

BRUCE R GILLESPIE

AND CHAOS DIED, Joanna Russ, Ace, 1970, \$.75.

This book's title may puzzle the reader. It comes from a quotation from the Chinese writer Chuang Tzu, and says, among other things, that "every organ of the senses is a menace to its own capacity", and that when the Gods of the Northern and the Southern oceans met in the realm of Chaos, god of the centre, they discovered that Chaos had no senses:

They had noticed that, whereas everyone else had seven apertures, for sight, hearing, eating, breathing, and so on, Chaos had none. So they decided to make the experiment of boring holes in him. Every day they bored a hole, and on the seventh day, Chaos died.

A nicely balanced enigma, you must admit. You cannot praise or blame, or form a judgement, but simply observe the--destruction of destruction. Perhaps the best science fictional analogue for Chaos is Cordwainer Smith's "A Planet Named Shayol". It is the place of formlessness, the area the mind cannot comprehend. If you comprehend it, or if it comprehends anything besides itself, it dies. Yet we usually call it death to fall into "chaos", into unconsciousness or instability.

Therefore, in a quite unusual way, Joanna Russ' introduction set off my mind in a midleading direction. The reader presumes that there is a chaos which undergoes processes which destroy its status as chaos. But from the beginning of the first chapter, the reader learns to set aside this misconception.

At least one form of chaos is easily identified. It is the society of a planet upon which an expedition from Earth lands. The expedition includes Jai Vedh (a "desperate, quiet, cultured and well-spoken man") and the Captain, whose name escapes the author. Their experience of the planet is chaotic from the first page. Disconcertingly, the characters can only speak about their experience in sentences of three words, and can only perform a large number of strenuous, interesting and mystifying actions. They struggle through a net of words and unguessable motives:

They talked upside down. The adults did not move, except for a man sitting on the capsule, who got off it, said something slowly to no one in particular with a singularly impressive earnestness of accent, turned on heel like a ballet dancer, facing Jai Vedh and the Captain, scratched his crotch, and gazed at them with

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perfect composure. No one wore clothes. Bit of looks, glances, shoulders moving, a little sigh.

It's like one of those parties where you walk in and don't know anybody and wouldn't want to know them anyway, but you're stuck with them for the rest of the night. Russ does not say that this society is impossible to comprehend--it just is impossible to comprehend. The Captain calls them "primitives" because he has no other word to describe groups of people he does not understand.

Jai Vedh just gawks.

It's impossible to call him a "character" in the traditional sense, because his emotional reactions in this situation form no recognizable pattern. He does not get too astonished in this situation, but runs around exclaiming "Good God!" later in the novel for even less explicable reasons. While the Captain runs after the naked girls of the planet, Jai is annoyed. "I don't like women," he says, "I never have. I'm a homosexual." But this homosexuality is not an important part of the story's structure or Jai's character. Jai Vedh is an observer, whose observations carry weight when Joanna Russ floods his eyes with her own perceptions.

The reader is not left entirely lost.

The editors of Ace Books have thoughtfully provided him with a guide on the back cover in the form of Fritz Leiber's blurb: "And Chaos Died explores more fully than I have ever seen done what telepathy and clairvoyance would actually feel like." Of course! This lot are telepaths, and the visiting Earthmen are blind men in a society which has an extra sense. Joanna Russ shows the Earthmen's bewilderment well; the stumbling-around, nearly-understanding-what-is-happening, only to find the "conversation" drifting. Even more important, the inhabitants of this planet know how to puzzle their visitors, and tease them most of the time.

This is Chaos, then, for us, but not the chaos which inspired the author. This formlessness is merely that which would accompany the sudden widening of the senses, and not their disappearance. Let's say dubiously that the story is "about" the telepathic and moral education of Jai Vedh, and his experience in this new heaven (the planet of the telepaths) and an old hell (an Earth of 100 years hence). The book is divided into four parts, in which the "story" progressively disappears. The reader feels himself to be on shaky, chaotic ground from the start. In the first part, the reader and characters undergo a wide range of exotic sense impressions. Obviously the telepaths influence both men from the time they land. In the second part, everything is "explained" and Jai Vedh is gradually educated in the telepathic skills. One of the planet's women, Evne, "cures" him of his homosexuality in the simplest possible manner. Everything is very lyrical and heavenly. Part 3 brings Jai back to nasty old Earth, mentally equipped to observe it. This part is a telepathic Cook's Tour of a human garbage dump. In Part 4 I gather that Earth is judged unwholesome by the telepaths and "cleansed".

This crude story summery deepens my doubts about the book. There is still the "Superman paradox" which has ruined a large number of sf books during the last few years. If the telepaths can do almost anything, and see almost anywhere, then why do they bother us for 189 pages of a novel? Where's the drama? And if the author virtually accepts Heinlein's "might is right" thinking, as Russ does here, then what sort of moral conflict in the story could possibly interest us? What these telepaths do is good because they get away with it. If you have Chaos, how can it be the subject of a novel? Why, indeed, should a reader remain as fascinated by this book as I was?

Take one of the most important scenes in the novel. Jai Vedh's telepathic senses are slowly "awakened" by the ground mind of the planet's inhabitants:

He thought: There's going to be a Moon! Not knowing why, he got up and began walking around the lake, then into the woods and up a hill, guiding himself by the auroral glow. The stars were extremely brilliant now, like pearls. The lake looked like their seedbed. No wonder the ancients spent so much time watching the night sky! He had heard of tropical stars. Bending down, picking up a pebble, he held it up to the sky to watch the light on it, then held it down near the grass, watching it roll away downhill until it faded into the ground. He heard it click lightly against something long after he could no longer see it. He could see his own feet clearly. And the shadows of the tree trunks.

Like most of his actions during the novel, Jai's actions appear to be at random. His eyes take in the scene around him. The landscape is precious ("stars...like pearls"), lucid, and reflects the perfection of the skies. The landscape is also seminal ("The lake looked like their seedbed.") and as much part of the cosmos as the sky. The banal, "How wonder the ancients spent so much time watching the night sky!", reminds us of the stillness and expectancy of the scene itself, and the triviality of Jai Vedh's mind beside it.

Jai picks up a pebble, a part of the earth. He bathes it in the light of the sky, holds it down so that it harmonizes symbolically with the life of the grass, then lets it sound its own distinctive "click" and "fade into the ground". This is the world where one can experience unimpeded the surface of natural objects.

But the experience extends beyond this simple harmony. Jai's night surroundings form a huge theatre, which suggests a work of man. His mind widens into the shape of this planet's huge Moon ("something broad and deep, now a globe, now a flat sheet of white, now a globe again") and finally forms a part of the widest possible natural relationship. Juanna Russ sees this relationship formed of both nature and a "natural" society, that of the telepaths:

At the bottom of the amphitheatre there was a gout of flame, which quickly disappeared; then a natural exclamation of some kind, and a giggle, and a few vehement whispers. Somebody backed away from the knot of people at the bottom, nursing his hand. People were walking in from all sides, sitting down, changing positions, traversing the slopes, people shifting seats, people coming in from the woods more every moment, people stepping over people, some lying down. It was a gigantic picnic, a theatre crowd, a May Day parade, a holiday colonial party outing with skins of every shade from moonlit pink to moonlit black and no sound of conversation whatsoever.

The movements of the people in this gathering flow together rhythmically. The line of verbs, "changing", "traversing", "shifting", "coming", "stepping", "lying", are the actions of relaxed, self-accepting human beings. But for Jai, that is all they do. He senses what things look like, and the kind of potential emotions that may exist here. But notice the punchline of the paragraph: there is "no sound

possess a vast wealth of conversation that neither Jai nor the reader can ever understand.

But Jai's senses have been stretched far enough to understand a part of this scene. He does not merely observe it. It looks as if he is presented with its implications as Moses was handed the Ten Commandments. The pattern of images is clear, yet mystical; all precise, yet nothing clear. Jai partakes of the nature of the planet, but it is the nature of its inhabitants, not his own. The reader sees, hears and touches with Jai Vedh, but he does not think with him.

With whom then does he think? What is the intellectual pattern of the book?

It is my suspicion that there is none. This suspicion springs from several sources. I've already explored the uncertainty of the tone. Then there is that worrying title again. In the story Chaos died as it gained its senses. The chaos of the planet is entirely sensual, but it is not dead. Russ has not stuck to her guns; she has not maintained the paradox.

What other Chaos could there be? Perhaps we can find an answer there. The telepathic society becomes the most familiar part of the novel, and the pages which involve us in Jai's telepathic "education" are very beautiful. The reader begins to suspect quickly that the chaotic element in the story is Jai Vedh. As we read further, we find our suspicions confirmed--not only is Jai Vedh chaotic, but the whole of the inhabitants of his planet are also. But there people are ourselves; they are the blind centre of the cosmos.

But then how do we account for the vivid imagery of the book? Whose is it? Where is the camera placed in this holographic film?

The rest of the novel confirms my suspicions that Earth and its inhabitants are seen through the senses of the telepathic world mind, not through those of Jai Vedh. This would account for the unsettling ride we experience with Jai back to Earth. The telepathic mind projects him back onto the spaceship carrying the exploration party back home. The most vivid image is this wreck of 21 century urban society:

Near the luggage container there was a slot in the wall; she inserted her hands into this slot and they came out covered with rings: elaborate things, they did not look lasting to him. She reached in and pulled out many more things: necklaces, bracelets, toe-rings, clips, finger-nail-shields, nose-rings, gilt for her eyes, jewels that stuck to her skin. She took off her smock and put jewels on her nipples. She giggled--"Club members!" Jai stared. She pulled out from the wall (her hands were small and awkward) an elaborate seat like an old bicycle seat surrounded with a jungle of metal pipes. There was a horn in the middle of the seat; she fitted herself on it gingerly and said apologetically in her tiny voice (had something happened to her vocal chords?): "Well, go on. It's spontaneous, isn't it?"

Scholars might like to compare this passage with the lyrical passages I've already referred to, where Evne teaches Jai to "love". Here we see the woman's crude defences against machinery which has nothing to do with life: "bracelets, toe-rings" and "jewels on her nipples" represent a trinket-valued soul. This woman has been reduced to the sense experience of mindless masturbation on a machine. The nature of man fades away.

But the novel gives us no way of understanding this failure of man. The relentless eye travels over the surface of man's sterile world, and excites us with the surface of the world of the new race. But the telepaths do not reveal themselves in their "revelations" (which read more like the most obvious liberal cliches of the popular press) of a world they hate. Jai sees no good in the Earth he revisits, but travels it with a kind of morbid pleasure. And Chaos Died is the nearest to an impressionist novel we may ever see in science fiction, but it is only that. It hides its mind, and so, in a peculiarly disappointing way, neither chaos is punctured, and neither of the two alternatives of man have the apertures of intelligence bored into them. And Chaos Died is a triumph of good writing, but it is never a work of humanity or vital art. Unfortunately, Chaos remains alive and well.

Bruce Gillespie
July, 1970

Through Time and Space with Ferdinand Feghoot

Ferdinand Feghoot was once touring the Imperial Museum of Inventors and Inventions on Trantor. Pausing before the Old Earth room, he stopped to examine the section devoted to George Westinghouse, explaining to all that he had always been particularly interested in the inventor of the air brake and founder of the great Westinghouse family.

"Not many people know it," Feghoot said, "but Westinghouse was actually not the first man to experiment with the use of air power to assist humanity. The Great Patriot Thomas Jefferson was himself a noted inventor, and is credited with many early American patents. In fact, he was well known throughout the American colonies for some of experiments in using air power to shave and smooth wood boards."

"Unfortunately," said Feghoot, "he never did receive a patent for that early invention of his, the Jefferson Air-Plane."

Sensies

- Buck Coulson: a purple sea urchin. Judy-Lyn Del Rey: a nectarine.
Juanita Coulson: a baroque pearl.
John Douglas: an Eskimo soapstone sculpture.
Alex Eisenstein: the base of a contemporary mercury-silvered table lamp.
Phyllis Eisenstein: maidenhair fern.
Marsha Elkin: Spanish moss.
David Emerson: a found-object sculptural collage, painted matte black and prominently featuring bedsprings.
Philip Jose Farmer: a narwhal's tooth. Sue Glicksohn: a chive bloom.
Bob Hillis: violet ashes. Arnie Katz: a pattypan squash.
Eddie Jones: a brightly polished McIntosh apple.
Tim Kirk: a large, deep green cabochon emerald.
R.A. Lafferty: a milkweed pod, dried for decorative use.
Jerry Lapidus: a bayberry hedge.
P. Schuyler Miller: a sparkling stalagmite.
Ted Pauls: rustic cedar siding.
Andy Porter: a disk of ripply dark blue handmade glass.
John Schoenherr: a flourishing Eastern hardwood forest.
Bob Shaw: a bundle of cinnamon sticks.
Jon Singer: a striped zucchini. Larry Smith: a steel currycomb.
Cele Smith: peach-flavored cotton candy.
Jon Stopa: upright rectangular black splinters of wood.
Joni Stopa: a cherry strudel.
Bob Toomey: soft brown feathers lying on fresh spring grass.

LISA

The Great 24 Hour "Thing", Andrew J. Offutt, Bee Line Books, 1971, \$1.95.

I found myself thinking throughout this book that it must have been incredibly easy to write--and I'm sure Andy had some very undemanding fun with it. A good-humored sex book. I found it neither stimulating nor offensive. "erotic" fan-fic, anyone?

New Worlds Quarterly #1, Michael Moorcock (ed.), Berkeley, 1971, \$.95.

This makes me very happy (of course--another market). I was never familiar with New Worlds as a real magazine; as a book, it has some fine stories and interior illos (more books should I think). Lots of very good writing--I was particularly impressed by Disch's "Angouleme", the two very funny John Gladek pieces, and Keith Roberts' "The God House" which is rich, strange, powerful, and beautiful. Get this--I don't think there is a bad story here.

Gather in the Hall of the Planets/ In the Pocket, K.M. O'Donnell. Ace Doube, 1971. \$.75.

The first is a novel set during the 1974 Worldcon; very similar to Malzberg's previous Dwellers of the Deep, but for some reason I enjoyed this one, but not DotD. Probably just my state of mind. Moderately entertaining. The other side of the double is a collection of short stories, some of which are extremely good. The best are only marginally sf--but I don't know what else you would call them--well-written strange little mood pieces perhaps. He writes well, often with great beauty. He seems to favor the present tense, which works sometimes (but I don't know why he chose to write the novel that way).

Splinters, Alex Hamilton (ed.), Berkeley, 1968, \$.95.

Not exactly a "chilling new anthology of modern horror stories" as it says on the cover, but a very strange collection nonetheless. Some of the stories are witty, others induce a sort of murky feeling--not exactly horror. All British writers, and the stories appear to have been requested from the individual writers and then bought regardless of how the story turned out. Generally good, but only one seemed to me successful as a horror story: Richard Nettell's very good "The Way the Ladies Walk".

Sex and the High Command, John Boyd, Bantam, 1971, \$.95.

It's supposed to be funny, but it's not. Essentially silly, written in a bland style embellished often by an irritating coyness. The women win in the end, and I suppose that is something.

Sensies

Karen Townley: a handful of tiny silver beads.

Rosemary Ullyot: a Schillerlocke--a spiral horn of puff pastry

filled with whipped cream. Jim Young: an ovoid of clear amber.

JWL

Partners in Wonder, Harlan Ellison et al., Walker, 1971, \$8.95.

In many ways, a fascinating, marvelous book; in one distinct way, a very annoying one. You all know what it is--Walker's publicity campaign has been extensive; the book contains Harlan's collaborations with 13 other sf authors and one artist. Each includes a patented Harlan-type introduction, discussing the nature of the collaboration and how it came about. For someone with an interest in the writing process, it's a fascinating book, a virtual text on the subject. You watch Harlan, a man with a well-known and very distinct style, work with, around, and within a host of entirely different styles. There are some excellent stories--notably the Sturgeon and Shekley collaborations, a few failures--and despite what Bill says, "The Kong Papers, Rotsler illos with Ellison captions, is hilarious. But. Someone at Walker--I'm sure it wasn't Harlan--got ahold of this book, and decided to Make Money on it. I'm the last personal to criticize expensive graphics, but there is so much wasted space in this book it's pathetic. It could easily be a third shorter without cutting the effect or impact of the graphics and layout a single bit. The \$8.95 price tag is thus ridiculous, and totally unnecessary. This is a most interesting book--and I only hope Harlan gets some of that extra money the empty space costs you.

The Sensuous Dirty Old Man, "Dr. A.", Walker, 1971, \$3.95.

Even though this one is even more padded, I don't mind it as much. In case you don't know, this is Dr. Asimov's parody of the whole "sensuous" book game. Written in the style of his famous story introductions, it makes delightful reading (particularly if you've had the misfortune to read any of the books being satirized). The padding is ridiculous, with full-page photos and even more white space than Partners, but in this case it's so obvious that Walker and the Good Doctor are only in it for the money....it's okay.

Science Fiction: What's It All About?, Sam Lundwall, Ace, 1971, \$.95.

Before I ever knew fandom existed, I read every book I ever came across on science fiction, and I would probably have loved to find it then. I devoured everything on the subject back then, even wrote my AP English thesis on it. However, between then and now I discovered fandom and also Advent Books. For a fan, this book is worthless; for a non-fan, actually harmful. Although Lundwall himself is a writer and Swedish fan, the overall attitude here is very condescending, both toward sf and toward fandom. Factual errors abound, obvious even to my untrained eye, even in such basic things as the name of J. R. R. Tolkien's book (Lundwall repeatedly calls it--the "trilogy"--The Fellowship of the Ring); a great many of the opinions expressed seem ridiculous. I haven't had a chance to read Don Wollheim's own The Universe Makers, on essentially the same topic; but from the reviews I've read, how I wish Don had brought his book out in an edition everyone could afford, instead of this! (Incidentally, I recommend you to the last issue of John J. Pierce's Renaissance for a good analysis of some of the flaws in this book, if you're interested in corroborating testimony.)

Nebula Award Stories Six, Clifford D. Simak (ed.), Doubleday, 1971.

\$ 5.95

This is perhaps the least of the Nebula anthologies, competing for that title only with the 1968 collection. The fault lies not at all with Mr. Simak--whose influence seems to have helped, if anything--but rather simply to the SFWA as a whole. The award-volume is based upon the awards, naturally, and this year's collection is perhaps the worst yet. The two short fiction winners present (there was no short story award) are simply not outstanding stories; "Slow Sculpture" is minor Sturgeon indeed, and "Ill Met In Lankhmar" is not particularly distinguished from a host of other Leiber Fafhrd/Mouser stories. Simak has included two other novelet nominees, "Continued on Next Rock" (2nd) and "The Second Inquisition" (4th) by Lafferty and Russ respectively, and three out of the four short fiction "runners-up"--"Island of Dr. Death" by Gene Wolfe (2), "In the Queue" by Keith Laumer (4) and "By the Falls" by Harry Harrison (5); third was another Lafferty. I thank Simak for including a spirited and opinionated essay on the field by Thom Clareson. Not a bad story, but no award-merit stories, with the possible exception of Lafferty's.

The Lathe of Heaven, Ursula K. LeGuin, Scribers--Book Club, 1971.

Also serialized in Amazing this year, an indication of the heights Ted has brought to that once-moribund magazine. This is Miss LeGuin's first published novel since The Left Hand of Darkness and if anything should confirm her reputation in the field. Again, an excellent basic idea--a man whose dreams can affect the "real" world; the idea is well-handled, mixing the question of the nature of reality (Which is "real"--the reality the dreamer remembers, or that which now exists?) with the plot device of a psychiatrist who manipulates the dreams for human betterment. It does become a little repetitious at moments, as the protagonist continues to dream change the world, dream, change the world, etc. In a thin year, a possible award novel.

"The Queen of Air and Darkness", Poul Anderson, F&SF, April 1971.

This lead story in the special Anderson issue of F&SF is well-chosen, and is quite probably the best short fiction I've read all year. I read it on Sandra Miesel's recommendation, was not in the least disappointed. Written in his poetic/fantasy vein which I've always preferred, the idea is not new--investigation and discovery of an intelligent native race on a human-colonized planet--but the handling is entirely original. I'm not normally particularly fond of Mr. Anderson's work--and this is my current Hugo nominee as novella.

Clarion, Robin Scott Wilson (ed.), Signet, 1971, \$.95.

I found this a fascinating and surprisingly holding anthology, and I've been amazed to read several quite negative reviews recently (in Starling, in particular). This is a collection of stories and fragments from students at the Clarion SF Writers' Workshops, along with essays by some of the professional writers-in-residence. The volume includes 21 pieces of fiction, and 8 essays; most of the stories are first sales, although some of the writers have gone on to considerably more success (Ed Bryant, George Effinger, Gerry Conway in particular). Many, if not most of the stories are not completely successful, and the majority are probably overall failures as stories. But there is a freshness, an intensity, and a concern in almost all the fiction that makes them interesting and worthwhile, despite technical lapses. The combination of these, with an excellent group of professional essay material, makes for me an enjoyable volume.

Driftglass, Samuel R. Delany, Doubleday, 1971, Book Club.

Beneath an incredibly poor packaging job lies one of the best and most important single-author collections this year. The cover is terrible; the picture on the back looks nothing like the author; the author's name is even misspelled several times, including on the title page. This is, however, a collection of virtually all of Delany's short fiction, and as such is magnificent. His award-winners and nominees are all here: "The Star Pit", "Aye, and Gommorah", "We, In Some Strange Power's Employ, Move on a Rigorous Line" (more awkward, but much more meaningful than the F&SF title, "Lines of Power"), and "Time Considered..." as well as six other stories, several of which probably should have been award-contenders. I admit prejudice--I find Chip one of the most exciting writing men in the sf field today. This collections will give you a good idea why.

Nebula Award Stories 5, James Blish (ed.), Pocket Books, 1970, \$.95.

This is a far better volume than the most recent sixth edition, thanks both to the editor and to the SFWA in general--the awards are better this time, and the editor has gone a little out of the way to make the volume something special. Nebula winners for 1969 were, in my opinion, the best overall list in the award's history: Left Hand of Darkness, "A Boy and His Dog", "Time Considered...", and "Passengers." An excellent novel, and two fine and one good stories. The volume contains all three, plus three runners-up: "Nine Lives" by LeGuin, "Not Long Before the End" by Niven, and "The Man Who Learned Loving" by Sturgeon. Personally, I would probably have included only the LeGuin of these three, and substituted "Ship of Shadows" (Leiber), "The Big Flash" (Spinrad), or "Shattered Like a Glass Goblin" (Ellison), but editor Blish made his own choice. However he also went beyond his duty as editor, and obtained critical discussions of the field from both Darko Suvin and Alexei Panshin, and along with his own descriptive introduction, these join the fiction to provide a fine overall discussion of the field. Recommended even if you have all the fiction, for these alone.

Peregrine: Primus, Avram Davidson, Walker, 1971, \$5.95.

This has to be at least the third series-beginning novel Davidson has produced in the last few years (without, I might add, yet producing a second volume of any of them), and it very easily could be the most enjoyable of the three. Certainly a fantasy, possibly an alternate world story, Peregrine: Primus is essentially the adventures of one Peregrine, bastard son of the last Pagan king of his time, as he seeks his fortune in a very Davidsonian version of Medieval Europe. He is accompanied by all manner of strange friends and associates (notably Appledore, his tutor and a part-time sorcerer), and both his adventures and the way Davidson presents them are all but indescribable. The language is rich but generally humorous and enjoyable; the novel manages to poke fun at a number of standard fantasy ideas and more than one standard work (there's a beautiful little dig at LotR buried somewhere), and altogether makes a very refreshing change from some of the fascinating but oh-so-dusty novels Lin Carter keeps digging up for the Ballentine Adult Fantasy series. I don't know if it's really worth the hardcover price, but by all means snatch up the pb when it comes out. At any rate, this novel would seem to cement Davidson as the foremost current fantasy writer, coming on the relative heels of Island Under the Earth and especially The Phoenix and the Mirror. I just wish he get around to the second volume one of these days.

Son of Man, Robert Silverberg, Ballantine, 1971, \$1.25.

A strange novel. Intellectually, I find it a fascinating study of the possible future evolution of the human race. But emotionally, the novel was almost totally lacking; except for a few short sections near the end, it isn't in the slightest holding, and the emotional impact that Bob seems to want at the end is totally absent. There's little plot as such--a man of today is transported via "time Flux" to the far distant future, where he tours the planet, visiting and actually becoming various beings in man's stages of evolution after his own period. But all this is only there--it didn't attract or interest me at all. More of an outline for a completed work than a final product.

Demijohn, Thom, Black Alice, Avon, 1968, \$.75.

As you probably know "Thom Demijohn" is a collaboration between Tom Disch and John Sladek, and for once, a cover blurb is appropriate--Black Alice is indeed an "evil fairy tale." The cover is also correct in calling it "A thoroughly adult mixture of sheer horror, appalling villainy, and macabre humor." With covert and overt parallels to Lewis Carroll, an upper class girl named Alice is kidnapped, and "hidden" by being disguised as a black girl. A biting, memorable little novel.

To Your Scattered Bodies Go, Philip Jose Farmer, Berkeley, 1971, \$.75.

A must-get volume. To my knowledge, this is the first book publication of Farmer's Riverworld series; although most has seen print before in scattered magazines, it's still most welcome. If I recall correctly, the original novel, written in the very early 50's, ran something like 200,000 words; this 200 page novel is the first section to that larger work, an introduction to the Riverworld and the first narrative of an individual. The Riverworld itself is a magnificent creation--a huge, artifically molded planet, on which every human being who ever lived is resurrected and seemingly immortal. This particular novel follows Sir Richard Burton from his awakening to his inconclusive meeting with the Ethicals, the beings responsible for all this. It may be 20 years old, but you'd never know it; the overall package is fine too, with a most appropriate Powers cover. Portions were published as "Day of the Great Shout" and "The Suicide Express" in Worlds of Tomorrow; if you can't wait for the next promised volume, later portions are in If, July-September 1967 and June-August 1971.

A Maze of Death, Phillip Dick, Paperback Library, 1970, \$.75.

Dick seems to go through periods in his writing when he plays around with a single theme, varying it a bit from novel to novel. He's had periods of looking at near-future societies, a period of examining drugs in his stories, and most recent he seems to be into a "The world as we experience it is only a facade" sort of thing, present here and in his previous novel, Ubik. I'd rate that previous work a bit more interesting than this, though, largely because of a much more interesting "imaginary" world as the basis for the surface plot. The surface of Maze is primarily a mystery--who is killing off an isolated colony? An original, logically-oriented religion makes things a little more interesting until All is Revealed. I'm still firmly convinced that Dick is one of most under-rated writers working in this field, but this, for him, is only a standard novel.

Five Fates, Keith Laumer (ed.), Paperback Library, 1970, \$.95.

This received a great deal of publicity too; it's a variation on the

idea of the original theme anthology. In this case, Laumer wrote the beginning of a story, and then he and four other award-winning writers each completed the story--Paul Anderson, Frank Herbert, Gordon Dickson, and Harlan Ellison. I wasn't entirely satisfied with any of these stories, and I think the only really memorable of the bunch is Harlan's Hugo-nominated "The Region Between." The rest are highly competent, and better than average, as is to be expected from the authors, but I don't think any of them will be remembered. All stories appeared in the prozines in 1970, but it's worth it to have them collected here.

The Forest of Forever, Thomas Burnett Swann, Ace, 1971, \$.60.

After Damell gave a poor review to Swann's Goat Without Horns last time, I'm very happy to be able to praise this book highly. It's a prequel to Day of the Minotaur, Swann's best-known novel (it even inspired me to reread that novel), and is probably even better than its sequel. Swann's work is unlike anyone else's I've come across; he blends character of classic mythology with those of recorded history, producing stories thoroughly charming in the best sense of that word. An excellent Barr cover and interior illos help the overall effect--cheers to Don or Tarry or whoever's responsible for it.

Space for Hire, William F. Nolan, Lancer, 1971, \$.75.

Nolan collaborated with George Clayton Johnson on Logan's Run; this book, plus a one-hour mad conversation with George in Boston, leads me to suspect that Johnson was responsible for the wild ideas in that very successful novel, and Nolan for the cliché plotting. Space for Hire is an enjoyable, if rather obvious, space opera satire on Dashiell Hammett's Sam Space. Frankly, I would probably have enjoyed the novel a good deal more if I hadn't just finished listening to "Nick Danger, Third Eye", Firesign Theatre's brilliant parody of the same thing, about a dozen times (on their second album, incidentally).

Stardreamer, Cordwainer Smith, Beagle, 1971, \$.95.

Don Benson moves from publisher to publisher, and it seems that with each one, he's managed to capture a few more of "Cordwainer Smith's" all-too-few stories. This contains most of his previously uncollected stories, notably "Think Blue, Count Two" and "Under Old Earth." Smith is a very idiosyncratic writer--you may not like his work, but if you do you'll probably like it very much. At a dollar for 185 pages this is a little high, but if you do like him.....

Star Light, Hal Clement, Ballentine, 1971, \$.95.

A much meatier book for your dollar, nearly 300 pages, but the Smith is far the better buy. I thoroughly enjoyed Clement's Mission of Gravity several times, and Needle has always been one of my favorite sf novels. But this sequel to Mission simply isn't anywhere near the first novel; it's neither as interesting nor as well-written, and I had a great deal of trouble finishing it. A shame.

Universe Day, K.M. O'Donnell. Avon, 1971. \$.75.

There's one story in Universe 1 only Terry Carr and I liked--Bary Malzberg's "Notes For a Novel About the First Ship Ever to Venus." The story was just what the title implied, but it struck a responsive chord with Terry, and with me too. Universe Day is a collection of similar bits of descriptive and narrative pieces, many published before. It doesn't all work, but I find the overall book quite compelling.

The Wrong End of Time. John Brunner, Doubleday, 1971, \$4.95.

This was also first published in one of Ted White's excellent fanzines. John Brunner, now, is a very clever man. He indicated, in a letter published last issue, that despite his recent successes, he's still forced to write rushed work, in order to make enough to stay afloat. But he remains John Brunner--and John Brunner is both a fine writer and a clever man. So while by all appearances this is one of those rushed novels--a slight variation on the Evil Aliens Out There Coming to Kill Us plot--there's more to it. The whole "plot" seems little more than an excuse to get people to read the novel, while John gives us another of his excellent near-future extrapolations--a U.S. under a total isolationist policy, surrounded by a system of missiles, satellites, etc., withdrawn from the world and degenerating. That plot runs its course well enough, though with a rather unsatisfying ending, but the society itself is as interesting as any presented recently, and makes the novel worthwhile.

The World Menders, Lloyd Biggle, Jr., Analog February--April 1971.

A novel that very nearly lives up to its advance publicity in the magazine ("Don't miss Kilgore Trout's latest and greatest novel beginning next month, War of the Giant Fleas!"). This may not quite be the classic John predicted, but it is one of the best straight hard-sf novels I've read in several years, and nearly the perfect Analog novel. (Far better, incidentally, than Star Light, nominated for a Hugo last year.) As seems to be the case this column, again it's the handling of an old idea that makes for success here. The old Colonial Survey sort of idea, Human scientists assigned to bring a primitive society up to high enough standards to join our good old Federation. But Biggle presents a fascinating society and social structure, and does a very fine job in presenting his tale; I find some annoying logical flaws--several factors which seem to "suddenly hit" our expert protagonist occurred to me much earlier--but perhaps I speak from hindsight. The first thing I've read in Analog and really liked in a long, long time.

Anita, Keith Roberts, Ace, 1970, \$.75.

Anita is the first thing I've read by Roberts since Pavane, and ironically, it seems to be same sort of Animal--a "novel" made up of a series of shorter works. But where Pavane was a work of major proportions, this is an enjoyable but annoyingly minor piece. The problem is that Roberts couldn't seem to make up his mind about it; there are hints that he wanted to try to say a little more than he does, but he usually doesn't go through with it. The story, by the by, is that of the education and maturation of a young, definitely female, modern-day witch. One thing particularly bothers me--the insistence of writing much of the dialog in dialect through the whole work. I can't take this in Shaw, and Roberts doesn't handle the technique any better. Still, an enjoyable little collection.

8 Stories From The Rest of the Robots, Isaac Asimov, Pyramid, 1964, \$.75.

Asimov's collected Robotic short stories, except for those included in the I, Robot collection; this batch includes a few remaining Susan Calvin stories, a few earlier ones, and a couple of miscellaneous unclassified robotic stories. The hardcover volume included these plus the two robot novels, The Caves of Steel and The Naked Sun. Very simple, if you don't have that, you should have this. My personal favorite is one of the early ones, "Victory Unintentional."

A Specter is Haunting Texas, Fritz Leiber, Bantam, 1967, \$.75.

This first paperback edition unfortunately lacks the superb Jack Gaughan illustrations that adorned both the magazine and the cover of the Walker hardcover version, but other than that it seems all here. I must confess that I can't review this fairly--the main character is an actor, and I'm naturally prejudiced (as I am with Heinlein's Double Star). But I completely enjoyed this satiric attack on the whole Texas (sorry, Lisa) syndrome; Leiber is a bit heavy-handed at times, and too many of his characters are either caricatures or unmotivated, but in a light novel like this, it isn't a serious problem. This is by no means a Major Novel, but I found it a lot of fun.

The Goat Without Horns, Thomas Burnett Swann, Ballentine, 1970, \$.95.

Darrell reviewed this last time; I felt him a bit too harsh, although basically right, but wanted to add a few comments to this paperback edition. Alas, it doesn't seem notably better than the original magazine publication; it does add to Swann's continuing investigation via fiction of the relationship between man and animal through the intelligent dolphin narrator, but all the flaws of the magazine seem still present. It's been pointed out that the novel is at least a partial parody of the gothic novel, but I'm afraid I'm not familiar enough with the genre to say. Interesting that Ace has published all the rest of Swann's work over here.

Magic, Inc., Robert Heinlein, Pyramid, 1950. \$.40 (with Waldo).

I pulled this out the other day, and discovered that I'd almost completely forgotten one of Heinlein's few full-fledged fantasies. His tale of a modern society based on magic rather than science was one of the first of its kind, and it's still very enjoyable even now. There are a number of very nice little touches of humor, considerably more than in most of his later work. The best moment comes when Our Hero is examining the Minions of Satan, and is suddenly aided in his efforts by a renegade demon who turns out to be an FBI agent--"I was trapped," he says, "I had just about resigned myself to an eternity as a fake demon." Beautiful!

Doctor to the Stars, Murray Leinster, Pyramid, 1964, \$.75.

A new price, an abominable new cover, and the same mediocre old title adorn a reprint of three of Leinster's Med Ship stories. Although the three here happened to appear in Galaxy, the Campbell influence is obvious; each concerns the adventures of Calhoun and his pet/companion Murgatroyd, ace medicos for the Interstellar Medical Service. All forgettable, but moderately enjoyable, though a bit high-priced.

Venus Plus X, Theodore Sturgeon, Pyramid, 1960, \$.75.

A very welcome reissue of a minor classic, one of Sturgeon's rare novels and one of his best. An examination of the sexual nature of man through science fiction, using some of the same ideas later made much more famous in Ursula LeGuin's Left Hand of Darkness. Get it.

The Submarine Mystery, The Motion Menace, The Green Death, Kenneth Robeson, Bantam, 1938, \$.75.

I refuse to subject myself or any of the rest of the group to another Doc Savage novel; these are 63, 64, and 65; I mention this mainly to tell you that George Pal had bought rights to film all 100+ of 'em!

Huques, again.....

As I said in the finale of the regular section of the magazine, the next issue will most likely lie dormant till I return from Amsterdam; since the Hugo nomination ballots will come out during that period, I'm going to take this fortunate spare page and start my annual recitation of suggestions and personal favorites.

Best Novel. Nothing really stands out, although many possibilities are around. My own favorites are Silverbob's A Time of Changes and Suzette Hayden Elgin's Furthest. Also possible contenders, all should be read: Bob's Son of Man and The World Inside, Lloyd Biggle's The World Menders, Farmer's To Your Scattered Bodies Go, LeGuin's The Lathe of Heaven, and Swann's The Forest of Forever.

Novella and short story. Only Anderson's "Queen of Air and Darkness" has impressed me in longer stories. Short possibilities--Effinger's "All the Last Wars at Once" and Harlan's "Corpse" from F&SF.

Prozine. Amazing, definitely, with the best novels, the best features, a very high rate of good short fiction, and some interesting new artists and artwork. F&SF, with the best short fiction, second.

Pro Artist. Kelly Freas almost by default, the Dillons being gone and Gaughan have a poor year. In all honesty, Freas has had a fine year. Jeff Jones certainly deserves nomination for his pb covers and work in Ted White's fanzines; I'd love to see Karel Thole get a nomination after seeing his magnificent display in Boston, but he hasn't had much work published over here.

Drama. The best selection this year since St. Louis finds eligible nominees in at least three different areas. Right now, my first pick is "LA 2017" from The Name of the Game (the Uylie episode); sight unseen, I would also recommend Stanley Kubrick's production of A Clockwork Orange, opening this week. In addition, both the latest Firesign Theatre album, I Think We're All Bozos on This Bus, and the film THX 1138 deserve nomination and consideration.

Fanzine. Nothing clearly dominated the field this year, but a number of individual entires all merit recognition. Energumen and Outworlds, on the ballot last year, have if anything improved and should be there again. SF Commentary and Focal Point, top current representatives of the two fannish extremes, almost unquestionably merit nomination. And on the basis of a large amount of good material and exception recent issues, I'd also like to see Granfalloon, Algol, and perhaps Scythrop have a chance at it. Give me the first four and any one of these, and I'll be very, very happy.

Fan Writer. As usual these days, very difficult. Terry Carr should have won last year, and is still probably my favorite. Nominations should probably go to Bruce Gillespie, Sandra Miesel, Arnie Katz, probably Greg Shaw, possibly Bob Vardmena.

Fan Artist. Here, as usual today, the nominees abound. I think Grant Canfield has been the premiere artist over the past year, and is probably my first choice. Both Jay Kinnery and Steve Stiles have done magnificent fannish work, and should be nominated for it. And then choose from the regular big five, all of whom have continued to produce fine work--Gilbert, Fabian, Rotsler, Kirk, and Austin.

And I'd like to see special awards go to Terry Carr, for the Ace Specials, and Lin Carter, for the Ballentine Adult Fantasy series--both among the most influential developments in recent years.