably well as I raced on changing his title, characters, plot, background, beginning and ending. I kept a little bit in the middle. After Milford, and after much eyestrain caused by my microscopic handwriting, Chris gave me his verdict.

PRIEST TO REDD, 20.10.78.

Jesus, it's brilliant!

((I've lied, that's not quite what he wrote about my MS. In fact, I'd better abridge his real comments. Here's what's left:))

.....It's not finished, but it's a good first draft.....If you go ahead and finish it on your own, as far as I'm concerned it becomes a David Redd story, with your by-line, and you take any cash that might come. If you did this, I shouldn't want my name associated with it in any way (ie. no "acknowledgement" or anything). You have, in other words, carte blanche to go ahead and finish it.

On the other hand, if you did publish this, it would effectively prevent me from ever publishing my own story. I say this entirely without acrimony, but as a matter of fact. I can see the differences between "my" story and "yours"...but there are sufficient similarities--the aunt, the girl, the islet, the boat, the time-zones--to make anything I do at best superficially similar, and at worst I would find it very inhibiting to reapproach the theme creatively.....

I think we should collaborate (although I have never done so before--except once, in the very early days, with great disaster--and the whole idea goes against my principles), and approach the job in a strictly professional way..... The story would have the by-line "David Redd & Christopher Priest" (or vice-versa; we can toss for who goes first).....

((And after making various proposals about the way we'd work he started tearing my plot and characters to pieces. Examples:))

I think the narrative needs more resonance: more atmosphere, more descriptive passages. The story is event-orientated, with few insights into character motivation. I could cope with all these on the second draft.

I can't see the significance of the juniper, in either the story or the title ((My title, A SCENT OF JUNIPER)). It seems arbitrary.....

Characters' names. I'm afraid Scheld will have to be changed. I have a character called Sheeld in a recent story (The Cremation, in ANDROMEDA 3). Also, I don't like "Heth" as a name...too reminiscent of "Eth".

The girl's motives must be made clearer. At the moment, she is a rather

sad figure, exploited by Scheld. She must know something he does not...and she should use it to advance the story.

I think we must also have more sympathy for Scheld. At the moment he is a rather unpleasant, self-serving character. OK, but neither is he strong enough to make these faults interesting.....

A warning: don't expect me merely to polish your draft: I'm likely to make fundamental changes.....

REDD TO PRIEST, 21.10.78.

I'll jump in at the deep end with the explanations.

Why "A Scent of Juniper?" Because Egon smells it on the islet and it comes to stand for his escape for a dirty three days with the girl. Then when at the end he's trapped, it reminds him of what he hoped and how different the reality is. But the scent also recalls to him his boyhood, when he was young and innocent, not yet a hypocrite and deceiver..... So what is actually happening in the story? I see it as a sort of seduction, like the way the bird decoyed the hawk on the island, only Egon is actually seducing/deceiving himself..... I threw in a lot of images of seduction, and hints that he was playing with forces he did not understand.....

More sympathy for Egon? My sympathies were with the earliest self whom he betrayed--the boy who smelled juniper on the heath. (So that's why the name Heth fitted..... My subconscious picked that name, Heth/heath. It writes better than what I do.).....

((I rambled on for another 5½ pages, about the story and about our working arrangements. Buried deeply in the 5½ pages was an item which made Chris reel back in horror.))

PRIEST TO REDD, 25.10.78.

.....I see from your letter that you want the right to veto any changes I make to your third draft. Well...we can't both have a veto, because it would get us nowhere. If I have the right to veto your third draft, it means nothing if you then have the right to veto what I've just vetoed. One of us has to have the last say. I'd like it to be me...for reasons which I hope you'll understand.

((He then spent four long paragraphs making absolutely sure that I did understand, and he concluded:))

.....So what I'm really saying is that my insistence on having the veto will, in all probability, be merely a technicality. If it becomes more than that, you'll have to trust to my reasonable intent. I'm not on an ego-trip; I'm undertaking this as a professional job, and I want a good story to come out of it. Obviously, we both want safeguards, but equally obviously, we're both going into this in a spirit of good intent and cooperation, and that's my main concern....

PS: .....Thanks for the background; as it's yours, rather than ours, I'll work within the background, but keep it as undefined as possible.....

PPS: And, whatever you say, I still don't like the title, as a title.

((Despite his reservations he settled down to the task of writing the second draft, and all seemed to be going smoothly when Fate in the person of one Paul Barnett of David & Charles threw the traditional spanner in the works. It was he, this Barnett, who had persuaded Chris to attempt a 5,000-word story in the first place, for a forthcoming D&C original anthology. It requires no great imagination to reconstruct their conversation of 14.11.78:

PB: Chris baby, where's that story of yours?

CP: What story?

PB: The one you're doing for us!

CP: Oh, that thing? I couldn't finish it.

PB (aghast): Couldn't finish it? Jesus wept, we sent the stuff to the printer and your name's on the cover!

CP (patiently): There's no story. It's dead. It's no more.

PB: But ya gotta do us a story! Your name's on the cover-- in the adverts--

CP: Although, just now I am writing one. A collaboration with--

PB: Can ya dictate it down the phone to me now?

((We had a market. And we had a fortnight. Could David do a final draft in a week? Despite the virtually guaranteed sale, I was appalled. My final drafts normally take years, not weeks. Through sheer foolhardiness I agreed to try, and suddenly the pace of story discussions speeded up:))

PRIEST TO REDD, 14.11.78.

.....Can you suggest an alternative to the title? I don't like it as a title, and I definitely don't like all this stuff about the junipers..... I find the use of the "scent" of juniper a very contrived device to create a sense of lost youth, etc. For the moment I'm going on with it, but every time the bloody things get mentioned, I feel like a fraud. Frankly, the way you've used it is stagey, contrived, arbitrary and phoney.....

REDD TO PRIEST, 15.11.78.

.....I think you're over-reacting to the juniper. Probably I used it too many times--easy to do in a first draft, what with running two parallel time-sequences and starting the story in the middle. But it does belong.....

PRIEST TO REDD, 17.11.78.

.....Look, we haven't got time to make structural changes. This will be unsatisfactory to you, as it is to me. In writing the second draft, I have been following your version...and I hope, when your turn comes, you'll follow mine, without introducing too many new things. This is a slight warning..... The real problem, and it's one I feel acutely, as you will, is that we no longer have the time I think both of us would have liked, to get the story mutually acceptable. We have become involved in something of a hundred-yard dash, to get something publishable done in the next fortnight or so. Humph.

((The above letter gave me advance warning of various new changes in plot, background and motivation. There was also the inevitable postscript:))

PS: I think you miss my point about the wretched junipers.....Scents of childhood, etc etc. Now I'm deeper into the story, this seems an intrusive and clumsy device, and one which simply looks awkward and unnecessary. Scheldt has enough inner motivation--not to say plot motivation--to get on with what he's doing without going all weak at the knees whenever he walks past a bloody tree! Even if you find some less stagey way of retaining the junipers, they certainly aren't a dominant enough image to warrant use in the title. You say I'm over-reacting. Maybe I word my objection strongly...but the objection is a fundamental one. The junipers do not work in this story.

So there.

((I refrain from comment. Instead, let's skip over a letter or two and see what Chris produced in his all-action week:))

PRIEST TO REDD, 21.11.78.

Here's my second draft, guaranteed to raise a smile and ruin a day. I wish you well with it, and God's speed!

A few things to say.

Firstly, I've written some detailed notes, and they're at the back of the

MS. These are referred to in red, in the margin of the text. What they amount to, in effect, is working notes on queries, suggestions, etc. They are intended to give you some insight into various textual matters, and plot. Remember, what I'm sending you is a draft, not a finished MS, so as I wrote I discovered certain matters about (say) plot and characters that became clearer later on, and will need incorporation earlier in the MS.

.....I was well aware that what you sent me was very much a first draft. I tried not to take liberties with it...but I was not at home with some aspects of the story. For instance, I found much of the dialogue rather stilted (eg. where Heth/Heidi arrives at the islet, and mutters something about forgetting her piano!). Then the ending worried me.....a solution suggested itself through Heidi's character.....although it is different from your version, I believe it makes a more coherent whole.

.....I'm anxious to know whether you like this. Or hate it. Or what. It's all been a strange experience for me...and not one I think I will do again. So let me know?

((And now it was time for my all-action week. I booked some leave and took my typewriter into a spare room of the firm's local office; I hammered away for five days, non-stop, astounding the other staff who had never seen me actually sit down and work like that before. I won't quote here from the detailed notes Chris sent me, except briefly to show how they indicate areas of further revision: "1. SCHELDT. Too similar in sound to "Silte". Suggest change to another mittel-Europ name. Perhaps FERENC....." And many other notes, generally on more complicated issues. Naturally I had additional ideas for improvements, and we conferred both by 'phone and by letter from this time. Fortunately only the letters have survived.))

REDD TO PRIEST, 28.11.79.

.....in desperation I've called it simply "The Agent"-- a short title to go with a long by-line. Any suggestions gratefully received.

The revision here is mainly a matter of cutting out some bits (Eslaw, Pederson), putting in others (N-D war fleet) and so on. Revision for content rather than style. I'm now retyping the more seriously mauled pages before going through the whole mess again..... One trouble is that I'm finding whole passages which are adequate, and given the time available it's expedient to leave them alone (after checking for consistency).....instead of us frantically rewriting successive drafts towards our own intentions, we've both concentrated on getting something acceptable finished. However, whether it's a good story or not is another matter...

PRIEST TO REDD, 29.11.79.

.....About the title: I think giving it something short and simple is a good idea...although perhaps THE AGENT is too simple. I'm for the simplicity, because if either of us wanted an elaborate or fanciful title, the other is sure to object. (It was part of my dislike of SCENT OF JUNIPER, for instance.) A few suggestions from the top of my head: THE ISLAND. THE ZONE. THE INVASION. THE SEQUESTRATION. ((?)) TIME ISLAND. DOUBLE TIME. DOUBLE AGENT. TIME FIELD. HEIDI AND EGON GO AND PLAY MUD-PIES ON AN ISLAND FOR A WEEK.....

I know what you mean about the story being in nomansland. It is for me too, to a certain extent. I got more interested in it as I wrote, but it lacked the indefinable electric charge of one of my own stories. I suppose this is what my unease with a collaboration amounts to. Still, I hope we can console ourselves in the end if we produce a competent, commercial story that does not cheat the reader...

P.S. I tossed a coin, and you lost-- the by-line is: REDD & PRIEST (in that order....)

((Only Paul Barnett decided otherwise. Other hassles: the hours on the phone reading dictionaries of quotations, searching for a better title! The week lost in somebody's office when the MS missed the post and got forgotten! Payment on publication! But somehow it got written, printed and paid for. I think that's a happy ending, just.))

THE STATE OF SCIENCE FICTION TODAY

Editorial

This feature is dedicated to F.G. Morris, fanzine reviewer for BLACK HOLE. To alleviate the "confusing layout and general incomprehensibility" Morris found in DR F., I'm including helpful sub-headings

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THE IMPORTANCE OF CLARKE, HEINLEIN AND ASIMOV.

Before I begin the main topic of this editorial, I'd better apologise for this issue being late. New baby, new construction project, new loss of energy, and all the usual boring excuses; result, no Seacon and nearly no DR F 3. As an emergency measure this is Part 3A with the topical stuff, leaving fiction and nostalgia for 3B next year. Sensible publications like YANDRO put out double issues; DR F. puts out half issues. Typical. Some features, e.g. lettercol and the 10,000-word THE AGENT correspondence, have been chopped short to save time. However, I have expended the full scheduled effort on preparing the cover.

FRANK HERBERT'S VITAL MESSAGE FOR OUR TIMES.

DR F. 1 & 2 got a reasonably good response, depending on how you define "reasonably good." I offer some extracts from typical comments. Graham England: "I've not thought of anything to write about." Ian Garbutt: "I took but a single glance at the appalling cover and promptly tried to ignore it." Chris Priest: "I totally ignored the first issue of DR FAUSTENSTEIN, hoping it would go away, but no such luck." ((Priest and Garbutt in agreement? Another world first for DR F!)) The other responses were similar. David Langford: "Here's another grotty fanzine." Ron Bennett: "Apologies for the lack of loc." Harry Andruschak: "I hope your fanzine prospers. And improves." Bryn Fortey: "Please note my new address." Rob Holdstock: "Please note my new address." Andy Richards: "I have to confess to enjoying the fiction." ((Well, there's one odd man out in every bunch.))

GEE, DO YOU REMEMBER THE NEW WAVE, GRANDAD?

The prevailing reaction was best expressed by Joe Nicholas: "I found myself unable to think of any worthwhile comments....to put it in a nutshell, DR FAUSTENSTEIN just isn't provocative enough....it doesn't move me to any Great Thoughts about life or the universe or the nature of science fiction or anything else you care to name." Gloomy stuff. Joe continued, "The fifties' nostalgia stuff was reasonably interesting, but....well, I didn't even discover SF until 1967, and I've never read any of the books you mention (although I have previously heard of them, but then that's not the same thing at all). And I have a feeling that the vast majority of today's fanzine fans will find themselves in pretty much the same boat; at the time to which you're referring, they were simply too damn young to either know or care. Or, to put it another way -- what we have here, boss, is known as a "generation gap"; and a bloody nearly unbridgeable one to boot. .....Your writing notes..... as with everything else in DR FAUSTENSTEIN, they are simply too dull to provoke response. And, goddammit, what's the point of a dull fanzine? If you want response of any worthwhile or useable kind then you've got to go looking for it, you've got to deliberately play to the gallery. Yes, that does involve reaching some sort of compromise between yourself and your readers, but that's the way the game is played. Editing, remember, is not at all the same as writing; to compromise in the latter is to cop out altogether, but it's bloody vital to the success of the former." A hard-hitting analysis indeed. I must lie down for a year or two to think about it.

BUT WHO CAN REPLACE A DEAN R. KOONTZ?

I've had to omit various intended features: survey of a typical week's reading matter, a collection of silly quotations, and an analysis of NEWSWEEK's increasingly desperate subscription reminders, Another casualty is my advance-notice column about forthcoming books. This was the sort of thing I had in mind: "For me, Robert Holdstock became a Writer to Watch when I discovered his classic SBD article EIGHT DAYS A WEEK. What a pity such energy, humour and imagination never appeared

in his sf. Never, that is, until his novelette-length treatment of the Time Valley extravaganza, which simply blazed with colour and enthusiasm; expansion to novel length was a must, and it has been years since I looked forward with such eagerness to a new sf novel..." Etc., etc. I think both Rob and I are very lucky that this advance notice never saw print....

STOP PRESS CHIMERA! OUT NOW. NICE ONE, IAN.

ALAN DEAN FOSTER.

Another casualty was the fanzine review column. My sincere thanks to all you people who sent me fanzines, especially those of you who sent them after receiving DR F. The least I can do is give a quick run-down on the collection:-

Alan Dorey zinse: GROSS ENCOUNTERS 6 patchy, but raises many gurgles despite the overall lack of focus. Arnold Tharg gets better, or worse. ANOTHER BLOODY FANZINE (Dorey/Nicholas) a bit limp. Too many fliers left insufficient energy for this first issue? Better luck next time. Joe, write more.

Worthy but too many words: TRIPE-PICKERS JOURNAL 2 (Paul Kincaid) sort of Gross Encounters 5½ with good thinking, high spirits & serious intentions somehow deadened by uninspiring format (especially in lettercol). Merited the full review I never gave it. ARENA SF 9 (Geoff Rippington) heir to the grand tradition of CYPHER, SPECULATION, etc. Good of its kind--George Turner's survey of Australian sf is an excellent introduction--but the editor's call for more academic criticism of sf just horrifies me. No, no, no! More well-written sf, yes.

Lightweight but I liked them: PERIHELION 3 (Steev Higgins), MOTA 28 (Terry Hughes). Fannish, forgettable, fun.

Sadly missed (maybe): DON'T PANIC!! (Graham England) which I'd hoped would develop into a regular international fan/sf newszine. Getting a subscription from me is as deadly as accepting a Kettle story. DEADLOSS 2 (Chris Priest) says it won't be the last issue, so obviously it really is dead. Threatened to grow into US-style hugezine similar to NIEKAS etc of awed memory; really I preferred the slimmer editor-written issue 1, but must point out superb contributions here from Joseph ABF Nicholas and Dicky Howett.

Recommended: WRINKLED SHREW 8 (Charnox), YANDRO 247-248 (Coulsons), DRILKJIS 4 (Smith & Langford), DOT 8 (Smith--limited edition), TWLL-DDU 16 (Langford), all strong on personality and welcome in the mailbox. Thanks to all.

NEBULA WINNERS AND HOW TO AVOID THEM.

Also received were two Bryn Fortey items, JUST SOME OLD-FASHIONED POETRY containing Bryn's own "rhymes and lines", and I KNOW WHAT I LIKE containing some of Bryn's favourite poems written by other people. I felt uncomfortable trying to assess these since I regard poetry as an art form belonging to previous centuries which is rarely suitable for creative work today. To consider just one page of Bryn's pieces, my reactions ranged from "can't be bothered to finish this" (INTROSPECTION) to "rubbish" (A SCIENCE FICTION TRAGEDY) and even "Hey, this is rather good" (CONCRETE SYMPHONY). Despite occasional good bits such as the last third of Andrew Darlington's THE WRECK OF THE ASPIDISTRA, I still think I'm better off avoiding higher culture. However, Bryn's efforts reminded me that the stuff could be worth reading sometimes, and in fact I intended giving John Birtwhistle's TIDAL MODELS (Anvil Press Poetry) an advance plug in my forthcoming books column, all due to the brief interest raised by Bryn's collections. To that extent he made a convert for culture.

FORWARD INTO 1980 WITH DEL REY BOOKS, ASIMOV'S SF ADVENTURE MAG and LUCIAN'S TRUE HISTORY.

Ooops, nearly forgot this letter from Nigel Welham, 17 Picton Road, Hakin, Milford Haven, Dyfed. He writes, "Well, you asked for it. I'm fed up with editorials discussing the "state" of sf today as if it's an industry in decline." (So am I.) And he criticises one of my 100 NOTES: "COSMIC CRUSADE (Richard Saxon). I admit that the vocabulary is elaborate and overstated....but I like the content of the novel which I think redeems it." Gasp. Modern cheapo crud paperbacks will be the nostalgia collectors' items of the future, obviously. No space to discuss Peter Paget's THE WELSH TRIANGLE (Granada pb) which goes over the Pembrokeshire UFO sightings yet again. Press clipping: children in a Nottingham park sighted 30-odd vehicles containing small humanoids who each had "green legs and a red top." The children did sketches and statements for their headmaster; I'd like to introduce him to the Broad Haven headmaster (15 kids saw a UFO, remember?) and see what conclusions they come to. Goodnight.

DR FAUSTENSTEIN NO. 3A ~~DECEMBER 1979~~ JANUARY 1980

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