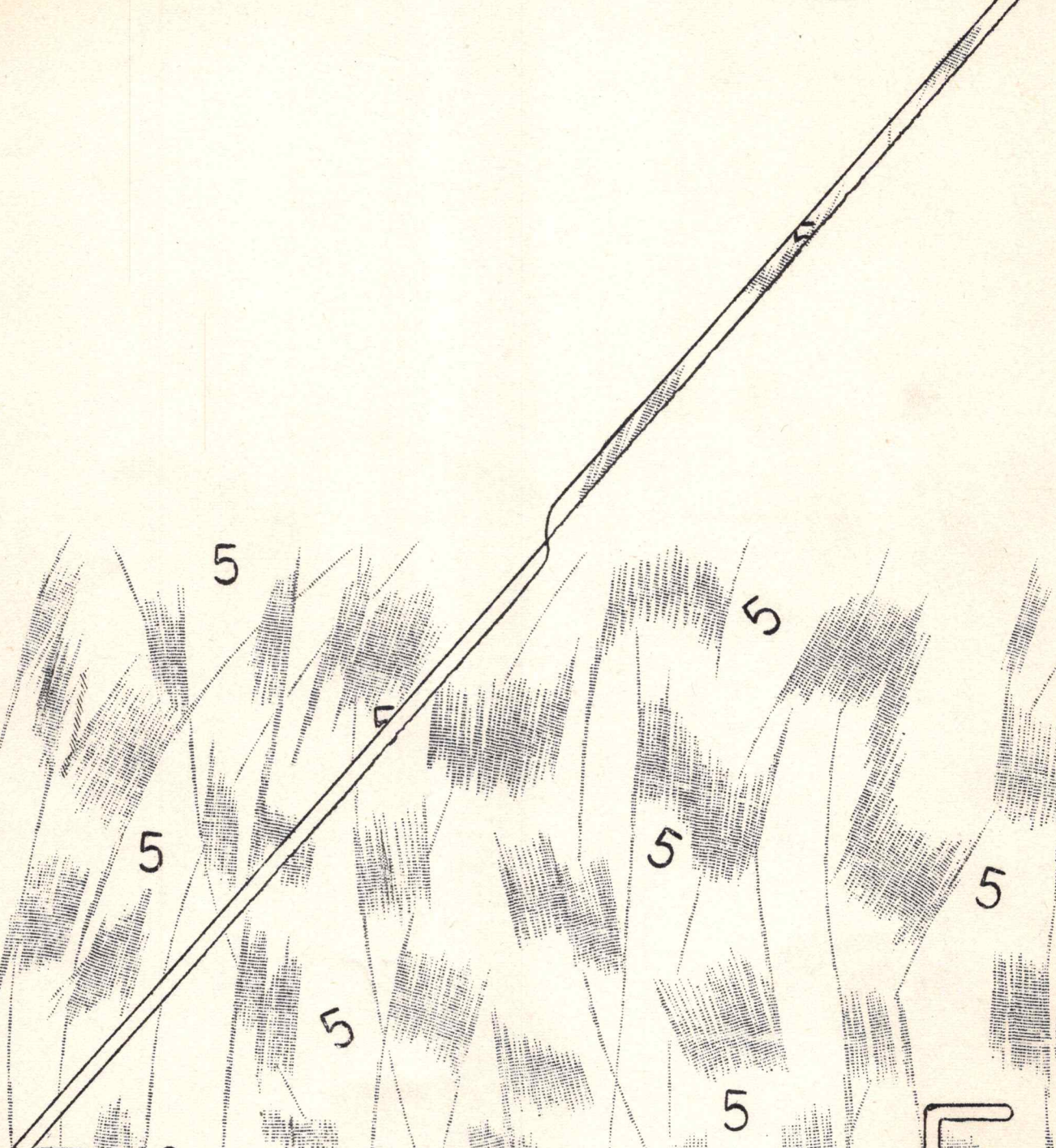


I P S O



F A C T O 5

IPSO FACTO

FIFTH MAILING

April 1962

Set Subject: Sex and Science Fiction.

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ASSEMBLY LINE.

George Locke.

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DEADLINE FOR SIXTH MAILING: 14th July 1962.

Contributions and comments to:

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IPSO FACTO was compiled for the fifth mailing of

THE INTERNATIONAL PUBLISHERS SPECULATIVE ORGANISATION.

by Ted Forsyth
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*

IPSO JURE

Constitution for the International Publisher's Speculative Organisation

1. **MEMBERSHIP.** Limited to thirty members. When the roster is complete, a waiting list shall be formed. When a vacancy occurs, the member at the head of the list will be invited to submit credentials to the Official Assembler.
Credentials for joining IPSO: Three items, other than letters or artwork, published in three different fanzines; or, a story or other work published professionally.
2. **DUES.** Seven and six (7/6) or one dollar (\$1) per year, payable on invitation to join and on receipt of every fourth mailing subsequently.
3. **ACTIVITY REQUIREMENTS.** A minimum of four pages and a maximum of ten to be contributed to each mailing. Allowed to miss one mailing in four.
4. **MAILINGS.** Material to reach the Official Assembler on the second Saturday of April, July, October and January of each year. A copy of the bound mailing to be posted to each member on the fourth Saturday of April, July, October and January. The Copyright Receipt Office also receives a mailing.
5. **SUBMISSION OF MATERIAL.** 40 copies of each $8\frac{1}{2}$ x 11 page to be sent to the Official Assembler, to arrive on or before the deadline. If the material is likely to arrive close to the deadline, overseas members should inform the OA by air-mail that the material has been sent. It's safest to allow four weeks for transatlantic crossing (printed matter). Do NOT assemble or staple the individual sheets.
6. **NATURE OF MATERIAL.** In each mailing a subject will be given which, it is hoped, the members will discuss in essay form in the following mailing. It will not be mandatory to follow the set subject, though, and there is no restriction on the type of material, so long as there is nothing to which the Post Office will take exception. However, 'mailing comments' consisting largely of the "I read your material, liked/disliked it, but can't think of owt to say"-type will be frowned upon.
7. **FORMAT.** Standardised as follows:
 - a) Inside edge - 1" margin, to allow for binding.
 - b) Outside edge - $\frac{1}{2}$ " margin.
 - c) Upper and lower edges - $\frac{1}{2}$ " to $\frac{3}{4}$ " margins.
 - d) Headings - no restrictions. However, do NOT regard your contributions as fanzines to be stapled up, but rather as contributions to a large combo-zine.
 - e) In addition to headings on articles, etc, every page should be headed, in type-script and between two lines, as follows:

SURNAME (of contributor): TITLE : MEMBERSHIP & WHOLE PAGE
NUMBERS.

e.g.

LOCKE IPSO JURE 18 - 1,2,3,4, etc.

To make finding material as easy as possible, each member's contribution will be bound in order of his membership number.

- f) Both sides of the paper to be filled, leaving no blank pages.
- g) Reproduction in black only, with the exception of illustrations and headings, by any legible means of reproduction except Hekto or Ditto.

8. OFFICERS.

Shall consist of:

- a) an OFFICIAL ASSEMBLER. He will assemble the quarterly combazine; post it to each member; keep records of membership, waiting list, and subscribers; and send an additional mailing to the British Museum; and sell any spares to subscribers and waiting listers. Spare mailings will be 7/- or \$1 each, or £1 or \$3 for four consecutive mailings. No buckshee copies - i.e. trades, review copies, etc. Letters of comment on the extra copies will be published, at the OA's discretion, in the mailing following. The OA will have the right to reject any material unsuitable for subjecting the sensitive Postal Authorities to.
- b) SUGGESTION COMMITTEE. Consists of three members in frequent communication, at least one of whom shall live outside America or Canada. Their duties will consist of setting the "symposium" subject for each mailing during their term of office.

Applications for officers, who should be sound body (Para-medical standard at least) and not prone to nervous breakdowns, should reach the OA by the deadline date for the October mailing, in which a voting form will be distributed. Votes to the OA should be received by the deadline for the January mailing - results published therein. Officers will commence picking up the shreds of the previous year's chaos in the April mailing.

9. TITLE. The title of the combo-volume will be IPSO FACTO. It will be bound by any reasonably permanent and secure method available to the OA.

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ROSTER

<u>No.</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>
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* publication required in mailing 6 for retention of membership

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TREASURY

INCOME

B/FWD 9-11- 0½
 Subs
 odd mailings 1-15-0
 mailings 5-8 4- 2-0
 5-17- 0
 Dues 6-12- 6

EXPENDITURE

EXPENSES
 General postage 6-9
 4 stencils @ 9½d 3-2
 Postage mailing 4 2-0-0
 2- 9-11
 Balance C/FWD 19-10- 7½

22-0 - 6½

22-0- 6½

ASSEMBLY— — — — —LINE

This looks like being IPSO's uncertain year. Apart from surviving the eagle eyes of the postal authorities - who are likely to look at this mailing with particular eagerness - it will have to survive two other dangers. The first is that I have returned to England, to civilian life, and to the fannish fold. As a result, the apa will pass from the neat and tidy mind and hands of Ted Forsyth to the inspired casualness and mediocre organisation of George Locke. It is sure to suffer - I gave up attempting to be tidy years ago. I hope that two years in the army will have got me in the habit of tidyness, so that when I come to assemble the IPSO mailing, the numerous sheets will be laid out neatly on a clean, empty table, rather than dumped in more or less random order wherever there happens to be a space.

The second danger was, I suppose, inevitable. This mailing marks the first of IPSO's second year, and as a result, quite a number of people have dropped out. Consequently, there are about ten vacancies at the moment - and the need is obvious: we need more members. As far as I gather, there has been relatively little publicity in general fanzine. This was deliberate at first, for reasons mentioned in the preliminary flyers. But now - ~~now~~ that it's survived its first year - I think we could do with a little judicious advertising. Any suggestions? The progress report booklets for the Worldcon spring to mind, as do the newszines FANAC, SKYRACK, and AXE. Possibly CRY etc...

Financially, we are in clover. Bruce Polz in this mailing suggests that we use the accumulated cash for sending the mailings to the USA members - and John Baxter - by airmail. I don't think we have enough cash to do that for more than maybe one mailing out of the four. However, several people have asked for early information on the next subject - and this we can certainly do something about. By the time you get this mailing, you will have got a mimeo'd airletter with the subject and other points on it. This will mean that overseas members have almost the whole three months in which to dream up their contributions. This, unfortunately, still means that mailing comments and other come-backs, to appear in the combo-zine, still have the mere three weeks for preparation, stencil-cutting, running off and posting - by sea-mail, usually. As a result, we're trying an experiment, which I'll detail later on.

The airletter didn't turn out too well - due to typical Locke stupidity, it never occurred to him that he could have run off the material on a sheet of duplicating paper, and sent it airmail by printed paper rate for the same price. This is what we'll do next time - and we'll also have more space to play with if we need it. We mailed out 16 of these letters - the cost came to 8/-, or a bit more than a dollar.

Last mailing, in SUB-ASSEMBLY, it was suggested that a special section for letter columns and mailing comments be instituted. As you will have seen from the airletter, we have decided to continue the experiment. Reactions have been mixed - so Ted and Bill Donoho have informed me, mostly people being vehemently for or against the idea - as they possibly understood it - of banning mailing comments.

The fact is - we are not proposing to do away with any sort of comeback, in whatever form you prefer. What we are trying to do is - and I hope it's not impossible - to produce something which is neither a pure magazine nor a pure apa. Something lying between the two - but it's difficult to define where. Basically, we think that a better sense of organisation will be given to the magazine - and I guess it is a magazine if it is bound together - if the 'original material' is kept together. By original material, I don't want to specify merely the stuff pertaining

George Locke

to the set subjects, but any of the original material the contributor wishes to send in. It might easily have nothing to do with any of the

subjects, as for instance, Dick Schultz's stuff or the lost part of my own slight effort. We still want to have a certain amount of variety - a piece of humour in an otherwise serious discussion, and so on. But we'd like to see material referring specifically to previous mailings all together in a single section. Coupling this with the thought mentioned a few paragraphs back - the one about a member only having a fairly limited time to prepare comment-type material on account of his mailing arriving very close to the deadline - we think that the following scheme should satisfy most people.

We'd like any member who cares to to send me the manuscript of his comments preferably by airmail. Then I can transfer them all to stencil at this end and run them off, including the sheets in the column after the last original contribution. Please don't send already cut stencils - it gives a neater appearance for a single typer to do the work. I just hope this antique doesn't break down half way through the cutting. For members' work there will, of course, be no editing but in the event of subscribers wishing to comment, we reserve the right to edit their letters.

As regards members, the point of page credit naturally comes up. It's a sticky one - but I don't think it would be fair, if this scheme becomes permanent, to allow any credit for this material. After all, we will be doing the work in actually publishing the stuff - and it's possible then for somebody to lob out 4 pages of comment every quarter and never actually publish anything. On the other hand, it in effect lays an extra burden on the individual member, in making him produce four pages of original material, plus whatever comments he feels he should make.

It all seems to come back to the question of what we are trying to achieve for this apa. John and I envisaged something more than 'just another apa'. Something not quite a series of stodgy, self-limited symposia. Something not quite a fanzine. Something not quite like any type of publication seen in fandom. Something with a strong, vigorous body provided by the contributor's original material, with a vigorous tail provided by their comebacks on previous issues. I think the experiment outlined above brings IPSO a step nearer this complex ideal. And I think that allowing no actual page credit is the better choice of the two - for IPSO.

So, for the duration of this experiment - and, I hope, for the duration of IPSO - we'll say that comments don't count towards page credit.

Phew! I've got all that off my chest at last - but at least I think I've aired my own feelings on what I hope IPSO will be. I hope, in parenthesis, that I don't sound toodictatorial about all this. If I do - I apologise.

Earlier on in this editorial, I mentioned quite a number of members dropping out. But going into the state of the roster more closely since writing those paragraphs, the situation isn't as bad as all that. Several of those missing from the roster haven't actually notified us of their intention not to renew membership; in the case of the three Americans listed - we simply have not heard from them. Berry's sub. and renewal should be here in the next few days, and I believe Burn intends to rejoin when he's earned some money. Breen, Metcalf and Johnstone have been reminded by airmail, and pending their decision to continue membership, we are holding their copies of this mailing for them.

Anyhow - to make it nice and orderly : the following owe dues for this year:
John Berry, Walter Breen, Bruce Burn, Norm Metcalf, Ted Johnstone.

We have, unfortunately, lost the following members: Busby and Lichtman resigned. Patrizio and Rapp have been dropped for lack of activity. I understand from Bill Donaho that Rapp notified Bill of his intention, through lack of time, to also resign. I feel particularly disappointed in his case as initially he was one of the most enthusiastic, and many of the subjects we've used came from his suggestions. Also saddening was his decision to put his contribution on Time Travel - complete

with IPSO's specialised layout - through SAPS, without letting the IPSO membership see it in IPSO FACTO.

Anyhow, regrettfully marking the passing as members of:

F.M. Busby, Bob Lichtman, Joe Patrizio, Art Rapp.

On the brighter side of things, we welcome since the last mailing Ted White, Gordon Eklund, John Baxter and Fred Patton, all of whom have contributed to this mailing.

We also welcome at the last minute Maxim Jakubowski, who joined too late to get anything in this time. We're very pleased to have ensnared Maxim, as he is a reminder of the 'International' part of our long-winded title. Maxim's a French fan currently living in England, as I believe, had some material published professionally in his own country. He speaks and writes English fluently, and has some material forthcoming in ORION. He publishes a fanzine in French - the next issue runs to a hundred pages and he has an enormous - to us - number of subscribers for it. French fandom is very active - and we hope Maxim will start contact between French and English-speaking fandom which will become as close as German fandom stands now.

So, keeping things orderly, we welcome:

Ted White, Gordon Eklund, John Baxter, Fred Patton and Maxim Jakubowski.

SUBJECT FOR THE SIXTH MAILING, deadline 14 July 1962.

P R O G R E S S .

We are almost 2/3rds of the way through the 20th Century - 60 years along a steepening curve of advancement in technological, medical, biological, psychological and other fields. Progress has been terrific. ((Even in music: from Bach to Lionel Bert??))

Where will this increase in knowledge stop, if allowed to continue uninterrupted ((and accelerated??)) by World War Three? Is there a limit to the knowledge to be discovered?

Some of the inventions of this century have had only local sociological effects - but others, of course, have caused major changes in our way of life. Obvious trends - eg: bicycle...automobile...acroplane...rocket...meter transmitter...etc may not be the ones to most upset the social pattern.

Examine the developments of the last sixty years and consider which have most affected the people of the world. Considering the newest discoveries - satellite, hovercraft, oral contraceptives, etc - which of these are likely to most affect mankind...

And HOW?

His Bach's worse than his Bert.

And that, I think, is all the official business for this time. But before leaving you to read the mailing, I'd like to express my deep appreciation to Joe Patrizio and, especially, to Ted Forsyth for taking care so ably of IPSO during the past year. It caused me no end of conscience-induced sleepless nights on having to ditch IPSO hardly before it had got started. I felt a moral obligation to, for the first year at least, take on the work, but as you know, the army had ideas. However, I hope to make up for it this year, and do my stint as from this mailing.

But Ted has assisted me immeasurably in the preparation of this mailing, and is quite happy to continue keeping the books. So - many thanks to Ted - and all praises for this mailing to him, please. Brickbats to me.

Ted would also like to thank Ella Parker for her efforts on our behalf, particularly in duplicating the official bumf for the past several mailings.

Best wishes,

George Lodge

What is the place of sex in science fiction? I should say the same place as it has in general fiction: mentioned if it is an integral part of the story, and if not - not!

It seems to me this subject could do with some defining of terms before making a start. So - what is sex in fiction, for a start? What is sex for an even clearer start? Let me consult the dictionary. Sex: The two animal classifications male and female. Sexless: Without sex and its characteristics. Sexy (slang): Sexually attractive. Sexual: 1; Pertaining to the characteristic distinctions of male and female. 2: Pertaining to intercourse between male and female.

The popular usage for the term "sex in fiction" or "sexy fiction" refers to the type of book which drags in unnecessary reference to the sex act. This is usually aimed at an audience which derives a vicarious thrill from the reading of such books. When it is done to a degree of appalling boredom it is often called pornography. I shall try very hard here not to get detracted onto the subject of the difference between erotic realism and pornography, but instead will recommend the reading of PORNOGRAPHY AND THE LAW by Drs. Everhard and Kronhausen.

So now we come to sex in science fiction and I really cannot see why any difference should be made in this branch of fiction. Should the sex be in the book in a natural way, to clarify the action or characterisation - then its use is right. Otherwise, dragged in to titillate or provide a 'love interest' - it is poor writing. I do not think there should be any restrictions upon the use of sex in science fiction other than one would apply to general fiction. Indeed, no doubt science fiction could have a wider field by being able to describe alien cultures and morals.

To take a look at the usual 'love interest' interjected into science fiction is to reflect that 'interjected' is definitely the word to describe it. The author is steaming along nicely with his story when you can almost hear him think. "Now I had better hint at a love interest or write a love scene." Goodness only knows why, as it usually sticks out like a sore thumb. Many of our best writers are hopeless at writing a love scene (Arthur C. Clarke for one) and the majority of them write about women as if they had never met any except in dreams. Just look at that bunch of beauties that Heinlein conjured up in STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND! Talk about a tired business man's dream...not a living, breathing, woman among the lot. I don't care if they were grokking, they sure weren't flesh and blood.

Science fiction has a classic definition - an author sits down to write and says "I wonder what would happen if ?" He then goes on from there. What would happen if we discovered space flight? What would happen if a new strain of disease appeared which was almost incurable and decimated the population? What would happen if we had atomic power? What would happen if Russia took over the world? What would happen if we had an H bomb war? All big questions, my masters; and the science fiction writer gets ready to answer them with enthusiasm. He can also wonder what would happen if all the men disappeared, or if our moral code was drastically changed. But - what science fiction author would bother to sit down and wonder what would happen if Frankie no longer loved Johnnie? He leaves that to the woman's magazines.

Science fiction is not really interested in individuals, when it is not attracted to some scientific theory it is usually intensely interested in some social or political theory. There are many books (hundreds pour out every year) which treat of the relations between men and women. Many are trite; some are realistic, a few are good, and a minute proportion show real insight and sensitivity. Certainly there are enough of them written that science fiction need not worry about taking on the job; if anything science fiction is a relief from the introspective novel with its passionate interest in who loves who and why. The pangs of unrequited love, the raptures of love, the treachery of love has been written about till one wonders that there can be anything new to say.

To be sure the story of all the science fiction author's ifs can be told in two ways: the broad sweep of cultures as in LAST AND FIRST MEN, or the effect upon a small band of people as in EARTH ABIDES. The more knowledge the author has of men and women the better will he be able to write the second way, but even then he will have to deal in types to get over his point. The types he will have to deal with come from general fiction. One could then state that if men and women were presented more realistically in all our literature it would be easier for the science fiction author to integrate real men and women into his stories.

Bad as the characterisation of men and women may be in science fiction it is many times worse in fantasy. Here the women are idealised to an incredible degree. They remind me of the romantic vision of the nudes drawn by Bo Stenfors, whose drawing of the bust defies the law of gravity. A fact that romantic artists overlook is that a large bust - sags.

A sad fact that many authors overlook in science fiction, fantasy, and in general fiction is - that ideal men and women do not exist. Nor should we wish this to be changed; ideal people would surely be hell to

live with - just think of the contrast with ourselves! Men love women, and women love men in spite of their faults, and we do not talk lightly when we mention loveable faults. Just listen to the pride of a man or woman describing their partner's faults!

It is this type of characterisation that is so sadly lacking in the people who stud our science fiction stories. This led to an outcry for better characterisation. J.T. McIntosh was hailed as an author who could do this well, and certainly stories such as ONE IN THREE HUNDRED were a vast improvement. However even there one can detect the stock characters, broadened it is true and faintly breathing, but only mediocre by general fiction standards.

When I find myself most annoyed at science fiction characterisation it is often upon a point that I do not see mentioned elsewhere. I am thinking of Fredric Brown's THE LIGHTS IN THE SKY ARE STARS. In this the hero could never start a sentence to the heroine without booming out "Woman!" first. I think it was meant to denote great masculinity, but my reaction was an irritated unbelief, it spoilt the whole story for me. I just could not believe that any woman would stand being addressed in this manner for any length of time without belting him one.

Again, when the heroine is described in glowing terms there is usually too much exaggeration, after all beautiful women are in the minority not majority. The same applies to men, a truly handsome one being an uncommon sight. It is really too much of a coincidence that so many leading figures in our stories are not only brainy but beautiful or handsome as well. The author who, being original, makes them ordinary in appearance is apt to do so with an air of...see! I'm different.

On the whole the authors are far more successful in their portrayals of men than of women. I can remember many male characters clearly - The Great Lorenzo, John Amalfi, Elijah Baley, but of the women only one leaps clearly to my mind. That is Pagadan from James Schmitz's AGENT OF VEGA. Not an earth woman either! Schmitz however has the imagination to make his characters larger than life, instead of those mousy females that sound like wishful thinking, and seem to be invented merely to decorate the pages of such stories as STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND.

When there is talk of sex in science fiction I do not think of the usual books such as Farmer's STRANGE RELATIONS or even that SIASL whose title I am now tired of typing out. Instead I think of Philip Wylie's THE DISAPPEARANCE. This story of what happens when all the men disappeared from the women's eyes, and all the women disappeared from the men's eyes

has many wise and thoughtful things to say about the way men and women treat each other. By this device the author was able to range over the whole of the various ways in which the sexes differ, and also the ways in which they are far more alike than many would care to admit.

Lately I have been reading a book SEX IN HISTORY. In this the theory of patrist and matrist cultures was propounded. The child who identifies with the father is patrist, the child that identifies with the mother is matrist(have fun trying to index your friends) and the theory is that cultures run on the same lines. Patrist-authoritarian, dogmatic, and narrow-minded. Matrist-liberal, easy-going, and open-minded. The author points out that too much either way leads to an unbalance. There are a whole lot of theories like this which might be taken up by the science fiction writer and used, and in that case the mention of sex would have a legitimate place. This one has, of course, already been 'done' to a great extent by Theodore Sturgeon.

Although I range wide in my reading habits, I own more science fiction books than anything else. The branch of literature which is simply and solely a 'love story' is very thinly represented. Those that are present are due to the author's skill or wit in writing-I am not a particularly sentimental person. So, were all the love scenes or love interest taken out of science fiction that was not absolutely essential to the telling of the story..I should not grieve. If, in its place, women were treated in a realistic manner I should applaud.

If sex was given its proper place with no undue emphasis or glamourisation; if the female characters were portrayed with something akin to what we really are, if the men were more knowledgeable in the ways of women, then indeed science fiction would be greatly improved. I could do without any love interest in a dozen stories if the thirteenth had been written by somebody wise in human ways.

Still: to write good science fiction which also contains a love story that is touching and real demands quite a lot from any author. I do not think we should be too harsh about the treatment of sex in science fiction only urge the paring of it to the bone(or should I say flesh) unless it is positively needed.

+++++

LOCKJAW

In spite of the rather assertive title sitting up there, pinned between two heavy black lines, this isn't going to be a serious dissertation upon the place and implications of sex in our favourite literature. Rather, it will consist of a number of more or less random thoughts on the subject, hence the title LOCKJAW. One or two of you might remember - if you don't try to banish such things into a subconscious limbo - that LOCKJAW was the title of my editorial column in SMOKE. With the demise - and unlikely resurrection - of that fanzine, it's been looking for a place to sit. It's found it here, I think.

A good excuse for the lack of a formal essay on the subject, for those who like excuses, is that I have few concrete thoughts in my mind, and the date of cutting these stencils is several days after the deadline.

FOR IT'S OWN SAKE

One of the main objections to pocketbooks such as the Beacon series is that they get the authors whose novels they are using to insert a few appropriate passages of sex interest. This was particularly true of a book by George O Smith, and another by, I think, Sam Merwin. In these two it was obvious that the sex interest had been added, as a flavouring agent is added to sweeten a bitter medicine. You don't often get authors confessing to doing that, though. But in one science fiction book, the co-authors - it was a collaboration - confess to all sorts of things, and in one of the italicised dialogues scattered throughout the text, we get the following:

Caine: You were saying something about a want which you discovered in our book...

Fairbairn: True. There is no feminine interest.

C: I thought it would be a little original to have none.

F: Perhaps, but the public won't stand it. They must have females in this story, or they will say we can't draw women. Now, that is my strong suit. Let us give Muddock ((The arch-villain)) a daughter. We can bring her in here and there when we feel that we want lightening and brightening. And she will work in at the end, I feel sure. A touch of sentiment always brings the curtain down effectively.

C: Sometimes too effectively.

F: I insist on a feminine interest somewhere, and it ought to be now.

C: I will have nothing to do with it. There is no place for women in this story.

And so, starting with page 89, Vespertilia Muddock is introduced. The conflict which develops between the two authors over Vespertilia makes almost a book in itself.

Enough said on the subject of sex brought in for its own sake, I think.

But people have no objection to sex when brought in as a legitimate part of the story. In other words, if the story could not exist in so satisfactory a form without the sex element, everybody raves over it. You find this in a large number of sf books ranging all the way from Stapledon's SIRIUS (and, I think, ODD JOHN) to George O Smith's curiously Stapledonian THE FOURTH R. But is it right that the usual forms of sex interest found in mundane literature - and usually accepted there although brought in just as incidentally as suggested in the above quote - should be so howled down by

fans? I don't think so. After all, sf deals with - or should deal with - human beings. And, let's face it, one of the prime motivators of human action is sex. Even such a simple plot as the hero striving to rescue his girl-friend from the slobbering green most who leaves a slimy trail behind him, goes right back to the primitive desires of love and passion.

Paradoxically, isn't it odd that when an author completely ignores any sex, the same fans are equally unanimous in decrying it? E.E. Smith used to have an abundance of heroines, yet, in spite of the hero's spending long periods in situations with the girl which could have evolved into love scenes, no mention was ever made of his having done so.

EXTRAPOLATIONS

Extrapolations using sex in the same way as writers have used practically every other subject in science fiction. The oral contraceptive is an obvious extrapolation.

Our old science fiction writer is very anxious to follow in the correctly placed footsteps of Hugo Gernsback. Get the facts - the scientific facts - right, he tells his wife.

Administration is the problem. He's read a bit about medicine - James White's Sector General series, he admits, if you pin him down on it - and comes to the conclusion that there are several methods of administration of any medication. There's oral administration, injection, and others routes of entry into the human body which it would be impolite to discuss too fully here. He discards these less obvious routes at once, and is left with the choice of injection and taking the damned thing by mouth. Since he's already admitted that he's limited himself to an oral contraceptive, he reluctantly rules that possibility out. Pity, as he'd dreamed up a magnificent sequence, full of purple passages dwelling long and lovingly upon suffering. Not only would his poor hero have the usual morning shaving troubles, he'd have to suffer the pain of a daily injection as well...

Then it occurs to him that the more logical method would be to have his heroine swallow the pills.

He makes the mistake of asking his wife how she'd like to take pills. The resulting extremely enthusiastic conversation is too coarse to be recorded here.

He sits down to think the plot out. And this is where his scientific training comes in. He read somewhere - a book on chicken-hatching - that conception largely revolves round a process called ovulation. Supposing he invented some drug which inhibited this ovulation business...?

Whoops! He blushes, as he imagines Mr Gernsback, stickler for scientific terminology, looking over his shoulder. He corrects himself: "Inhibitor of ovulation". He smiles. Dead learned, this is. Excellent writing. Just by using the same words, but leaving out one or two extra words, he has given an impression of extreme erudition...

If that's the correct word.. Where's the dictionary?

So he tells his wife all this. She looks highly impressed by his erudition, and says that it'll be a great story. But then she puts her foot in it. "Which day of the cycle shall I take these?"

Our science fiction author stops. After a lengthy silence, during which he is looking at his wife with an expression he has never used on her before, he stammers;

"C-cyclos?"

She explains. The writer retires to his den, digs out a couple of books on botany and ornithology, and writes off for a correspondence course on birds and on bees and on flowers. Have a year letter, having passed the course by bluffing through the examinations, he is acquainted with the facts of life, and sets to work again writing his science fiction story. By now, he feels really 'on the ball'. He thinks that his novel will be the science fiction novel to end all s-f. And by now he feels able to give his dissertation on his new contraceptive.

First of all, he'd give it a long, chemical type name. He was very clever - he dreamed it up on his own. In fact, so proud was he of it - and of his hitherto unexpected powers or oratory in being able to pronounce it, that he let it roll off his tongue in front of the mirror every morning while he shaved.

But then: Shock! Deep trauma! He mustn't give the name of the substance itself away. But he'd be allright giving the name of the class of compounds of which it is one. And that is equally smooth and flowing when pronounced. In fact, it sounds even better, and takes less time to say. '19-Norsteroid'. '19-Norsteroid'.

So, at the beginning of chapter seventeen, he makes his scientist explain the new oral contraceptive. "It is one of the 19-Norsteroids, and is a potent inhibitor of ovulation." The scientist's voice will be quite calm. He has a long beard trailing over his ankles, and is too old for the implications of the discovery to have any emotional effect on him. "It also possesses a certain progestational effect, but this is relatively unimportant." It has no bearing at all on the story - it's included as a bit of background material to give a higher impression of plausibility. "If it is taking every day on the 5th to 24th days of the menstrual cycle, it acts as an effective contraceptive. If, however, a day is missed, then there is a risk of pregnancy, and also ^{a change} in the length of the cycle itself."

Basing the story on that underlined 'if' forms an example of the use of extrapolation in science fiction generally, and how it might be used in the type of sf we're discussing in this mailing. It's a bad example, really, as the much publicised oral contraceptive coming on the market now - or it ^{may} have been generally available for a year or two; I'm a bit out of touch with current market products in pharmaceuticals - is based on exactly the lines indicated above. But I lack the imagination to think up a genuine extrapolation.

ONE — TWO — THOUGHTS OR — STRAY —

For instance, I've often wondered what the result would be if one of our better sf writers - Sturgeon springs to mind - were able to pull out all the stops, and, without fear of censorship or legal proceedings, write the full-blooded story that has only been hinted at, so far. Of course, it's always possible to get published through one of the Parisian purveyors of pornography - who have also produced a fair amount of literature to go along with the crud. But I feel that it's hardly a remunerative market - I may be wrong - and so long as an author wants to write something more than a labour of love; in other words, wants to make money - then there'll always be a certain feeling of restraint when one opens an sf book dealing with sex. But then - that applies to mundane literature, as well.

Come to think of it, the possibilities would be endless if we based this epa in France, Switzerland, Germany, Italy, or Brazil. I mean, look at the diversity of things we could discuss if we were all English speakers on the continent?

There'd be sex, for instance, and we could discuss freely such a deeply philosophical subject as the Number of Positions available to a four-dimensional alien being with two other sexes as well as his own.

Then, of course...but I regret that my mind is beginning to travel along paths noted neither for their purity of thought nor for purity of expression. In fact, reading the last three pages of on-stencil ramblings, I have one or two doubts as to whether they'll pass Ted's eagle eye and puritanical character. At least, I think it must be puritanical - he's just been reading the last stencil, and has made noises of disgust. I'm hoping that they were directed more at my style than my subject. Perhaps - horrifying thought - they were evenly divided between both.

But - enough of the whole subject.

VOYAGE TO THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA revisited

Every now and then, people say that science fact has caught up with science fiction. But remember, when considering such developments as sputniks, that it's only the general, reasonably sober themes behind these sf stories that suddenly become fact.

But at long last, science - according to the papers of the last couple of days - has taken its cue from one of the most fantastic, scientifically improbable abominations of a story to ever appear in the science fiction world. I'm referring to the film, VOYAGE TO THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA, and the idea there of using atomic missiles launched into space to destroy the Van Allen belt of radiation which has caught fire.

You can look down; there is no need to be afraid. The Van Allen belt isn't going to burst into flames, whether bright scarlet, green or violet. But the other half of the theme - busting the poor innocent belt wide open by atomic missiles - is firmly in the US programme of coming scientific achievements.

The Daily Mail states:

"The United States is to set off a megaton H-bomb 500 miles above the Pacific in June or July.

"There are two main objects in the test:

"1. To annihilate experimentally all high frequency radio and radar communications over a vast area of the Pacific for at least several hours; and

"2. To try to destroy part of the Van Allen Belt, a layer of deadly cosmic, radioactive particles which surrounds the earth and is one of the biggest hazards for future space travellers.

"Scientists believe that it will take up to a century for the Van Allen Belt to reform."

Even now, there are the usual protests at the test. But that's not what I'm worried about. I'm worried about my lack of specialised knowledge of the subject. For the idea of completely disrupting a whole belt of particles circling the entire earth with one measly little H-bomb strikes me as fantastic as the idea of the thing catching fire in the first place. (Please excuse typos - which seem worse than usual)

---George Locke. 1962.

As should be reasonably obvious by the above subject heading, I have little or nothing to say about sex and science fiction. I object to having sex dragged in as an extraneous element in a story, but have no objections to stories with sex as either the main item ("A World Well Lost") or as a sideline. My judgement of a story's worth seldom involves the degree of sexiness as its basis.

Of the 15 entries in IPSO 4, 5 wrote on Heinlein, 4 on Fantasy Worlds, 3 on both subjects, and 3 on neither. That's a pretty even division of interests, and indicates enough interest in worlds of fantasy to merit continued writings on the subject. As a result, we present...

THE CARE AND FEEDING OF FANTASY WORLDS

Some time ago, Asimov did a story called "Dreaming is a Private Thing," in which the protagonist is sent into someone else's dream world to bring the owner back to "reality," and the owner quite naturally objects to having his world invaded at all, let alone having himself dragged out of it. In general, dreaming - or a dream world - IS a private thing. But there are some people who prefer to share their worlds, in one way or another, and in one degree or another. Some simply work people they know into the world -- or dream them in, in the case where the world is an actual dream rather than a day-dream type -- and tell no one; their world is still reasonably private, on this level of reality, at least.

Still others will open their worlds to their friends completely, allowing them to help develop and populate the world -- after all, one person is limited in the amount of imaginative creation he can accomplish. But then the friends write in their friends, who write in their friends, and suddenly the world becomes a public playground, with everyone trying to write the regulations.

So it is with Coventry. As Jack Harness remarked in one of his CULTzines, Coventry has become a case where Paul Stanbery is faced with people eating him out of house and empire. The result has been the CIAWOT (Coventry Is A Waste Of Time) Foundation, which has attempted to set up standards of action for the Coventranians on this (5th) level of reality. What this amounts to is that one finds his actions limited by anyone who got into Coventry early in the game and fills one of the higher ruling positions, in the same area of Coventry. As an example, my 'actions' in Linn are subject to the limitations of Rich Brown, as Lord Leader of Linn, and if they affect Coventry as a whole they are also subject to limitation by Stanbery and the Upper Twelve, the Judicial Body of Coventry composed of those who got in early. (Most of the 12 are inactive and have given Stanbery proxy control, but Rich Brown holds #2, Rick Sneary #11, and Ted Johnstone #12.) Stories, articles, and what-have-you, to be official Coventraniana, must be approved by Stanbery. Otherwise, they're Jackleg items, and will be ignored by anyone else looking for background material for Official items. (On occasion, such Jackleg bits can be worked into the 'Mainstream' of Coventranian history after being written -- such as a story by Karen Anderson in the January 1962 SAPS mailing -- but these are rare occurrences.)

At times this seems rather unfair to someone who wants to write a story of Coventry -- it involves a delay while the item is approved, and may necessitate the changing of some parts of the item before publication -- and the changes can be major or minor. Dick Schultz's last IPSO contribution wouldn't have been approved for the simple reason that there already is a Grand Master and Chancellor of Williamsburg -- a Pasadenan named Dan Hickey. So a lot of fans don't bother to check their writings out, just because of the bother. I know there have been

times when I felt it was too much bother even to pick up the phone and call Stanbery in Pasadena to clear some ideas, and just went ahead and used them, hoping there wouldn't be too loud an objection from Brandy Hall afterwards.

Again, is it really fair to have all these limitations on the use of a fantasy world? Yes. If just for one reason, yes: It's his world. It belongs to Stanbery and the rest of the kids who invented/swiped it. (The names were stolen, but the working of them into an entity is invention.) Whoever makes up the game is entitled to make up the rules of the game. This is my attitude in general, and I try to stick to it in specific instances, such as arguments with Stanbery about something or other I want to have happen in a story I may be writing. There are, of course, corollaries to the rule: the rules of the game may not be changed at the whim of the game-maker, and if there is no rule covering a point, the player may make up his own. And if he doesn't like the rules, he can go make up his own game -- invent his own fantasy world.

And that's where it gets sticky. I am quite incapable of inventing my own world, though I can populate -- with persons, not just peoples -- an already-existing world, and can do a fair amount toward animating it -- making it live through stories, adventures and the like. The same limitations apply to Ted Johnstone, who has had more experience writing fantasies than I am, and is better at it. We are fantasy-leeches, in a manner of speaking -- though the relationship is more akin to symbiosis than parasitism, since a world without 3-dimensional (or at least 2-dimensional) people is a dead world. And we work our writings around the background limitations that may be set up by Stanbery (Rich Brown has set few limitations on Linn; our troubles come when we have to work with New America, of which Stanbery is Emperor, or with Coventry-as-a-whole.) If we run into an objectionable limitation, we either try to argue Stanbery out of it, or to go around it somehow -- there's usually a way. And it's the only ethical way of operating in the framework of Coventry. And as far as I can see, one should have some sort of ethics, even in -- or about -- a fantasy world.

How does one go about inventing a fantasy world? I don't really know... There are so many details to work out -- geography, geology, history, politics, economics, culture, and what-have-you -- for each of the countries, areas, cities. All of these have to be worked out if you are to have a complete world; otherwise you must settle for a part of a world -- or just a setting for an adventure. Of the IPSOites represented in Mailing 4 who wrote on Fantasy Worlds, only two made up their own -- Locke and Harness -- and only Harness came close to providing a complete world with background and all; Locke settled for an expanded idea/gimmick good for an adventure or so, but not for living in. I guess it takes a good deal of imagination to create a world -- more than I have, at least. Even assuming that you borrow everything from somewhere else, either baldly or in interpolated form, the attention to detail which becomes necessary is prohibitive for most people's imaginations.

But there are some... . Don Simpson is a Southern California fan who lived with us at the Fan Hillton, and is now in the army. He is quiet, and not overly faaanish, but he has done some excellent artwork for fanzines -- and he has invented one of the most highly-developed fantasy worlds I have come across: the world of Donalar (not Donelan, as Harness mentioned). He has maps in detail of each country, both political and physical maps -- in multi-colour. He has histories and lists of rulers, and all sorts of details on what happened when, what goes on where, and why, and by whom, things happened. There is only one small problem with Donalar: it's a dead world; everything has happened -- nothing is happening or is going to happen.

Rick Sneary's world of Chan, on the planet Mercury, has quite a bit of detail, especially on the history, though I have heard relatively little of it myself. Rick has written several other fans into Chan -- Bjo, Ted Johnstone, Steve

Tolliver, among others. This caused more complication when Chan was worked into Coventry, since the fans already had avatars in Coventry.

And that leads to the problem of having too many fantasy worlds. Particularly if one does identify with a fantasy world (Oh, you're still not sure how serious I was last time? Well, there's no hurry for any decision...), having more than one such leads to splitzophrenia of even imaginary avatars -- and it also leads to splitting of efforts in writing stories of these worlds. Any of you who receive AXE will have read Gary Deindorfer's LYDDITE 2, with a spoof on this business of identifying with a fantasy world character. It winds up with a line about "...that would mean that I would be living in two Fantasy Worlds simultaneously. That would be just plain unnatural, of course." And of course, he's quite right. It would **take** a more highly developed imagination than I -- or most anyone I know -- can claim, to handle several fantasy worlds in addition to the "real" one.

I had a letter from a Michael McQuown, who had learned about Coventry from Rich Brown, at Tyndall Air Force Base. McQuown and a friend of his had come up with the world of the Galactic League, and had some history and some other background written. What they needed was people to fill in all sorts of positions, rulers and everything, and for this they turned to the Coventranians, figuring that the Coventranians would be glad to take up another set of positions, particularly if the positions might be "higher" than their positions in Coventry. In a designed-to-look-reasonably-impressive letter, McQuown was told that the Coventranians as a group had all they could handle with one world of fantasy, though of course they were free as individuals to take up the offer. He was also turned down on his second request -- to use Coventry as a "vehicle" for his own



world -- a protectorate of the League, a 'hide-out' for pursued protagonists in his stories, and so forth. Pfu. Coventry is an independent Fantasy World, even if it's not a private one any more. (It's also copyrighted in most of its aspects, as Ted and I copyrighted GIMBLE 3, and will continue to copyright Coventry stories.)

* * * * *

I usually distribute ten to twenty extra copies of my IPSO contributions to people I think may be interested in them, and the distribution of the last one drew a letter from Fritz Leiber:

I read OPERATION FLIPBACK with considerable interest. I am reminded of a college friend -- a notable fantasy enthusiast and an aesthete of devil-dreams and cemeteries -- who wanted to be hypnotized so he could be given pencil and paper and instructed to trace the outlines of the amazing forms that existed in his imagination. Nothing even came of this since he never got satisfactorily hypnotized (though I seriously wonder if something unusual might not indeed have been achieved, considering the startling items that have turned up when, say, a person is hypno-regressed to some childhood birthday and simply instructed to draw a man /regressed to 3, he draws an egg with dots in it and spiderlegs coming out of it./)

Of course, one point was that my friend was no artist, in fact one of those people who claim, almost perversely, one feels, not to be able to draw at all. He later managed to hypnotize (or somehow influence) a couple of commercial artists into drawing a comic strip dramatizing THE SEVEN AGAINST THEBES and illustrating a fairy story about a witch. Unfortunately, nothing commercial came of these efforts, though both were impressive.

Some people, I'd think, might accuse you of elaborating FLIPBACK with LSD, etc., to the point where it'll probably never be actually tried, but I really think your instincts against trying it are sound. The only times I ever experienced an uncontrolled or nonvolitional flow of the imagination (as from the unconscious) was when in a highly anxious and fatigued state or (especially) during withdrawal from alcohol -- in other words, on the edge of psychosis. I tried to summarize some of these experiences in my story DAMNATION MORNING (Fantastic). They were frightening.

re Coventry, I suppose Heinlein's novelet is so seldom mentioned in connection with that spin-dizzy realm simply because the connection is so fundamental.

The only other comment was from Stanbery, who mentioned that he liked the idea of a Coventry parody on Camelot. Real Soon Now... .

 IPSO DIPSO (thanks, Buz): I wish to register a suggestion, and a grotch. The grotch is against keeping people on the roster who do not contribute. Rapp said in SAPS that he was dropping IPSO, but in spite of the fact that he has had only one contribution in the mailings for the entire year, he stays on the roster, and without even having to get a contrib in next time! UNfair say I, to the rest of us members. The suggestion is that we use some of that extra money in the treasury to get the mailings to stateside members faster, so we may have more than three weeks to read the mailing and get the next contrib ready.

 This has been RIDER'S SHRINE 5 from
 Bruce Pelz,
 738 S. Mariposa, #107
 Los Angeles 5, Calif.
 INCUNEBULOUS PUBLICATION 67

 How much of oneself should one reveal
 on paper? I don't know, Bruce Burn,
 I don't know... .



A darkened street, over which bluish lamps fold out over darkened trucks and occasional personal vehicles. An old part of an old city, the walls are grimed and chipped. Fading and fresh posters line the walls of the shops and factories, the inhabitants look as if they were older than even the city. A surly brute lounges against a street lamp, careless of his dust-blue militiaman's uniform and vacantly observes a sign which gleefully proclaims the happy progress The People have made since the Unions united under control of The State. An older sign proclaims the passing of the monthly quotas by some obscure factory in the center of the continent and asks why this sector has not produced any such champion.

A pale youth, oblivious to the rushing lorries, crosses the street to the same side as the militiaman. The militiaman twirls his night-stick, and idly wonders if he should bother asking him for his Papers. The youth lights a Rosekranz cigarette with a quarter of a wooden match and coughs on the ersatz materials. He caresses the homemade knife, in case the militiaman should be so unlucky as to ask him for his papers. Members of the Resistance do not very often have papers.

The militiaman moves on, his blue uniform turning black when out of the range of the streetlamps. One lamp buzzes irritatingly.

The youth flips the dead match at a wall poster. The poster shows The Leader in a benevolent mood, whilst below his shining face lie the words, "Work; State; Party".

This situation is as much a part of the Twentieth Century as is the automobile or the Atom Bomb. It is a glimpse of the raw face of brute totalitarianism. The Police State in action. The principle of Pavlov and double-think controlling the lives of a nation. Unfortunately, this is not the past. This is not the present. This is the future, and the locale is America. This is not some vague half century in the future, this is within our lifetimes, and I'll tell you why. You may not believe that it will ever be your child who watches the militiaman over his shoulder, but I hope to at least make you believe that it is not the fevered imaginings of a fevered mind.

Indeed, this is "If This Goes On....". For there is no part of this picture of fascism in America which is impossible. Indeed, I fear it is more probable than it is possible.

We have been on the road to fascism for some years now. There must be the proper conditions present before that vile weed can grow. But the most startling present symbol of our present trend first came about when Joe McCarthy found that one could be politically successful by preaching the same brand of hate against the Bolshieviks that Goring and Hadler proclaimed. What makes him unique is that he preached not against the traditional enemies of yid and nigger and papist, but against the Neue Crusade of International Communism.

Taking a leaf from Hitler, he proclaimed in so many words that we were being beaten by the commies because we were being betrayed. This leaves the rabble-rouser but to identify these enemies of The People as the traditional enemies, to ensure the widest possible support for this latest type of witch hunt. But there is more to Joe McCarthy and the Witch Hunt than just opportuntists using the same old hate-symbols in a slightly newer fashion.

It all started a few centuries ago when something since called an Industrial Revolution took place. The results have been many. As more complex products were produced in more complex factories, a profound sociological disintegration took place apace.

No more did one know one's place and that place fit in the world. Now we became a world, a culture with its citizenry searching for a

new place in the New Order Of Things. Naturally, as they failed to find a new class structure, they turned to Messiahs and Leaders for someone to tell them what they were. Not just what they should do, that is a minor part of any dictatorship. Actually its major benefit is that it gives each citizen a definite role, a place in society.

In a word, Security. Pure escapism, a running away from the fact that one is not perfect, neither does one society claim to be perfect.

As the tide of weltenschmerz rose, the demagogues found themselves controlling larger and larger masses of people earnestly wishing to be led. This is a condition of our present world, this is a Truth.

Do you hate/fear the rich? Support my party. Do you hate/fear the poor/Unions? Support my group. Do you feel Germany was betrayed, that Germany needs a Leader? I will give you the Greater Reich. And now a small surge of such demagogues are cannily preaching their epistles of hate and fear.

Rockwell. The John Birch Society. And even more frightening, the millions of citizens who think is perfectly all right for the Government, the allmighty Government, to own and control all industries, businesses, transportation and communication facilities and banks. A great unrea- ped field of potential followers, waiting for the right man to come to the fore and lead them to Greatness and the Allmighty Holiness Of The State, the all-embracing, the all-protective, the all-controlling State.

The age of regimentation is upon us, and we welcome it. We yell for more rules, for more regulations, for more censorship, for stronger policies and a more all-inclusive police and State. But still you ask, why is this group here? Won't someone stop any potential Hitler?

I ask who. Who can, or more important will want to, stop such a man or group? Not one significant power group in the US I say.

Let me digress. Have you ever read or studied much of the type of schizophrenia known as paranoia? Any psychiatrist can tell you a lot about it, apart from the well-known bit about such a victim thinking everyone is "Against Me". One thing he might mention is a little chart which has on it a "base line".

You see, a paranoid is not born that way. At some time stimuli acts upon him, he reacts, and then builds a defense. All of us have them, of course. The paranoid keeps building his, however. In short, he reacts too much too too much stimuli. Then the line plummets back to the base line. The paranoid has retreated into a world where he need not react to all that stimuli. The stimuli cannot ever reach him again.

This is an individual. But can it happen to nations? The notion of nations becoming psychotic is one hard to grasp, but I ask someone, anyone, to bring out a different one which could explain what turned a civilized nation like Germany into the GrossesDeutschesReich without managing to sound downright silly. A national character turned psychot- ic. And it fits.

Obviously I intend to relate the paranoid cycle to the present state of mind in the US today. The first and most important item I wish to bring up is the fact that we have a consistent supplier of shocks to our national mind. The international Communist threat.

They do something, it's almost always an attack on us in some way. A period in which we build our defenses up again. Then another shock. And so on, ad infinitum. Any psychiatrist will tell you that nothing helps build a paranoid then for someone to really be against him. The commies are doing this purposely and constantly because this is their method of dealing with enemies.

It works fine against prisoners. First the shock, the pain, the stimuli. Then the kind word, the friendly doctor, the sympathetic captain. Then the shock again. This works fine on someone in a cell

who is helpless to defend himself. Unfortunately the states aren't helpless in a cell. And the Russians are rapidly driving us to a frame of mind where we think everyone is against us. John Birch Society anyone?

Ever think much about the fact that everyone, not just the news services, are so tender about the apparent fact that "none of them furriners appreciate us after all we've done for them"?

Nationally, when and if the US reaches its base line, it will turn against every deviant element in the states and probably go berserker against the foreign enemies. I.e. become single minded about destroying the foreign dangers. Germany again, if you need an example.

One thing about paranoids.... All faults and failures of the paranoid are ascribed to the Them. Birchers again, anyone?

Deep pressures therefore, laid upon an already faulty background (found any perfect societies lately?) will produce neurotic national characteristics. And international Communism is just one stimuli. The aforementioned deep yearning for someone to give them a place in society is another. The Population Explosion isn't helping matters any, either, as their sheer numbers force the nation to impose some form of national planning and authority in order to deal with their sheer mass.

Regimentation, all is regimentation, all for the Good Of The People. How soon, how soon I ask you, until we notice one day that the slogan reads for the Good Of The State?

The trends are there. Big Unionism, seeking protection and guaranteed employment, willing to follow any demagogue who will give them this. Big Business, wanting guaranteed business, protection from Big Unions. Big Armed Forces. And Big Government. The Neue Klass. The new beauracy, the civil service that today feels that it can decide what is good for the people. As if they were some sort of God, able to define the course of history and probe the minds of the citizenry. Such will welcome a Leader who will make the People do what is Best For Them.

This is all part of that yearning for class identity. The erroneous assumption that we need a leader, someone to tell us what to do.

The really frightening thing about this trend is that it is unchecked by any power group in the states at present. And don't be calling the Libertrarian League a power group, or'll send a copy of "Science And Sanity" to you posthaste. Every business group wants more economic security. Every union wants job security. Every religious group wants more censorship and paternalistic governmental support for their religious teachings. The Catholic request for Federal aid for their religious schools, for instance, is nothing more nor less than a hope that they can eventually make their religion the State Religion. As with every other religious group wanting aid.

Everyone wants something from the Federal government, and additionally seeks aid from The State to control the opposition. Underlying it all is a seeking for identity. Again and again we must come back to the fact that we are a nation unsure of ourselves.

But if there were no other forces at work, I could hope for us to set up a new balance, a new check and re-check system to keep us from sliding into fascism and The State mentality.

For within our lifetimes there have been two climatic economic, sociological and emotional catyclasyms. The Depression (You ever stand in a bread line, buddy? If you have, you will never again want anything but security.) and the Second World War. In effect, our national character was torn apart and has not yet re-molded. Our old values were dashed to the ground and none have taken their place.

Therefore we have a culture up-rooting. A loss of national faiths. The pressures of Communism. And a national seeking for a Big Brother to give us identity and do our worrying for us. An attitude of, "Let's go

something, even if it's wrong!" A movement towards socialism, national Socialism.

Fascism.

Besides the outside pressures and internal stresses already outlined, another factor is due to enter the picture. An even more devastating upheaval than ever before experienced here in the States. And I don't mean an atomic war.

Le Deluge. The flood comes. I speak about the coming Depression. An economic collapse, which is as sure as death and taxes, but which barring external invasion should be eventually realigned. You don't believe me? You've got quite a bit of company, though I note that most economists and businessmen are investing more and more in foreign concerns. Of course it means nothing.....

The causes are many and varied but can be summed up to a certain extent by a simple phrase. Supply and demand. When supply exceeds demand, a sick economy results. But try to tell that to the nut in the street. To quote, "Why the Government has too many controls for another agonizing economic reappraisal to take place."

As if Congress can outlaw the laws of economics. Only in an economy of planned economy where labor and services are controlled by The State can economics be even slightly bent.

What is happening now is that the Government is asking for a hell of a Depression by trying harder and harder to keep the pseudo-Boom going indefinitely. The harder you press on a rubber ball the higher it bounces, as the saying goes.

For some years our marvelous little automated society has been producing goods of all kinds at a faster rate than we can absorb them. Only stimulated demand has kept the economy functioning. The result of this has been the Age Of The Debt. Madison Avenue has kept us buying products we have no use or need for. The average family, stf-like, has put itself into hock for years to come in order to buy something they have been hoodwinked into wanting. Yet Joe Schmoo, the average LIFE reader goes on right ahead and thinks that the Government will take care of everything. It has been taking care of everything for years now.

Or hasn't Joe heard of Tariff's, price supports and Farm Aids? Not to mention the thousand end and one aids given to industries, banks and home builders to endlessly expand, regardless of actual real demand.

The Government, that endlessly providing Father Image has about reached the end of its rope too. The only further radical steps it can take at this stage is to either nationalize the industries and all businesses as they falter and run down (which is a very likely step, considering the socialistic tendencies in our nation today and the fact that we'd undoubtedly talk ourselves into believing that it isn't really socialistic nationalization anyways....), or go the way of that horrible story in IF. They might subsidize wastefully overproductive industries the same way that they now encourage greedy farmers to overproduce, to plant all they can, the Government will buy it anyways.

One prediction... By '65 every commuter railroad east of the rockies will have been nationalized by the Government. First subsidization, then control. It's inevitable.

At any rate they might encourage these extragavances. Can you imagine stacks of surplus autos and TV sets and electric can openers?

Another thing that is bringing disaster to us is the unfavourable balance of trade. We are bringing in foreign luxury products and raw materials at an ever accelerating rate. And as wages and prices ascend in a speeding spiral, we calmly price ourselves out of the world market and devour our own body, in the form of sending out our gold reserves. And the gold levels go down. And down! And down. And down.

In a show of strength after the Wahr, the Unions bucked for higher and higher wages, along with such things as pension plans, etc. The "blood-sucking" capitalists, working on the old principle that they've got to pay for these products somehow, not unnaturally raised their prices. And the union wanted more money, then the bosses....

And so our foreign markets have dropped dead on us. While at the same time, the pursuit of luxury became our fiercest drive. We now rely on foreign areas for nearly half (in some specific cases more than half) of our raw goods and materials.

There are now two alternatives by which we could stop this unfavourable balance, short of conquering Latin America and Africa and making it a permanent (in a political sense) economic vassal. Come to think of it, surely you don't think we're fighting so hard for the underdeveloped nations of the world out of the goodness of our hearts, do you?

They are for us to re-align our wages and prices (and aims, too boot) to re-establish ourselves on a more even footing in the world market, and thereby getting rid of our budgeoning overproduction into the hands of those who would like to buy, but can't due to our prices. Considering the present state of amicable relations between labor and management, I hope you won't mind if I believe the Martians will save us all first.

The other is for the Government to take over (for our own good, of course. And oddly enough, for once, they'd be right!) the production of all goods, all services and all finance in the country, and then put through a program of austerity and deflation of wages and prices.

This one would lower all prices, all wages, and cut off the production of consumer goods in place of export goods. Along with the cutting off of foreign luxury goods, of course. The only thing, I doubt if a Democratic Congress would forsake the selfish wishes of the majority and put through such a determinately anti-luxury bill. A tyranny might, tho. Crude and ill-managed though our Congress man be, it knows for a fact that The People want nothing to stop the seemingly endless flow of goodies from a benevolent omnipotent State.

It'll be a rude awakening some day.

Of course, here the reaching of the Base Line would probably show itself very bluntly in the election of a person or party which is fanatically opposed to Communism (and them dirty nigger/jew/furriner traitors) winning the election. Not the John Birchers. They could never live up to the crinkling sound of laughter with which any party of theirs would be greeted. But I am not heartened by an all too frequent political type which says that the Birchers have the right idea, they just went at it wrong. That's why I don't smirk at Goldwater.

Oh, Goldwater won't be the one, but he's a prototype. A person who appeals to our desires to return to a more glorious era. Laugh at him. I'll be rowing across to Canada the day a man like him is elected to office.

It is quite possible. An election, a Leader type elected, on the promise he'll do Something About The Menace. Some dirty dealing. A few snide comments in the press that the Constitution wasn't any sacred Bible or anything. And we have our beloved security. Deimey Pajas, Pax, the quiet of the Police State, enabling acts for Our Good.

Can one of you honestly point to a single trend or development which is not pointing the way towards Bigger And Bigger Government, towards the mentality that decrees that The State Knows What Is Good For Us? The Fascistic State marches forward, promising us Security like it was some sort of all-healing touch of Ghod. And we listen. And the State grows. And the People await their Neue Messiah.

1984, here we come. Ahead of schedule, if you please. I wonder if some day the Free World might be threatened by a Militant US?

Tangleweb

TANGLEWEB is the first in what I hope will be a series of articles for IPSO -- and, more importantly, I hope it will be an interesting series. TANGLEWEB will be the permanent title.

First, I will intrude on your eyeballs and write yet another article about Coventry. There are a few more things that I would like to say about it, some observations I have made.

Coventry is a leaky sieve -- it's sprung at the seams. This is no fault of Paul Stanbery's, nor yet of any of the others who inhabit/dream up the little world. I believe it was Marion Zimmer Bradley, who, in FAPA, pointed out that detailed fantasy is an adolescent rather than an adult project, so that Tolkien's lands stem from his youth, rather than his maturity. And similarly, Coventry is an adolescent affair, a teen-age adventure -- but unlike Tolkien's Middle Earth, Coventry bears the marks of plastic surgery and after-thoughts accrued in the course of time.

To give you some background.... It is known that Coventry originated in the minds of some early-teenagers in Pasadena, California, and was elaborated by them over the years and that the work was further expanded by Ted Johnstone of South Pasadena and that others contracted the dreamworld through him and that now there is a certain interest in it in fandom (together with a certain disinterest and dislike, but that's irrelevant.) Ted A. Johnstone ~~it~~ was who saw in Coventry a series of stories, possibly to be printed professionally eventually, and to write the stories in GIMBLE, the first two issues of which were riders with FANAC. Bruce Pelz has run Coventry material through SAPS. There was a large convention of Coventrians once at the Fan-Hilton last year, with considerable fun had with costumes, some of which were repeated at the Seacon masquerade ball. Neocoventrians appear at sporadic intervals.

Exactly what is Coventry? According to Stanbery, it was the name applied to a group of islands in the Arctic Ocean off the northern coast of Norway, located in an ice-free area of temperate climate maintained by volcanic action under the surrounding water. The first known inhabitants were a group of Hittite tribesmen who migrated there from Central Asia. Later inhabitants, Lombards, Mongols, Mongloidians, and Europeans from what are now Germany and Russia, came across the islands and settled. A long and detailed history of the wars and ruling families was drawn up, together with many other details, and a future history drafted. Enough was written down for the originators; latecomers find sometimes too much and sometimes too little information for their purposes -- and in attempting to add, extrapolate, and gain acceptance for their ideas find themselves sometimes working at cross purposes, curious and sad to say.

The history continues: Soviet tyranny lasted from 1921-1974. After World War III (1970-71) and the Russo-Chinese War (1970-76) Coventry found itself masterless. Tarpinian and Stanberian Governments-in-exile returned, but were troubled by the United States of Panamerica (Coventranian history is a long series of wars). Space flight began, and eventually the Venus colony rebelled. Antarctica became a scientific marvel. In 2055, Alpha Centaurus was reached. But man found his life becoming sterile and decided, in 2107, to equip a monstrous outpost, found in the asteroids, of a former interstellar race. In 2125 the ship, which had been fitted out with the land masses of the Coventranian islands, was launched. Why those land masses? Because a 19th century atmosphere flourished there, so it was duplicated. 200,000 persons were put on board, their memories erased. In addition, 144,000 guardians, their mental makeup determined from conception to be 19th Century types, were to control the ship and remain isolated from the "inhabitants." Affairs are to be kept carefully at status quo. The various stories written by Johnstone and others occur circa 2348, in a medieval-to-19th Century atmosphere.

I've omitted the philosophy from the above; there are several developed philosophies embodied in the Covenant. Paul could give you a debate on his philosophy, if he wished, that might be interesting.

Now, I've said Coventry is a leaky sieve, and I'll prove the point. It's a polyglot of sciencefiction and fantasy stories and local's jumbled in together. Tolkien lands -- Gondor, Moria, Eriador, Rhondor, Rhûn, und so weider -- contend with names out of history -- Prussia, Charleston Bay -- and neonyms out of history -- New Scotland, New America -- together with names out of darkest sword-and-sorcery -- Aquilonia, Lankmar -- and science fiction -- Linn, Futurania -- cross swords with Pasadena places. I suspect (and I haven't had time to check out the theory, but it looks right) that the later history was imposed bodily on the pre-20th Century era when the Pasadenans discovered science fiction and fantasy. Too many things are attempted. The earlier war games do not blesh so well with the interaction of favorite story-locales. In particular, if anyone ever gets any Coventraniana published in a prozine, the place names will have to be changed. The gentle reader will say, "Trantor? Linn? Why doesn't the author use original names rather than copy Asimov and van Vogt?" And if the 20th, 21st, and 22nd Centuries are examined, other names -- Gautama, Mephistopheles, Petronius (the arbitrator), Alexander, Nehemiah Scudder, Delos Harriman, Ledbetter -- become a handicap. Painfully so.

Then there are themes and inventions, other borrowings, other syncreticisms. The ship is a disc, powered by Spindizzies (James Blish's Okie series) with a Krell City base (Forbidden planet.) -- drawing heavily from Universe (Heinlein). The social structure is bound by the Covenant (again, Heinlein) and there is even a subsection of the Krell City run by Humanoid Robots, known as Wing IV. (Williamson). The Guardians are immortal, a la "To Live Forever" (Jack Vance) and Blish. The various countries exhibit the nature of the story they were drawn from: Linn's symbol is a Bohrian atom schematic.

As I said, it leaks -- or rather, the interlocking gears scream loudly, protestingly.

Certain complications arise forcibly, nastily. The disc is referred to as a thousand miles in diameter (but this is one appraisal). There is a 15 mile thick rim of "polar" ice inside to keep the inhabitants from realizing that the ship is a closed system and not a part of earth. Applying the formula: 475 miles squared and times pi equals an interior area of 707,000 square miles. Using the map in Gimble # 2, I would estimate

that between one fourth and one fifth of that figure is land area, because there is a large "polar region" and a lot of sea. Shall we say, 150,000 square miles, or an area the size, curiously enough, of California. One third of this is in small island areas. Considering the coastlines, that knocks off more available land area. And portions are desert and wastelands. For comparison purposes, California has a population of 10, 586,000; a population density of 70 per square mile.

Various suggestions have been made to explain the official "Pauline" statement of vast populations. The population might be schizoid, each acting as two, three, a dozen people, or under the hypnotic suggestion that there are that many people around. Or they could be in shifts, as was the population of Diaspar in Clarke's "The City and the Stars". Or the population might be split into threes. On the count of one, the first third squat down and the second third, which has been squatting, straightens up and the final third jumps in the air. Then the process is repeated, making Coventry a running, jumping, and standing still world. In practice, the experienced Coventrian (a) ignores the size limits and/ or (b) compartments his thinking rigorously. I've mentioned several times that Coventry should be expanded, looking fleetingly in the direction of the map in Gimble # 2 showing an ellipsoidal disc 600 by 900 miles in diameter and a land area of 2,200 square miles for the "inhabitants." Ghul!

The second point I want to bring up is that Coventry is still fun, despite the above and other factors. It's an intellectual challenge. If you're interested in writing stories, it's a fertile field. Not only do you have to use logic to reason your way through situations, you also have to be able to pull strings.

You see, there are certain other contradictory facets to Coventry. Because it is a science-fictional place, there is no sorcery. Yet there are elves in Coventry, with elvish powers. In Miraleste, which will be written up, are elves to ensorcel a travelling Grand Duke. And Pelz has a friend at the Gate, by which a flipped-back person can enter Coventry...at least for fictional purposes. Only -- what are the elves like? Stanbery clams up and you can see why.

The Covenant reads as follows: "To Serve Life,"

"To Cause No Damage to Any Living Thing,"

"And to Guard the Works of Man from Harm."

And so the weapons used are consecrated by the Church (the behind-the-scenes manipulator of all affairs of Coventrian life) -- so the guns would be paralyzers and the knives and swords vibro-blades of pseudo-matter, which would pass through without harming living flesh but would paralyze it. Yet Ted and Bruce have Stanbery's approval on stories where people have been hacked up and put beyond reach of medical science. (The Church revives the bodies and uses the people to colonize suitable worlds found in the course of the ship's travels -- so the Church wants healthy "dead" bodies, you see.)

One thing the local fen who were interested in Coventry tried to do was conduct a war game: the United Republics of New America vs. Tarpinia and Trensena.., the Dickensheets, Ted, Bruce, and I against the Tarpin Brothers, with Stanbery as Umpire. But the whole thing bogged down into where are the maps, Stanbery claiming that someone else had them and no, don't make new ones; (we never got the maps.) Our natural inclination was to send spies in to burn the enemy's harvest and arrange suicide squads of diseased soldiers and leave poisoned wine behind in evacuated cities, Dickensheet supplying us with the name of a particular fungus that caused first drunkenness then belligerence then collapse and finally death. But it went for naught -- all this was unhumane and against the will of the Church and had to be abandoned.

And of course, any war game had to leave the status just as quo when it finished as when it started, which was pretty quo indeed.

The problem with all these items is that the newcomers have set themselves to follow the Rules of the Game, with Paul Stanbery elected as Referee. Almost all of the originators with the exception of Stanbery and Rich Brown have gaffiated. So we press Paulus Edwardum Rex III for detail after detail and plan after plan, idea after idea and occasionally try to persuade him that our line of thought is better than his. Often enough, it seems he's taken lessons from Stonewall Jackson... but after all, it is his world, and better to have one arbitrary command than try to integrate the myriad schisms that would develop if we each went our own way.

For my part, many interesting possibilities present themselves. What exactly would be the effect on a person who lived 223 years (2348-2125) in a static environment, an antiquated set of islands and mainlands, for the most part -- and went from time to time to the various portions of the Krell City and whatnot of the Guardians running the show? Invent a character intelligent enough to win his way from the ranks of the commoners to control of a country and prove himself valuable enough to be initiated into the Mysteries of the Church, and come in two centuries to doubt himself and his abilities? Such a person is Rosharn the Tenth, Steward of the combined kingdoms of Gondor and Arnor, aka Jack Harness.

Coventry is a meeting place for ideas. You can always smuggle in little ideas and pet wishes, such as a particular book that never was printed on Earth but that could exist on the chinese-puzzle world. You can have quite a complicated plot going on a stage that has plenty of barbaric and retarded kingdoms with a band of immortals who run things with a philosophical mandate through the Church when in reality the world is a large spaceship underneath that goes from star to star exploring an colonizing... only actually there are some supernatural forces at work occasionally....

You see what I mean? Coventry leaks at the seams -- because it is a kid gang dream elaborated upon for stories and actions by adults. And while the basic structure is there, and the final gold encrustations put in place, whole walls and floors are missing. It's like the palace in "By His Bootstraps".

Possibly the cross-struts and guy-wires can be assembled by teamwork eventually, so that the anomalies are reconciled. In which case, the other danger is encountered of making affairs too rigid for a newcomer to do anything. If a newcomer can't create, he won't join. And again, exactly how hard can we press Stanbery for details? How much egoboo can one headstrong person get out of co-ordinating the Ship of State? For then answers to these and many other exciting questions, such as whether I can get my Rosharn opus completed, tune in at whatever later date pleases you. And remember, please -- all this is my own idea of the situation, and is not necessarily the official version of Stanbery or of the CIAWOT (Coventry Is A Waste Of Time) Society. There hasn't been time to submit the final version of this article to anyone.

There -- I've had my say.

I've been wondering if IPSO would benefit from a reduction of "official" subjects -- to 2 per year, say. That way we would have articles on the topic one mailing, and comments on the articles next mailing, final comments, smaller in number, the third as we take the second subject. Comments? And I don't think the idea of a "forum" editor will work out. It's always the sentence that was omitted that was your best work. (a similar system of tabulating and compartmenting comments was done in the CULT at times, and was a GoodaThing, if a novelty. But IPSO is larger.)

HOW DRAGGED WERE MY HEELS*

Everybody knows exactly how much sex there should be in science fiction. There is even a pious platitude on the subject, which everybody dutifully mouths every time the subject is brought up, after which everyone beams, confident that the last word has been said on that. I'd better put it down here, and get it over with;

"Sex is okay in science fiction if it's part of the story, but it should never be dragged in by the heels for its own sake."

That sounds fine. But like all pious platitudes, it serves only the purpose of an easy substitution of real thought on the matter. What exactly does this mean? What sort of sex is justifiable in science fiction? Even more aptly, what sort of sex can we point to, saying "This was dragged in by the heels."

The extremes are easy to spot. Philip Jose Farmer has written several books which embody serious inquiry into alien mores and manners in other times and places; not even the worst prude or idiot could justifiably call these stories prurient or pornographic in intent. VENUS PLUS X, like BRAVE NEW WORLD, is a satire on our own time, and deals largely with our own sexual mores; in both of these, the depiction of sexual manners both alien and familiar are justifiable and form "an integral part of the story." Let us leave aside for a moment the tricky question as to whether sex forms a suitable subject for scientific exploration at all. I think we can agree that Farmer and Sturgeon use sex as a necessary part of their gestalt, and that their artistic consciences are clear.

But how do you draw the fine line in cases less clear-cut? At the other extreme--laws of libel, and the postal regulations in the USA, being what they are, I won't name names -- you have the writer who turns out a novelette or paperback original for some magazine or paperback house, such as Beacon Books or VENTURE, where the editor is known to be receptive toward strong sex scenes, where his writers are urged to write "strong, realistic, human" stories. The writer knows the editor observes no taboos except the basic ones of mailability. But it is not fair to assume that the writer has deliberately injected sex into his story to make it more acceptable to the editor. We need not assume that he has "dragged in sex by the heels" when he permits his hero and heroine to engage in various popular indoor sports. Possibly he is simply writing, for this permissive climate, what he would have been writing all along if he had been allowed to do so.

There are some writers who believe, in all sincerity, that a story with no mention of sex when two characters of

*Copyright 1961 by Marion Zimmer Bradley. All rights reserved, especially that of quoting excerpts out of context.

assorted gender are presented, is unrealistic and hypocritical. Their argument --and it may well be a valid one,-- runs like this;

"Sex is a part of life. My story deals with real people. Real people have sexual drives. If these two people were together in real life, they would obviously have some sexual reaction, either positive or negative, toward one another. If I do not deal with this, I am shirking a very real issue in my story."

Obviously this author is not sitting down and deliberately cooking up sex scenes to give the reader a buzz. He is presenting two characters; the development is such that they **act out all their drives**, including the sexual, in the reader's eye rather than outside the context of the story.

This must be respected. On the contrary, this begs the question of the entire assigned topic. If stf by its nature is a fiction of ideas, the introduction of a sexual element may detract from the ideational nature of the material. (I said, may detract. I am equally willing to examine the probability that it may add; but we should in all fairness examine the contention that it will at times detract.) By its very nature, stf is not realistic fiction. It is either fantasy or logical extrapolation. The argument against sex here would be that unless one were using s-f as a satire for the purpose of shedding light on present-day mores, sex is misplaced in stf because it can be better dealt with in the context of today; that the realistic approach to man's personal, emotional and sexual problems should be laid against his real environment rather than an imaginary one; that problems of sex should be dealt with in novels of the mainstream.

The writer who is genuinely dedicated to realism, in stf or elsewhere, will look on this argument as footling. He will say vehemently; "But that's just evading the issue! People are people! Sex is just as much a part of life on Mars or on board a spaceship, as it is in Greenwich Village, 1962!"

And his opponent will declare with equal vehemence that "Yes, but that isn't why we write stf! If you want to write sex novels, why not write mainstream novels?"

Now they have both stated their cases reasonably. However, if they want to fight, they go on like this;

"But I don't want to write about sex, I just want to handle the sex realistically in a science fiction novel!"

Whereupon the opponent of sex in science fiction will draw himself up and deliver what is meant to be his crushing final argument;

"Yeah, but elimination is part of life too, and you don't tell about every time your hero visits the plumbing."

And if the defender of sex has any sense, he won't answer this. Not because there isn't any argument left, but because anyone who holds a view as extreme as all that is unconvinced anyhow, and argument a mere waste of the time of both parties. In an extreme case, "who has the last word" is immaterial. Keeping on after this point usually means that things get pretty messy and at the very least, names are called and friends are lost.

However, he does have a point. Extremists in realism can get so preoccupied with "not leaving out any part of life" that the main march of their story is lost in a lot of compulsively-

mentioned details; they feel that they are shirking a vital issue if their hero doesn't stop and go to the bathroom every four or five hours. The extreme example, of course, is Rabelais' description of a day in the life of Gargantua or Pantagruel, complete with every wind-breaking, nose-wiping, belch or other physical function. He carries realism to its extreme. There are those who extravagantly admire this sort of thing, and I admit it can serve as an effectual antidote to the other extreme-- where the hero can spend five days tied up in the ship's hold and emerge smelling only of manly sweat. The works of Henry Miller take a Rabelaisian view of life, and even the U.S. Supreme Court has admitted artistic purpose to that view of life.

Set against this, of course, is a perfectly cogent and sensible argument --to which devotees of Rabelais and Miller refuse any validity -- that a piece of fiction exists in a particular gestalt or context. Private functions are acceptable only in certain contexts; fiction being selective, the compulsion to discuss in fiction (a public context) matters which are usually reserved for private contexts, is exhibitionistic and should be discouraged unless unavoidable. Even the old maids who censor books for adolescents in high school libraries do not usually object to the discussion of a bowel movement in Norhoff and Hall's classic of starvation on the high seas, MEN AGAINST THE SEA: the narrator is a doctor and he is reflecting on the way the bodies of the sailors have reacted to starvation. This, they would say, is an acceptable context for the discussion of a private function. And there are many writers who would agree. Just as children are taught not to play with their dirty diapers, a growing artistic maturity --they contend-- will outgrow the compulsion to parade on paper one's knowledge of sexual matters. An adult's sex life, they say, is his own business; just as your friends do not discuss their marital experiences, so the characters in a book "deserve some privacy."

A word here should be said in defense of school librarians. They must guard against the narrowest-minded parents in the community, not against the vast average. One outraged puritan can do more harm to a school library than the 99 tolerant and permissive parents who are content if their young are not explicitly instructed in the elephantine books. They are occasionally forced to take the pragmatic approach --"What will the parents stand for?" to keep their libraries open at all; rather than the ideal approach of "Have the parents any right to censor their kiddies reading?" If you bring up the begged question as to whether a closed library may not be as good as a censored one, I must shrug my shoulders and say that I have no immediate answer.

We have gone far afield into the ethics of the artistic conscience per se. Now let us return to our subject, and discuss sex in science fiction in the light of a few specific cases.

The far extreme of science fiction is; no sex at all. What one writer called "obscenely sexless." This, of course, does not refer to such stories as ALAMAGOOSA, where the subject dealt with has absolutely no sexual application, but those tales where --for instance-- a spaceman and a girl spend six months on an uninhabited planet, and the subject never once comes up. Yet they are "in love" and when rescued they marry. Now I ask you!

It isn't as silly as it sounds from that flat denunciation. The story is concerned with some other context, perhaps. Men and women do work together without sexual involvement. The personal context of the story, perhaps, is concerned with some other basic drive, and their personal lives are left outside the story; the reader can assume what he likes about what they do "between chapters." One cannot here use the "realistic" criterion; the story is fantasy, and deals with a single fantastic gestalt. Sex here would indeed be gratuitous.

And, sometimes, is. Very silly things can happen when a writer of straight s-f, existing outside a sexual context, decides that he must move with the times and starts writing sex into his stories simply because most s-f nowadays deals with some sex. The goofiest example I can think of, offhand, comes not from a Galaxy Beacon Book, but from a writer whom, otherwise, I admire tremendously as a creator of s-f, and virtually love as a man; fandom's own beloved "Doc" Smith. THE GALAXY PRIMES is a tragedy of what can happen to a writer of traditional stf when he tries to be "modern."

E E Smith, on his own level, is a superb creator of science fiction of a particular kind; the almost-epic fantasy. THE GREY LENS-MAN is probably the best thing of its kind ever written. And that E E Smith can handle real people, and create emotional situations beautifully, is evident to anyone who has read CHILDREN OF THE LENS. Some people don't like this kind of story; "it's just too damn galactic." I do. And I remember EEEvans writing to me once about CHILDREN OF THE LENS, in regard to my commentary on the superb emotional scene in which Chris receives her second-stage from her son, "I dig it out and re-read it every few months." E E Smith is a master writer --on his own level.

But I maintain that THE GALAXY PRIMES is probably the worst example of dragged-in-by-the-heels sex in all the literature. An absolutely inordinate part of the story is obscured by two of the main characters--not in the fact that they sleep together, but by their endless discussion and wangling about when, where and how. It is naive, and it is embarrassing. E E Smith is writing out of context.

He is not simply a goop about writing-about-sex-in-stf. In that same GALAXY PRIMES, there is rather a good bit of rationale about why the "Primes" do not interbreed with the natives of the various planets.although I admit that to me, it sounded dangerously as if the author were trying to give his heroes an acceptable reason for not being conventionally promiscuous.

And much of the heavy-handed sexual discussion in GALAXY PRIMES was just as embarrassing to me as if that dear decent hearty old gentleman himself had walked into the convention hall clad

only in fresh air and a few inches of striped socks. There are people who could do this, and it would be acceptable; they would simply be demonstrating the courage of their convictions. But in E E Smith, it is appalling.

I think a similar gratuitous example appears in Poul Anderson's THREE HEARTS AND THREE LIONS. Poul never descends to the naively salacious, but at times his emphasis is misplaced. The first time he uses the device of some shuddersome alien entity lurking outside to seize the hero when he "has unholy thoughts" --i.e. when he permits himself to think sexually of one of the beautiful girls in the story -- this is effective and chilling. The second time it is less so, and the third time, the reader groans and says "Oh, no! Not that again!"

There are--as I said ~~before~~ good reasons for a story to ignore sex. I am thinking at the moment of Tolkien's masterly evocation of Aragorn's indifference to any woman but Arwen; in THE RETURN OF THE KING, last of the series, there is a moment when Eowyn almost literally throws herself at Aragorn; and he, gently but very firmly, rejects her. This particular point always seems apt to me, because at one time I happened, for my sins, to get hold of a whole succession of historical-legendary novels of the I-SLEPT-WITH-JULIUS-CAESAR persuasion, in which the heroes bedded down as many females as they conquered cities. When I read that particular sequence--or rather, when I re-read it critically for the purposes of my PALANTIR paper --I amused myself imagining how Frank Yerby or someone would have handled the relationship between Eowyn and Aragorn, or how some of the sex-in-every-chapter boys would have impugned the hero's masculinity, because he failed to demonstrate sufficient masculine interest in the gal. After all, they would deliver their rationale, it isn't realistic. Verily, and amen; it isn't. Realism here would be grotesque.

As it happens, I don't like that scene between Aragorn and Eowyn. (I always identify with Eowyn, you see, and my feminine vanity is wounded, I guess. I feel rejected.)

Heinlein, I think, strikes a nice balance for the kind of story where the sex is underplayed. I ought to remark that I have not yet read STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND: I've ordered the book, but it hasn't caught up with me yet. In TIME FOR THE STARS, the adolescents aboard the starship are chaperoned, yet take a normal interest in each other. And in THE PUPPET MASTERS, sex never forms a context of the story (except where Mary diagnoses two "zombies" by their lack of normal interest) yet no one could accuse Heinlein of "ignoring" the relationship between Sam and Mary. In short, sex is neither intrusive by its presence or ridiculously conspicuous by its absence. This may, just possibly, explain why THE PUPPET MASTERS is the only Heinlein novel for which I have any real affection. DOUBLE STAR and THE DOOR INTO SUMMER left me indifferent on a second reading, LUMMOX and HAVE SPACESUIT, WILL TRAVEL struck me as idiotic, and I never could struggle the rest of the way through THE STARSHIP TROOPERS.

There is also what one could call the "halfway realistic" approach to sex in science fiction. This would apply to such novels as THE DEMOLISHED MAN, or J T M'Intosh's ONE IN THREE

HUNDRED, where the characters have-- along with their other problems-- some sexual problem or other within the framework of the story, and it is simply dealt with as it arises; neither ignored nor made an undue focus of interest. I suspect that this is the ideal at which the pious platitude quoted at the beginning of this paper is aimed, but I personally think it can apply only to a certain type of story and excludes too much at both ends. The amount of sex included in THE DEMOLISHED MAN would conceivably be too much in a novel of pure adventure. And cutting VENUS PLUS X down to that level would be an unwarrantable restriction on the author's freedom of subject matter and treatment.

The sex novel per se probably made its first bow in science fiction with Phil Farmer's THE LOVERS; and I do not use the term sex novel in any disparaging sense, but a genuinely descriptive one. It deals, definitely and specifically, with a problem in sexual mores; and it does so validly and well. Unfortunately, seeing the success of this book, other editors and other writers have jumped on the bandwagon and imitated the sexual freedom of expression without imitating the context of the story which made the sex a legitimate preoccupation. As the editor of my college text of Rabelais said; the editor of any dirty book will call it "Rabelaisian" and the casual reader will look for obscenity and usually find it; not because obscenity is all there is to Rabelais, but because obscenity is the only Rabelaisian quality which any fool can imitate. Thus one could say; sex is not all there is to Philip Jose Farmer, but it is the only thing which the ordinary writer can imitate. They proliferate, and only Sturgeon exists on an equally high level. The editors may be to blame for this.

I know personally of two unpublished science fiction novels, and I am positive there are at least a dozen others in existence, which deal with science fictional subjects on a level of erotic realism. One is my own; and parts of this novel were confiscated by the United States Post Office when I stupidly displayed portions of it to the wrong people. In essence, the purpose was honest; to portray the fashion in which a love affair would intertwine and interweave with the entire community life among a race of telepaths where no secret desire, no matter how unconventional, could be hidden or repressed. The other novel -- mailable, but probably unprintable as it stands -- was written by a fan who has done no professional work, and deals with the possibility that homosexuality will very possibly exist as a preliminary condition among all-male spaceship crews. The question arises; will such novels ever become publishable? SHOULD they?

(Erratum; for "unprintable" above, read "unpublishable for the average trade-list publisher.")

And since we've brought up the subject, what about such unbreakable taboos, for magazine, fiction, as homosexuality? I think we should examine them, as editors are forced to do. Some people say "Away with all taboos." Are we to have tolerance only for that viewpoint, and be wholly intolerant of those who would like to retain some areas for private rather than public contexts? As an offended writer, I personally would like to see the taboos go. But have I the right to force my own views of life on the reading public?

I spoke on a previous page of the proliferation of sex-problem novels in science fiction. Eric Maine's WORLD WITHOUT MEN deals with the invention of an "absolute contraceptive", and takes the to-me-untenable position that the normal kind of procreation would therefore cease; the idea being that no woman would EVER agree to bear a child if she could possibly get out of it by a foolproof method. This may say something about the author's experience with women --I don't know. He proceeds along a perhaps-logical sequence of a race to invent parthenogenesis, a disappearance of the normal male from the earth, and the logical notion that everybody would immediately turn lesbian. If I disagree with all these premises, I suppose I am free to write a story refuting them, and stating that --given Maine's parthenogenesis-- an almost completely sexless race, like worker bees, would evolve.

And some writers --Judith Merrill in a book whose name I have forgotten--glanced on the possibility that future spaceship crews or colonies on the moon, all-male, would have to compensate for possible repressed homosexual desires in themselves. Jerry Bixby, in SHARE ALIKE, has made almost the same point in a rather shuddery story of a man who enjoys contact with a (male) vampire. But must we now have a rash of stories whose authors feel conscientiously obligated to deal with the inevitable problem of homosexuality' rearing its ugly head' in every spaceship story from now on, just because that problem is well and truly dealt with in one or two such stories? The writing on the wall might indicate that perhaps we must. The context of today decries male friendship to the point where the Hero and his Faithful Sidekick are no longer an acceptable story-material.....someday remind me to print my commentary on the something-or-other person who described Batman and Robin in those terms. And yet I wonder if this can't be as grotesque as the compulsive attempt to prove via fiction that the hero and his girl couldn't live chastely in a spaceship for two weeks. I'm thinking of Tolkien again, perhaps because this point recurred so often in my paper on Men, Halflings and Hero Worship. The "Mount Doom" sequence, Sam's care for and emotional preoccupation with Frodo, the growing closeness and intimacy between them, the intensely emotional and moving quality of their love for one another, certainly places this in the category of classic David-and-Jonathan friendships. And you know what our hypothetical compulsive seeker of Freudian realism would say about that!

I emphasize this point because it was forcibly called to my attention when a friend suggested that I should include the last two of the Tolkien series on my annual listing of fiction dealing with homosexual and variant themes. I pooh-poohed the notion, as did my co-editor. However, once the point had been raised in my hearing, I discussed it -- not to put too fine a point on the matter --with several persons who, to my knowledge, were capable of at least an emotional response and/or reaction to their own sex. All agreed on one point; that this portrayal was both innocent and at the same time particularly moving for

the quality of unselfish love and devotion expressed. All -- to my mild surprise, being used to hearing some of these biased critics demand that David and Jonathan must be openly claimed among the homosexual aristocracy -- were in absolute agreement that Tolkien's "real" meaning could safely be left to a psychoanalyst and that the books should NOT be included on such a listing!

Once again we have wandered far afield, and made no conclusions except to reiterate our hoary old platitude; that sex should neither be dragged in by the heels nor swept under the rug in such a fashion as to leave untidy lumps and blank patches. ARE there no new conclusions to be reached on such a subject?

I have been accused of writing too much about sex in my own science fiction -- at least by editors. (I have also been accused, by editors of my mainstream books, of writing too little. See?) I consider present-day manners and mores to be gravely in need of reappraisal, and I suppose that when I leave the modern context and range afield into the past and future, I permit myself to speculate -- perhaps overmuch -- about the effect of differing social codes on the end result in the lives of the characters. I do not believe my work has been unduly censored at any time, though. I am thinking in particular of THE PLANET SAVERS, printed in AMAZING STORIES, where toward the end of the story the hero, Jason, twice dismissed his unwelcome alter ego, Jay, by making a sexual advance to Kyla, the free-Amazon guide in the story.

At one point Jason is making love to Kyla and I finish the scene with him kissing her. Shift to next morning. Did they continue their love-making beyond that point? I never said.

At the climax of the story, however, when Jason renounces the hope of a life of his own with Kyla, I wrote "It wasn't the end. She--pleaded with me, and I didn't know how I resisted. But at last she ran away crying, and I threw myself down by the fire, hating myself..." Now. In my original version, "But before morning I felt her arms around my neck...." Kyla has returned, saying "At least I'll have you while I can." Cele Goldsmith cut this scene, leaving it at the point where Kyla ran away.

Am I angry? Offended? Miffed? NO. The point I was making in this story was not a sexual conflict, but an emotional one. If the reader wishes to assume that Kyla and Jason carried their love-making to conclusions, I don't particularly care. If, conversely, he wishes to assume that they found enough satisfaction in kissing and exchanging words and pledges of love, that's all right too. In all honesty, I never really bothered to stop and figure it out for myself; that was entirely their own business. I was concerned with their emotions --- concerned with their actions only insofar as they affected the progress of the story. Why Jay rejected Kyla, and why Jason found her attractive, was far more important in the context of this story than precisely what overt expression they gave to their feelings. Who cares? Not me, certainly.

And I think that if the author handles the emotional context of the story rightly, then the amount of overt sex to be portrayed is immaterial. He can write as little as his tastes dictate, or as much as the editor permits, and still produce an honest story. And if the feeling is false, no amount of bedspout, or lack of it, will prevent him from producing, whatever his aim, a dishonest one.

PHAROAH

#2



YOU ARE NOT
DANNY'S BROTHER!

SAMMY'S
COUSIN?

For all who care to know, this publication is Pharoah #2, published in order for Lenny Kaye to retain membership in the International Publisher's Speculative Organization and will be in the fifth mailing of that noteworthy group. This is also Profitless Publication #6 run off on the irredoubtable Pyramid Press. For future historians, this is being prepared on March 31, 1962, which is cutting the deadline a trifle close. And by the way, editor/publisher of this ? is Lenny Kaye, 418 Hobart Rd., No. Brunswick, N.J. in the U.S. of A. Now let us proceed onward.

Verily, I am honored. John Berry called me a ghood Man. John Berry called me, Lenny Kaye, struggling young faned, a Ghood Man. I cannot get over it. I am flabberbagasted. (My spelling has suffered from it too.

I skipped the last mailing for two reasons. First, and foremost, I had little, if anything to say about Robert Heinlein. Second, and just as important, I was behind terrible in mail, was working on Obelisk like a fiend (It's still unfinished, which shows my enthusiasm...) and I just felt a general lack of enthusiasm. The high requirements of IPSO have prompted me to get busy on this publication, which is a halfway decent good sign.

On the subject of Sex in S-f, I am again, sorely lacking in information. I have read very little s-f in the past year and a half. This kind of gafia probably stems from A- a general loss of time and B- I have read s-f steadily for 3 years prior to entering fandom. During that time, I have read very little outside material. (Used the wrong verb tense-- change "have" to "Had#). Now I find myself bored with science fiction. I am concentrating on outside fiction now. I have discovered that s-f isn't ghod. Ayn Rand, Jack Kerouac, and J.D. Salinger hold more enjoyment for me than Robert Heinlein, Clifford Simak and A.E. Van Vogt. I find more pleasure in reading Advise and Consent than in, say, Slan. (Which, incidentally, says much for AandC.) I suppose that I will find a middle ground soon, with outside material interspersed with s-f, but that doesn't solve what I've put forth just now.

Which is why, I can't talk to authoritavely (spelling?) on the set subject. But judging by common sense and previous experience the opinions I put forth will be reasonably valid.

Sex and S-f don't mix.

This is not to be confused with the times where sex is a legitimate and much needed part of the story.

This is the sex for sex's sake such as exemplified in Galaxy's Beacon Novels.

I realize that s-f does not command a large market and I also realize that sex is a big seller where books and magazines are concerned. So it is only natural that some enterprising ~~authoritative~~ editor with a set of presses at his command would think of combining the two.

Which, I suppose, is the Beacon novels were invented.

It is my firm opinion that those novels did more to hurt science fiction than anything Ray PalmShaver did.

Picture a normal, everyday man. He calmly saunters into the corner

candy-store to pick up some reading matter. He walks over to the paperback rack and slowly flips the pages of several pocketbooks. He picks up any Beacon Novel. Either one of three things happens:

He flips the pages, and sees:

"Crash Carew flipped the stud of the 'Undress' button of his spacesuit. It fell in a heap at his feet. He slowly moved toward the voluptuous green Venusian girl. She smiled seductively and slid off her Plas-tex dress. It fell in a heap near Carew's space-suit. Suddenly, with a rush, he was upon her, madly smothering her with kisses...."

If he is a prude or an intellectual etc. he will replace the book on the rack.

Now, take case 2. He flips through it...misses the sexy parts, and takes it home. Can you imagine his disgust when he reads this. He thinks all s-f is bad and vows never to touch it again. (If he is an ordinary moron and likes the sexy parts, he'll be chased away from the field when he reads Analog anyway.)

Case three is where the guy likes the main thread of the plot and wants to read more. This, however, is a very rare case.

All unnecessary sex in s-f is bad. This goes for Earthman with Earthgirl, Earthman with Venus girl, earthman with venus-man etc. Bizarre or no, it is undoubtedly bad. If, though, the publisher insists on sex, the bizarre kind is preferable to the plain old staid earthy type. (After all, what are Nightstand and Fabian books manufactured for???)

The biological aspect is a lot better though. It at least shows the author's originality. And above all, sex should not be denied in s-f. It may make a story trashier, but a good story is a good story, sex or no sex. A full-scale restriction of sex, no holds barred, is a form of censorship...something that every true-thinking fan should avoid.

\$\$\$\$\$*

The above is all I have to say on the set subject, and I must say it is more than I had expected to say. The rest will be just Nattering, to borrow a John Berry word.

I am a collector of Pogo. Pogo, for all those not in the know, is a possum who resides in Okefenokee swamp and is the sole creation of Walt Kelly. He is a comic strip and I got the craze when George Bibby sent several Pogo books (which are just collections of his strips..I assume they have them in Britain as well as the U.S. of A.) Any one who has A- info on Pogo or B* old comic strips, Pogo books etc. would please write me and tell me so. I thank u.

Recent readings--*--*. The Naked and the Dead by Norman Mailer is a powerful book. It pulls no punches and gets right down to facts. It is the story of the Reconnaissance platoon and their recon assignment on the island of Anopopei.

Mailer is telling the story of Marines at war. It is a well-known fact that soldiers curse more than civilians and in this, Mailer's book is realistic. He makes his characters curse when necessary, when needed or for the hell of it. It is a good book. Read it (Signet, 75¢ in the U.S....I'm sure it's out in England.

To Kill a Mockingbird, by Harper Lee is masterpiece of beautifully told story. It is the story of a Southern Town which is rocked by a Negro's alleged assault of a white woman, and being told through the eyes of a

twelve year old, it takes on new and greater horrors. Various unconnected pieces of the plot fall neatly into place as the story is related and it is hard to believe that this is Harper Lee's first novel. It is, above all, a different and original novel. (Watch for the next edition of To Kill a Mockingbird come out and have on it "...above all, this is a different and original novel. --Pharoah").

I have also bought several records recently. Foremost among these is the Kingston Trio's album of "College Concert". It is a recording of the concert they gave at UCLA in California. They never sang any better and they never selected better songs. It is also interspersed with witty sayings and almost borders on the fannish. "Do not drink while Driving...You might hit a bumb and spill the whole thing!"

Micheal Babatunde Olatunji is a Nigerian drummer. He has his own vocal group and drummers and he has played at various nightclubs in New York. He is scheduled to appear at Carnegie Hall April 7 with his whole company.

He is nothing short of magnificent.

It is very seldom I rave this way over anything (the last thing I can remember is Kerouac's On the Road). He is magnificent.

He has two albums to his credit..."Drums of Passion" and "Zungo!" (He also has spot appearances in John Coltrane's "Common Ground" and several other albums.

He plays his native African songs, replete with words and vigorous, spirited drumming. Close your eyes and you can imagine you're in a tent in Darkest Africa, while the "Natives are Restless Tonight" etc.

Olatunji is an improviser of the first order. While his assistants beat out the main rythym, he goes off on drumming tangents off his own, winding in and out of the main theme.

But don't take my word for it. Try him yourself. He is really great Like I said up there...he is magnificent.

Ipsos Facto #4 wasn't bad at all. I enjoyed most of the contributions all made some sense and it was all fairly good. IPSO is turning into something for the better and for a new apa, it isn't doing as bad as many thought (and, I hesitate to admit, I too.) There are several things I am against in Ipsos, tho. First, the high activity requirements are too much. I am going to find it hard to make 3 out of 4 mailings and think that something like 8 pages each mailing (no...that's even worse.. I meant 8 pages every other mailing) would be good. Dissolve the minimum contribution and maximum contributions as they are worthless. I don't believe anyone should be limited.

One question. Are we, or aren't we allowed to use outside material in the mailing...I am foggy on that point and there is nothing in the constitution to clarify it for me.

I wonder what happened to all that talk that the world was supposed to end February 4th and 5th. I think that sort of didn't work out. On the Bob Newhart Show last week they had a takeoff on that. Quite funny. Showed the medium who had predicted it getting his furniture repossessed, a yelling crowd outside his door, etc. etc. Very funny.

Speaking of Newhart, he sometimes has very funny skits on his television show. Recently he had a take-off on the doctor tv shows naming it "The Young Janitors". ("Call for Chief Janitor Newhart...there's an emergency in ward 7...an intern dropped a tray of food...come quickly...there is an emergency...")

Anyone for a TV show with Lenny Bruce????

The last page. Good thing, too, for I have very little left to say.
(In fact, you might call it nothing to say, but that might be unfair.)

I have recently been noticing how much more display science fiction is getting. On WPRB, the FM station I constantly listen to, in the ad for the Princeton University Book Store they say "From Salinger to Science-Fiction" (which could only mean that they're telling their wide range of stock, but it still seems that they're at least plugging it.)

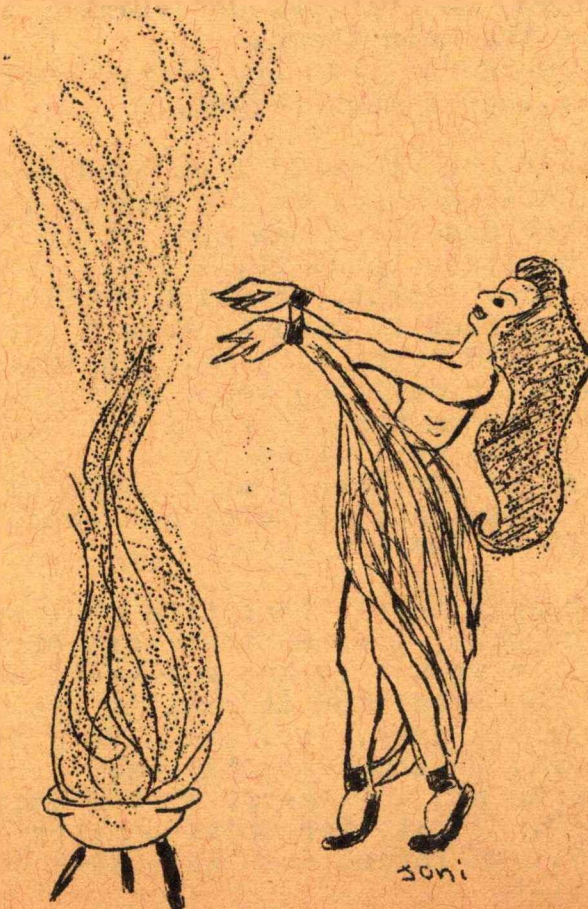
When I was in New York, I noticed how the Paperback Gallery in Greenwich Village ("Largest stock of Paperback books anywhere") has a prominently displayed selection of s-f...ditto with most other book stores I walked into.

Ah, yes...s-f is finally accepted (Should we laugh now or later.)

Instant Nostalgia dept.--- "Ladies and gentlemen...the management requests that the ladies remove their hats so one and all may see the antics of those crazzy cops in a laugh filled, pie filled adventure of the Keystone Cops. It's called "The Great Pie Robbery" or "Custer's last Stand" (fine that boy a nickel!)" I just heard it...honest to ghod...on the radio.

Well, pardons for this hastily put together issue of Pharoah, but the deadline just sorta snuck up on me from behind. Next issue I could promise will not be minaf, but then I could be sued for breach of promise or something. Which would be quite bad.

Until next time then...Eddie for Taff...DC in '63, New Brunswick in '86 and I go Pogo.



TED WHITE: UFFISH THOTS

I find myself joining this organization with some trepidations, for in his letter of invitation, Ted Forsyth admonished me, "you can write on any subject - provided you don't write "chitter-chatter."" This cripples me from the start, for my natural inclination in writing styles these days is towards a lighter, breezier approach, even in illuminating fairly serious topics. I see nothing wrong with this--to my mind it is vastly preferable to stolid plonking Serious Writing, and even more inclined to better put across Serious Points--and I object more than slightly to the use to which "chitter-chatter" is being put these days: to denigrate facile writing of the Berkeley school.

If Ted meant instead that he wished I wouldn't "natter" in the OMPA-SAPS style of Much Blather About Nothing, I wish he'd picked a better word or combination thereof. To me "chitter-chatter" (n., v., introduced in current usage by Boyd Raeburn in describing Ron Ellik c.1956; e.g., "Ron Ellik chitter-chatters like a squirrel." Now used in reference to the pseudo-Burbee writings of T.Carr et al, viz LIGHTHOUSE #4) refers to a form of light patter in writing which may be easy to attempt but is difficult to master. After struggling with the form since 1958, I've begun to develop my own style in it, and I'm sure it would agonize me deeply to be forced to rip this indigenous part of me, by the roots so to speak, from my system.

I won't have it, do you hear!

AN ETERNITY IN A JAM: If I had five years to live in a fantasy world, I haven't the vaguest idea where I'd go, and I'd probably spend the entire period in a quandary of indecision. Immediately some of the grander mythos came to mind, such as Tolkien's Middle Earth, Baum's Oz, and the like. But these were offset for me by a niggling desire to live in the world of Leo Edwards as a perpetual adolescent or...

My problem is that while I love to read, and become thoroughly enmeshed in books (if they're any good) while reading them, I do not go on afterwards to fantacize about them or try to spin out further tales for the characters. This is probably why I'm bum at fiction; to me reading fiction is my function, and to create a fully populated book or story would be akin to being God--and it might also reduce my enjoyment of the books I read as I came to understand their inner mechanisms. This prejudice is one I've had for many years now, even though these days I have enough of an analytical eye that I'm not totally blind to the construction of a good story. But still the problem is there: when I finish a book, I tend to dismiss it from my mind. I have no favorite world to which I periodically return unless it is by way of series stories, which I do have a liking for.

I can recall in my youth when reading was like as not to be interrupted by chores such as mowing the lawn that quite often I would have to leave off reading a book in a fairly exciting or interesting place, and my mind would fairly churn with speculation over the various characters and the possible outcome of the story or book. These days this rarely happens, for

I devore most books at one setting, and reserve easily left off books (often non-fiction) for my subway riding and such. In fact, only Tolkien's books and E. Nesbit's Five Children have occupied much discontinuous reading time. (After finishing the second section of Children, and reading the jacket blurb for the final section, I did dream an entire book to fit that third section, but I'm afraid my version was not a great deal like Miss Nesbit's...)

Baum's Oz still holds a great fascination for me, probably because of the nostalgia I feel over the fact that Land of Oz was one of my first books. These days Lin Carter and I have great discussions about Oz, since Fanoclast meetings are now held at his apartment and he has a fabulous collection of Oz oddities and first editions. In fact, when I said that I wished someone would continue the series in the old tradition, Lin beamed at me and said, "I have," whereupon he produced a booklength ms. which he'd written in 1953. Reading it was a particular joy, since not only had Lin blended the Baum and Thompson styles well, but the very fact that I was reading a book I'd never expected to encounter added zest. Now you see, it would never have occurred to me to continue the series for my own enjoyment, but I got a very special joy from someone else doing just that.

I was reminiscing with Avram Davidson one evening last fall--we were sitting in the old Towner Hall, sipping Pepsis--about boys' books. "Those were the days," I said. "The days of Rover Boys, Motorcycle Boys, Motorboat Boys, Hardy Boys, the Boy Scouts--" I know, intellectually, that the world those books, most of them published 1900 to 1930, paints is no more real than Baum's Oz, but I have a nostalgic longing for it too. I'm reminded of dusty attics in the homes of grandparents, uncles, aunts, distant brandes of the family--all lovingly searched during long summer hours for the old books that had been "put away when the children grew up"... My own collection is meagre, made up mostly of scavangings from Washington DC shops in the last five years, but from those borrowed copies plus the ones in the Church, School, and Town libraries I managed to read all of the Rover Boys books, nearly all the Tom Swifts, and one hell of a lot of others. My own collection includes the still in print Hardy Boys series, most of the Dave Dawsons, and a few of the recent British Biggles books. "There was one series which was really different," I said to Avram. "Right!" he said. "The Leo Edwards books!"

Edwards wrote four series, three of them interconnected, using the same cast but highlighting different characters as narrators. Avram dug into his immense knowledge of trivia and produced the names: "Poppy Ott, Andy Blake, Jerry Todd and Trigger Berg; I have some," he said. The next time I saw him he produced one for me, a Jerry Todd book, and I read it cover to cover.

Unlike most boys' books, in which the juvenile characters have a play at being adults and Catching Crooks and the like, Leo Edwards' books, which were told by one of the boys, centered around boyish activities in a small mid-western town which was achingly real to me. What really flabbergasted me, though, was the letter column in the front of the book. Edwards supervised a sort of fandom of his own, and interspersed with his good-humored chatter would be letters, club news, poems, and various other oddiments from the readers. The copy Avram loaned me had sixteen

pages of this, immediately following the title page of the book. This particular book lacked a feature I recall from earlier reading: many of the Edwards books included, at the end, a chapter from the middle of one of his other books. It was a very effective way to increase sales, but extremely frustrating to me, since I read copies salted away in out of the way places, usually singly and without recourse to any sequels or others of the series. (It was something of a job to piece together the Rover Boys mythos, for instance, especially since there were two series featuring them through all the schools, marriages, feuds, etc. that they endured.) I can still recall one of those "extra" chapters from a book I must've read while in the middle of grade school: the boys are swimming in the river and decide to explore a small island. As boys did, they were nude, and while they're prowling a lodge on the island, a girl scout troop or something like that shows up. The boys hide in barrels, and one is in imminent danger of discovery, when-- the chapter ended. I still don't know how that one worked out.

Only one recent science fiction book invested in me any desire to live in the world pictured: Gallun's The Planet Strappers. This is a remarkable blend of the old and the new in science fiction; modern space conquest coupled with the old individual spacing-by-initiative and lone miners in the Asteroids and like that. Gallun has worked out an elaborate rationale for this, and he shows the opening of space and development of space politics through the eyes of a group of college students who go into space, the "Planet Strappers" of the title. The vista he opens, of the eventual colonization of space itself (as opposed to just the planets in it) was awe inspiring, and I had a powerful urge to participate in it myself. This was one of those rare (for me) modern stf novels which I was sorry to put down. I recommend the book, with the cautionary note that my wife thinks I'm crazy for liking it...

SEX vs. SCIENCE FICTION: I believe in Sex. I think it's a fine thing, and I'm fully for a healthy participation in sexac by one and all. But--

That's the usual disclaimer used when a fan advocates keeping sex out of science fiction and vice-versa, and I'm annoyed by the attitude, which I regard as fully as purile as the one behind the late and unlamented Galaxy-Beacon Books...

I've read a lot about sex in the last few years, all the way from Ann Landers (ugh) to Albert Ellis. I've read most of the best "marriage manuals," Henry Miller (including his essays on sex, and the mammoth Rosy Crucifixion trilogy), and a lot of the mainstream novelists. And I've also read Heinlein.

To me it seems inevitable that sex have a place in science fiction as long as human beings are used as characters in stf stories, and quite possibly even when they're not. Sex, after all, has a place in human beings (and maybe Others), and no small role either. Our western culture has sought to suppress the actual role of sex in our daily lives, and in turn this has led to a greater mass preoccupation with sex, especially on the level of trivialities (ie: advertising's subliminal sex-sell). Thus our very preoccupation with the question of sex in stf--is there any question really but that sex does belong in stf? Only the

"traditional" absence of sex from popular fiction has created our problem, artificial as it is.

What is the place of sex in science fiction, then? A natural place. Whenever sex might obviously be expected to be manifested in the lives of the characters, either in the form of motivations or actual intercourse, of whatever sort, it should be there. Its absence makes a story look foolish. (An example: Heinlein's Tunnel in the Sky. In this juvenovel two members of a survival class marooned on a hostile planet live in a cave with each other for days, never stirring from its portals. Imagine Our Hero's shocked surprise when his companion turns out, after days of this communal living, to be a girl! Strangely, the jacket from the book advertises as another juvenovel Henry Gregor Felsen's Two and the Town, the plot of which revolves around a star-struck girl screwing the local high school football hero and then getting pregnant, and the consequences of this. It is, I might add, a very well done and realistic novel, and about the only one I ever heard of which a) dealt with the problem of a forced high school marriage, and b) was presented for the consumption of high school students.) Needless to say, the sex in most of the G-Beacon books was not natural nor realistic, and in several cases (Troubled Star for instance) the addition of the sex, after the fact so to speak, was quite obvious. The sequences did not fit.

Where is the borderline? (Morons do not drool over such scenes; they are put there for the edification of the frustrated--who are frustrated from both sex itself and a better grade of pornography---to masturbate by.) I think the borderline is obvious: sex is superficial and larded-in when it does not fit the context of the story and good character development. There are such stories (in adult fiction), but they are rare. (I think it's amusing that in Henry Miller's Plexus, a banned book, there are no sex scenes to speak of in the around 800 pages...)

Need the sex in stf be bizarre (or alien)? I presume this is in reference to Farmer. Frankly I think that if the author can justify the bizariness or lack thereof in his work that the amount and type is up to him.

What about homosexuality? Well, it's a taboo subject, fit largely only for iconoclastic thinkers and homosexuals. Inasmuch as science fiction makes considerable pretense to its unfettered thinking, I can't see any objection to homosexuality as a theme. Arthur C. Clarke suggested that if overpopulation became severe morality might do a flip-flop in favor of homosexuality, for an article in HARPERS some time back, and this might make an interesting story (and a better one than Beaumont's attempt in PLAYBOY a few years ago).

Four-letter words? As any reader of my review of Stranger in a Strange Land (VOID #28) knows, I condemn the book for the dishonesty of its vocabulary. As written, it demanded four-letter words, and it did not have them. Indeed, through the sacchrine prose it seemed to me I detected a rather Heinleinesque leer which mocked all the Fine Things he proposed for the liberation of sex. We need fewer hypocrites, and more honesty; and four-letter words are, in certain contexts, the only honest ones. Whether or not a stf publisher could defend an obscenity case in court on the usual meagre stf publisher's budget is a moot point.

I suppose that I could and should say a few words, at the very least, on the set subject for this mailing. Since this contribution will probably appear near the extreme end of IPSO FACTO No5, it may be unnecessary to state the obvious--that is that the topic of this Mailing is appropriately titled Sex in Science Fiction. A very fascinating subject about which many words have been written, and about which many more are certain to be composed in many unexpected places as well as in the current IPSO Mailing. I would like to give a few off-hand remarks on this subject but I have a couple of good (to me) reasons for not doing thus. So, I won't.

For one thing, I don't wish to risk parental disapproval of what I publish even though to you and I Sex in Science Fiction is a rather innocuous subject. It may not seem quite so harmless to my parents, unfortunately. Secondly, I have only been reading Science Fiction for about five years. As a result I feel a little self-conscious whenever I expound my opinions on any matter having to do with direct criticism or evaluation of the field. Like, I am always somewhat afraid that some old and tired fan will put me down as not having enough experience to discuss such a subject. Probably, he would be correct. So, I again state that I am not going to say anything about the set subject even though it took me two paragraphs to say so.

Then we have this optional subject; Publicity Schemes. Another seemingly excellent subject. When first apprised of my invitation to join IPSO by the OA and given a list of the possible subjects, I immediately knew that this would be the subject I would have to write on. Unfortunately, I failed to come up with a single idea on the subject -- maybe I am not the imaginative sort -- and was forced to discard the subject somewhat against my will. Strike two.

And that leaves "Fantasy Worlds" doesn't it? Oh well, I don't really want to discuss this subject either but I seemingly have little or no choice in the matter if I want to appear in the Mailing. So, the next three pages will contain some personal commentary on a rather odd form of Fantasy Worlds; hope you enjoy it.

In order to make the title appearing between these two little lines up there more appropriate to this page, I had best fill up a couple of paragraphs with commentary on the latest IPSO FACTO.

There are some excellent and thoroughly fascinating contributions in the mailing. Harry Warner, you in particular are to be lauded for your excellent and quite original manner of discussing Heinlein. This section of yours made much more interesting reading than those sections devoted to Heinlein which were little more than lists of stories. F.M. Busby, your comments on Heinlein were, also, quite worthwhile. I hate to see you drop out. Congratulatory messages should also be given to both Bruce Pelz and Ella Parker. I didn't expect to care for either of your contributions (especially your's Bruce, Coventry usually bores me.) There are lots of other good stuff in the Mailing and I wish I could comment more fully upon it. If I'm going to say anything formal on a set subject, however, this would be an impossibility. So, read on and I'll see you next time round.

THREE PAGES IN THE MARMALADE

I am rather curious as to just how many people have built up their own little personal worlds of fantasy. I would guess that any possible answer to this question would have to rest upon a definition-- an acceptable definition--of the term "Fantasy Worlds". Are fantasy worlds just these highly complicated societies such as the Middle Earth, the world of John Carter's Barsoom, and so many many others--including, of course, such things as Coventry (highly complicated fantasy worlds?) Or should one include the worlds that people create themselves out of longing for a life that they do not have and know within themselves that they will never have. Worlds these are that are not built to extremes but simply a place into which a person can escape from the level of existence known as reality. These "Worlds" are only complicated to the degree that a person can experience some facet of belief when they cast aside their daily existence to spend some time in their world of fantasy. Maybe these levels of existence should be classified as "daydreams" rather than as full fledged fantasy worlds. An interesting concept nonetheless.

Most, if not all, of the members of IPSO who saw fit to write on the theme of "Fantasy Worlds" in the last Mailing wrote of the highly complicated type of world. These "Fantasy Worlds" are seemingly as complicated and as deep in concepts as the previous level mentioned known, laughingly, I assure you--as reality. I don't really have any worthwhile reason for this. Perhaps fans who have been constantly exposed to complicated worlds of fantasy in their reading matter are more inclined to go all out when they build up their own private (usually) worlds of fantasy. Possibly, fans are just more imaginative than mundane types.

There are similarities, however, between the fannish worlds of the marmalade as chronicled here in IPSO, and the mundane world of the daydream. In all fantasy worlds, I would venture to say, the builder of the world imagines himself as something he will never be. Whether this fantasy alter-ego is a movie star, or a hobbit battling to the death with a flock of Orcs is of little importance. The fact remains that everyone builds up their fantasy worlds of their own mind, simply in order to become something they are not. But, then, what other reason could a person ever have for building a fantasy world?

To become more personal and less objective (and hopefully more readable) I ought to state here that I have my own personal fantasy worlds, myself. I have never built one up to the complication of Coventry and hopefully I never will do so. You see, I am basically a lazy person; uninclined towards going all out in such a thing as a personal Fantasy World. I could never live in one of these worlds for five years or, even, five minutes. They are far too crude to allow such a situation to occur. While living in my world I would be certain quickly to discover some important detail necessary for existence had been left out and I would perish or, even worse, end up back in 'reality' again.

My fantasy worlds -- I hesitate to use this term, but what else will fit? -- are probably more imaginative games than anything else. I can probably trace my interest in such things back to when I was, oh, six or seven years of age. At that time I used to gather up the other neighbourhood

kids and put on small plays (I guess that's what you'd have to call them) for the adults and others. Sometimes, I would take these things from films I had seen or comic books I had read. More often than not, however, I would create them myself. I would build up these little creations to the point where they were complete plays -- completely ad-libbed, of course -- and quite good for a seven-year old I might add. These weren't always fantasy, (I wasn't too interested in such crazy things at the time) but occasionally they were. You might classify these playlets as fantasy worlds, in a way.

I used to, also, build up my own games out of a couple of sheets of paper and a pair of scissors. If some idea for a game came to my mind, I would sit down and design the game. They were often playable, too, and were usually designed so that I could do it myself. Usually, the game would be almost immediately discarded and I would go on to something else. Read a comic book or look over my ever-growing collection of Bubble gum cards. Often, I might add, I would never finish the game. Either I would find the idea to be unworkable or I would simply lose interest in it. Again, you would find me with my Bubble gum card collection.

This contact with imaginative games has probably been the major vehicle that got me interested in creating personal fantasy worlds. These 'Worlds' are usually drawn haphazardly on a sheet of paper with the continents, islands, major cities, rivers and so on marked in. The continents and separate nations are then given names. I usually have locked up inside my mind some sort of picture as to what the various nations are like, what type of people live in them, what their political system is like, and such things. Usually my time is spent then mapping out small struggles between the countries for power. Say such and such a nation has no border on the sea and wishes a port, and that there is a very small nation neighbouring the larger former country. Then after building up the basic premises I work from there with either the larger or smaller nation coming out on top depending on my mood. I usually do this sort of thing in moments when I have nothing else to do or simply don't feel in the mood for doing anything constructive. Usually the sheets of paper containing the necessary facts are tossed in the wastebasket when I'm done and I forget completely about the world until another opportune moment comes along. Some day I'm going to take this thing seriously and really build up something. Unfortunately, such an occurrence would probably land me in a Mental Hospital. In the cell next to Bruce Pelz undoubtedly. I have always been a rather unlucky sort.

But these worlds are all my own. Completely private. As far as I know no one knows of the existence of these private worlds except myself. I don't think that even if, say, I did build up my own world into a large complicated bit of pseudo-reality I would like anyone to share it with me. Fantasy worlds really ought to be private matters. I can't understand Stanberry....but then that's another story.

Oh yes, the question. If you remember, (I almost forgot, myself) those writing on the topic of Fantasy Worlds or Five Years in the Marmalade were supposed to answer the following: "If you could spend five years in a fantasy world, where would you go, and why?" For the last two pages I have been quietly avoiding the topic. Thankfully, I have my notes here beside me now and know that all I have to do is to turn the page and I'll

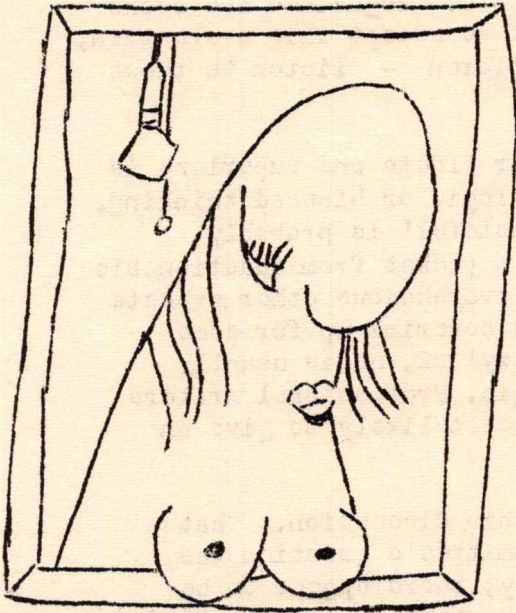
find out the answer to the question.

I don't feel that I would really care to live in a world created by some other self-made creator other than myself. If I had a chance to go to a world other than this world I wouldn't want to spend my time living in a world created by someone else; whether that someone is Robert Heinlein, J.R.R. Tolkien, Edgar Rice Burroughs, or Paul Stanberry, matters little to me. But, as I have already mentioned, I find that it is quite impossible for me ever to exist in a world of my own creation. I simply haven't ever built up a world in which this would be possible. And I am not going to make one up now just for the happiness of being able to say that I, too, can spend five years in the marmalade.

You know, if I really was backed up against a stone wall, a gun pushed into my ribs, and a short, ugly, mean-looking character leering behind the revolver and demanding to know just where I'd like to spend my five years in the marmalade, I would probably chance something science fictional. Say a nice quiet newly discovered planet. I would be one of the first ones there. It would have all the excitement and adventure of the past as well as many of the modern conveniences of the future. I think I'd like it there. I could help build up a new world -- of course, I would want to gain power, and for that reason -- and, possibly, I would be able to mould the world into more like what I personally feel the world ought to be like. It would be an enjoyable thought at the least. I think this would probably be my choice. I would satisfy my long desire to be an explorer. If the world was peopled with a set of humanoid aliens who were living in a fairly backward culture such as approximately the Middle Ages, I don't believe I could ask for worse. There are a lot more terrible places that I could choose to spend five years in. It would make a pleasant vacation, I think.

Like Ted Johnstone, I have always been rather enthralled with the Middle Ages. This facet of my life undoubtedly comes from reading too many Prince Valiant comic strips but this factor cannot be held in check at this late stage. However, I wouldn't care to live in the Middle Ages as they existed on Earth. Unfortunately, reality in the Dark Ages was far from the romp shown in Prince Valiant. :: To sum up: If you offered me the trip I'd probably either refuse or head for my alien planet.

This has been Calling Card No.1, April 1962. It has been written, edited, and published by Gordon Eklund, 14612 18th Ave S.W., SEATTLE 66, Washington, USA. Calling Card No.1 is due to appear in the 5th IPSO Mailing and may be circulated to a small degree outside of the apa. This has been our first contribution to IPSO and is, also, Gumshoe Publication No.6



SEX IN SCIENCE FICTION

John M. Baxter.

For IPSO Mailing 5.

Cartoon by
PHILBY.

"Tell me a word that you've often heard,
Yet it makes you squint if you see it in print.
Tell me a thing that you've often seen,
Yet if put in a book, it makes you turn green.
Tell me a thing that you often do,
Which if described in a story shocks you through and
Tell me what's wrong with words or you /through.
That you don't mind the thing, but the name is taboo."

--- D.H. Lawrence, 1925.

Like all vociferous minority groups, fandom holds that certain truths are self-evident. Perhaps we don't go as far as claiming that we have an inalienable right to engage in our chosen hobby, but nevertheless we do have our articles of faith, a base on which fandom stands four-square against the advance of mediocrity. Foremost among these tenets is "Science Fiction Is More Than Escape Literature". It is closely followed by "Fans are different to ordinary people", and less important but no less strongly held "Sex is permissible in science fiction if handled with taste". This we believe and are sworn to uphold.

I don't suggest that our blind acceptance of these dubious conclusions is an example of stupidity or narrow-mindedness. Certain subjects have been discussed ever since fandom began, and after a hundred writers and convention speakers have examined a question and have all reached an identical conclusion, we can hardly be blamed for accepting their logic without querying it personally. The role of sex in science fiction is a matter which has had the usual amount of publicity, and the conclusion of Those Who Know has been

that the important thing in approaching sex is that it be handled with sympathy and understanding, and that it be an integral part of the story. If these conditions are observed, it is acceptable, even desirable. Magazines and books which use sex to titillate are universally panned. If we accept this evaluation, we are doing no more than we are advised to do as children - listen to those who know more than we do.

The difficulty in accepting the opinions of our elders and superiors is that often these opinions are the result of erroneous logic or biased thinking. A professional writer who tells us that sex must be 'tasteful' is probably voicing a subconscious envy of his colleague who made a packet from questionable material. Or perhaps his dislike of "sloppy" writing overshadows other aspects of the work which should be considered. He may even be covering up for some childhood traumas. Whatever his motive for panning 'sexy' sf, he is usually expressing a conclusion based more on emotion than logic. Professional writers are too close to the subject. They of all people are least likely to give an objective valuation of the books they read.

I think it might help to define our terms in this discussion. What exactly is meant by "sex in science fiction"? The committee's question was (perhaps intentionally) vague on this point. Basically, there appear to be two types of sexy sf - the erotic and the scientific. However, most fans tend to refer only to the first whenever discussing the general role of sex in the sf field. By 'sex', we generally mean eroticism; descriptions of sexual relations between human beings, be they male, female, neuter or any combination or multiple thereof. We mean material which is specifically written to excite and stimulate the reader sexually. It is this type of fiction which sparked the entire controversy, and about which the discussion continues to rage.

As I pointed out earlier, we have been conditioned into believing that eroticism in science fiction is bad. This is based partly on the combined opinions of reputable critics and partly on our own observation. Sex in science fiction is almost invariably handled clumsily and without feeling. It has been touched on only in passing, and with the possible exception of Theodore Sturgeon, no writer has ever given it a great deal of thought or produced any stories with a sexual element which could honestly be classed as sympathetic. It is generally approached with the characteristic hamhandedness of an action writer working with unfamiliar and refractory materials. Good erotic writing requires skill and imagination, tempered with sympathy, a quality not common among writers of science fiction.

Naturally, when we encounter a piece of eroticism produced by the average science fiction author, we are repelled. We feel uncomfortable. The writer handles his material as if it were shameful, and the reader in turn feels some of this shame. In reading it, he is contravening one of society's strongest rules. No amount of education will convince a man of the twentieth century that sex is not somehow disgusting. Enlightenment will, one hopes, come in the future, but for the moment we must spend our Victorian legacy, meaning that the subject must be approached circuitously, obliquely, the ideas suggested rather than described. If sex is handled in this way, our sensibilities are assuaged. Because the prose is delicate, even poetic, we can read the erotic descriptions without fear, telling ourselves that it is the writing that appeals to us, and not the sex.

When we do this, we are fooling ourselves, of course. It is natural and desirable that humans indulge in and enjoy sexual experience. It is equally natural that they enjoy reading and thinking about sex. To the critics of erotica inside or outside science fiction, sexual descriptions are tedious, improbable, even unreadable. They carp about "reiteration" and "dull writing", yet the eroticism of Beacon Books' sf series is relatively well written even by today's high standards. Placed in competition with non-sf pbs, they sold well, at least on Australian stands. This indicates that their attraction at least equalled that of other, more accepted, lines. In most cases, popularity is no guide to quality, but the field of erotica is widely divergent from the main stream. Eroticism is a blunt, specific type of writing. It can be absorbed direct into the bloodstream without the benefit of watering-down. Like humour, it is often more interesting if it is not subtle or veiled, so to complain that erotic descriptions are not well-written, though perhaps true, has no bearing on the matter. The important thing is that they excite the reader, and Beacon's sf most certainly did.

I feel it is time we stopped being high-minded and unreal about the matter of sex in literature, science fictional or otherwise. Sex exists - that is something we have to face sooner or later. Sex is natural - that, too, is a basic fact. Human beings enjoy sex, and fans, being human, enjoy sex along with the rest. It is not a question of "dregging in" sexy fiction for the "moronic" to "drool over". When it comes to sex, a widely-read man is just as "moronic" as the next. The difference between the attitudes of IQ 50 and IQ 150, if there is one, lies in the fact that an intelligent man with a great deal of philosophical justification for his moral code will be ashamed of his attraction to erotic literature, whereas a man of lower intelligence will not give a damn. Only the man of higher learning is ashamed of the fact that he is basically still an animal with animal desires and inclinations.

To justify the erotic nature of THE MALE RESPONSE, THE LOVE MACHINE, PAGAN PASSIONS et al. is to justify pronography in general, so there is no real need for me to detail points which have been put far more succinctly by other writers. Ralph Ginzburg's AN UNHURRIED VIEW OF EROTICA is perhaps the best of the books explaining and illustrating the role of erotica in literature. Suffice to point out that erotic fiction satisfies a natural human appetite, just as humorous fiction satisfies yet another appetite. Viewed in this light, the broadly sexual fiction distributed by Beacon, especially FLESH, VIRGIN PLANET and PAGAN PASSIONS, represents a perfectly legitimate advance in one of the oldest and most popular forms of literature known to man, and a welcome indication that science fiction is prepared to discard some of its fusty "conventions" and move with the times.

The field of scientific extrapolation on biological themes is completely distinct from "sexy" sf of the type discussed above. It bears the same relationship to Beacon's publications as the material in the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN bears to an AMAZING story. The emphasis and function are completely different, and I am surprised that the committee lumped them in with PAGAN PASSIONS under the heading of "sexy sf". However, this once again may be intentional. No doubt the sometimes revolting ideas of Philip Jose Farmer do touch on some basic sexual feelings, but Freudian psychology claims that all fiction has this effect, so one can hardly claim that there is any real connection between Farmer and, say, Brian Aldiss in style or intent.

The primary interest in biological science fiction centres around alien life forms and processes, or around customs, human or otherwise, which could change our attitude to sex and reproduction. Some good work has been done in this area of late, but in view of its limited appeal and range, it is unlikely that it will receive much attention in the future. The discovery of biology as a legitimate area of speculation will make itself felt, but in view of the relatively limited possibilities offered by this science, the changes will be negligible. It must be admitted that, as a basis for sf, biology has been a disappointment. Only one writer, Philip Jose Farmer, has devoted any real thought to the theme, and his results have been reiterative and unoriginal. His stock plot ((human being trapped in alien biological system)) was the basis of some interesting stories, but it is not one which lends itself to adaptation or enlargement. There is more to science fiction than setting up a strange ecological system and then explaining it.

There are more possibilities on the sociological side, but these have been almost worked out. We often forget that science fiction, even at its mildest and least critical, relies heavily on sociological and sexual extrapolation for its plots. Almost every story has a sociological theme which attacks one of our conventions, and as many of these conventions are sex-based, a great deal of mainstream sf is actually "sexy" in the terms of the committee's question. Sexual intercourse with aliens is discussed openly, and often approved (Boucher's STRABRIDE, Sturgeon's AFFAIR WITH A GREEN MONKEY). We have read about the possible effects on society of an oral contraceptive (Charles Eric Maine's WORLD WITHOUT MEN), approved homosexuality as a weapon against over-population (Beaumont's THE CROOKED MAN) and a religion featuring ritual prostitution and cannibalism (Robert Heinlein's STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND). This novel also introduced the ultimate in perversion and voyeurism, a complicated sort of telepathic feedback employed by men and women whereby each enjoys the others' sensations. Even in sf, this is strong meat, but the frequent acceptance of polygamy, polyandry, perversion, flogellation, nymphomania and necrophilia has prepared fandom for it. In writing about sex in the future, science fiction is way ahead of everybody else, as the committee's question proves. We are so used to it that we don't even recognise it when it's placed in front of us!

To sum up, erotism has its place in science fiction, as does legitimate biological and sociological extrapolation on sexual themes. The first, however, is not receiving the encouragement it deserves from fandom, while the latter is perhaps taken for granted. Erotism, about which the entire discussion revolves, should be criticised on the frankness and honesty of its presentation, but not for its appearance, which is perfectly legitimate. The only basis for criticism can be its degree of titillation or the clarity with which it is written, and not the fact that it describes "taboo" actions and situations. Erotic science fiction should not be condemned merely because it is erotic, nor should we frown on its appearance because it is unsophisticated or blunt. If we are uncritical enough to welcome and enjoy "good, old-fashioned space opera", we should be equally agreeable to the publication of "good, old-fashioned pornography".

Prepared for distribution in the 5th mailing of IPSO, April 1962. Written by John M. Baxter, Box 39, King Street PO, Sydney, N.S.W., AUSTRALIA. Printed and published through the kind offices of Ken Cheslin, Stourbridge, Worcs., England.



A slight note of introduction before we get under way: I'm Fred Patten, a fairly recent SoCal fan, 21 years old & a senior at UCLA, planning to enter its Library School this fall. Regarding sf, my goal to read every word of it has been slowed down by schoolwork and my decision to become an actifan, but I'm still plugging away at it.

I'd like to start off with a definition of science fiction. Of course, there're more definitions than you can shake a life wand at, but I tend to favor the one that science fiction is a description of the near or far future, containing enough elements of our present culture to make the story intelligible to us, and logically extrapolating its differences from aspects of this present culture. Or something to that effect. (Personally, I prefer sword & sorcery fantasy.)

At any rate, sex definitely has a role in science fiction under this definition.

And ordinary sex can have a valid role in sf, too. It's most likely that in any legitimate sf story, the extrapolation is on some subject other than sex. But just because sexual activity need not have altered physiologically regarding our own era does not mean that it must therefore be excluded. I think it was William F. Temple who pointed out that Heinlein's *Starship Troopers* have the attitude of a group of boy scouts toward sex and marriage; where will all the future *Starship Troopers* come from? No matter what the future society described, normal sexual relations will probably continue to exist, and can therefore be validly described in the story. Immoral relations, too; human nature seems to be basic regarding the fleshpots, and doubt it'll change too much in the foreseeable future. Stories such as Asimov's "I'm In Marsport Without Hilda" are valid sf from this standpoint.

But all this should take a minor role in the overall story. "Sex in Science Fiction" means, I take it, stories in which the sexual action or interest is at the focal point of the plot. Unfortunately, the number of these sexual sf stories is minor compared to the number of stories using sex in sf usually in an illegitimate way.

The illegitimate use of sex in sf is evidenced in the stories which dress sex in just to make them bawdy enough to sell to people who like pornography. I suppose that, if you place a whorehouse in Venus City instead of Tijuana, the story is technically sf. But it's not sexual science fiction.

I said up above that I have a goal to read every word of sf. That's not entirely true; I avoid the strictly sexy "sf" novels. The Kozy books such as *Father of the Amazons*, and the rest of their line. The early Monarch books, with their sexed-up novelizations of cheap Hollywood horror movies. Things like that. But I have read several of the Beacon books.

Did Beacon print sexual sf? Sometimes, but only accidentally. What Beacon really went out for was pure salacious sex-in-sf. The stuff it rewrote into Judd's *Outpost Mars* (*Sin in Space*), and A. E. van Vogt's *The House That Stood Still* (*The Mating Cry*). This may be sex in sf, but it surely isn't sexual science fiction. Beacon's sexual sf novels were books like Farmer's *Flesh* and *A Woman A Day* (Beacon's titles), and Anderson's *Virgin Planet*. Th

stories in which man's sexual mores and/or physiology has been radically, and logically, changed. This extrapolation was basic to the plot, and made the books legitimate sf. But it wasn't for this reason that Beacon published 'em; in fact, Beacon tried to eliminate the more outre aspects.

What is the place of sex in science fiction? Well, what is the place of science fiction? To stir the intellect; to arouse interest and speculation. This is also the place of sex in sf - to stimulate the mind, not other organs.

Need the sex in sf be of a bizarre or alien nature? No, but it helps. Some of the most stimulating works of sexual sf have had bizarre natures, such as Farmer's The Lovers, A Woman A Day (his title: Moth and Rust) and Flesh (and is there any chance that someone will publish those last two as Farmer wrote 'em, without Beacon's deletions and additions?); and Sturgeon's Venus Plus X and "The Golden Helix"; not to mention Huxley's Brave New World. On the other hand, there have been good sexual sf stories dealing with a normal sexual nature, such as one in which pregnant women were unable to withstand the rigors of spaceflight, due to a fatal reaction between a drug necessary to prevent violent spacesickness (caused by weightlessness) and a hormone produced only during pregnancy.

Is the biological aspect more acceptable than the sociological? Not necessarily. Good stories can and have been written on either aspect. The biological aspect may generally be less controversial than the sociological, but we sf fans are supposed to pride ourselves on our openmindedness. So it really shouldn't matter.

Should such themes, admitted to mainstream fiction, be denied to science fiction? Why? Science fiction is supposed to be less, not more, constrained a field than mainstream fiction. Don't get vulgar just for the sake of being "different", but don't hold yourself back unnecessarily.

What is the future of sex in sf? The sexual sf story, such as Farmer's "Mother" or Wyndham's "Consider Her Ways", will probably go on as before. Thought-provoking (usually any author skilled enough to invent a new, scientifically valid sexual nature is also skillful enough to write a good story), but rather sparse. It's a difficult subject to bring off easily, though usually worth it; a good sexual sf story tends to become well-known, and get a fair amount of decent literary criticism.

The legitimate use of normal sex in sf will continue of necessity to play its minor role in the field.

The illegitimate use of sex in sf will soon disappear, let us hope. Its appeal is really rather nonexistent. Take Beacon Books, which has folded its sf line, as an example. How many of you bought Beacon books? Something like Flesh perhaps, which you couldn't get in any other edition; but if you're anything like I am, you avoided sexed-up reprints, like The Deviates or Odd John, which were actually inferior to the originals because of the nature of the changes made. And I imagine the "drooling morons" who specifically look for salacious material soon learned to steer clear of Beacon's sf, in spite of the covers, after they found that the interior plots were basically intellectual, with erotic scenes few and scattered. And this will probably be a general rule. Sf fans will avoid the sex-for-sex's-sake "sf" because it isn't mentally stimulating, it doesn't have the Sense of Wonder; while the usual patron of sex books will prefer to take his erotica in more mundane settings, where he can more easily follow what is going on.

If I had 5 free years to spend anyplace, it'd be in Coventry. Specifically, it'd be in Lankhmar. And I'll tell you why.

As I said somewhere up above, I generally prefer good sword and sorcery fantasy to good science fiction. And out of all the sword & sorcery heroes - Conan, John Carter, Tedric, etc. - my favorites are the Grey Mouser and Fafhrd, created by Fritz Leiber. Faf & the Mouser have ranged all thru time, but their adventures are centered around Lankhmar the Imperishable, City of the Black Toga, in the world of Nehwon, which is in our Earth's dim past - preceeding even Howard's Hyborian Age, I'd say.

Now, I'm sure all of you know that Coventry, the fannish fantasy land originally created by Paul Stanbery, is full of all sorts of sf references; its name being taken from Heinlein's story, "Coventry", the isolated area whose inhabitants could establish whatever fantastic forms of government they wanted. I got in on Coventry late in 1960, when it was just beginning to catch on in fandom, and a lot of positions were still vacant (and a lot still are. Better join up yourself, before you get written in as somebody's stooge). A large group of LA fen had just come from a theater party outing that evening (it was Dr. Seuss' film, "The 5,000 Fingers of Dr. T", wild & hilarious; see it if you can), and we were all congregating in a restaurant prior to breaking up. Stanbery was there, and the conversation had gotten around to the inevitable subject. Bruce and Ted were on a recruiting mission, explaining to me how the whole thing was built around sf references, quoting names & places; one of these was Howard's Aquilonia. "Is Leiber's Lankhmar in there?" I asked. It was. "Has anyone claimed its Overlordship yet?" They told me to ask Stanbery. I did; the post was still open. "Great! You've got yourself an Overlord!" I told him. And viola!; I was in Coventry.

At the time, I congratulated myself on picking a pretty plush spot. In the stories, the activities of Faf & the Mouser are generally limited to the lower-class quarters of Lankhmar. The Overlord is just a nameless symbol of authority (or was at the time; Fritz may be writing the position into an active role now). This meant that the Overlord could be said, without proof to the contrary, to rule without fear of rebellion or palace intrigue. Lankhmar is in an isolated area, fairly safe from foreign invasion; even if it should be invaded, the city itself is literally unconquerable, having withstood sieges of up to 123 years (Two Sought Adventure p. 159). In other words, I'd chosen the lot of an absolute monarch who needn't worry about overthrow or assassination from domestic or foreign sources.

It hasn't worked out quite that way. Only the names are the same in Coventry; the actual lands of Nehwonian Lankhmar and Coventranian Lankhmar are rather different. For one thing, Coventranian Lankhmar isn't completely independent; it's a tributary kingdom attached to the Empire of Linn. For another, Lankhmar isn't isolated geographically, and its neighbors are considerably farther advanced technologically than the Nehwonian barbarians; this has decided strategic disadvantages. For a third, Stanbery may allow explosives into Coventry; walled cities and explosives do not mix.

Let's leave the "real" Lankhmars and get back to the fannish aspects of Coventry. In Coventry, no one is as completely independent as he'd like to be. All are theoretically free to act as they see fit, but the action must fit into a unified whole. Stanbery is currently acting as a kind of Coventranian clearing house; anything that affects Coventry's history in any way is first supposed to be cleared thru him, to make sure it doesn't contradict any already established fact. This isn't too bad if you're a prolific Coventranian like Bruciver or Tedron (oops, I mean P.J. and Johnstone), who're always writing their positions into established fact as they want them. But if your activity is only marginal, as mine is, you're liable to find that someone else has written you into a position that you don't like, but can't change.

For instance, when I went to choose a suitably Lankhmarian name for myself, I found that Johnstone had already written me in as Fredegar. Ted thought I'd like that, since it's a simple variation of Frederick, and a reference straight from Tolkien as well: Fredegar Bolger (LoR, I, 51). But while I am a Tolkien fan, I don't care to mix my fantasies. Besides, the name Fredegar, or just about any variation on the original Frithuric (from "frithu" and "ricja", Old German for "peace" and "rule", respectively), are definitely of Northwest European origin, and I believe that Fredegar is an actual Saxon (or possibly Norman) variation. Lankhmar, on the other hand, is rather obviously patterned after ancient Alexandria - at the mouth of a great river, surrounded by wheatfields, great deserts nearby, etc. (Nehwonian Lankhmar, that is). I'd have preferred to choose a name sounding a bit more like something from the ancient mid-East, and not something recognizably North European. But it's too late now.

Or something a little more pertinent: personal description. Just about the first thing any active Coventrianian does is to record his "personality" - cautious, hot-tempered, devil-may-care, a great natural statesman, a military genius, a ladies' man; whatever they want. Now, this is my first essay on Coventry; I've never described my "personality". Fritz has described Lankhmar as in its Decadence, with its Overlord a decadent fop. I don't mind being decadent, but I'll be decadent in the manner of the old scholar rulers, like Amenhotep IV Ikhnaton or Claudius Germanicus (Caesar) in his later days, who developed philosophies, wrote scholarly essays, or generally otherwise spent most of their time in the Royal Libraries while the realm was chopped up by intrigue and invaders. (Note to Coventrianians: this isn't my whole "personality"; I can devote myself to statecraft and military matters when I have to.) But I don't care to be a fop. There's a certain Coventrianian who's decided that as long as I haven't described myself, he'll do the honors for me, stressing the foppishness. A Declaration to this self-styled Master Weaver of foreign intrigue: I don't care how you write East Coast fandom into Coventry, but I will not wear my hair in gilded ringlets, talk with a lisp, stay drunk at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of the time, and be carried everywhere by strong girls strewing rose petals.

This particular Coventrianian has had the courtesy to clear his story with me first, so that I could nix the above if I wanted (which I have). But you can see how nastiness can develop between Coventry fans to an intensity that takes it beyond Coventrianian limits.

Still and all, I'd spend my five years in Coventrianian Lankhmar. I'm already written in as a figure of importance. And, while Stanbery may be writing such modern weapons as guns and tanks (how we're supposed to maintain the atmosphere of medieval sword & sorcery in the face of this, I don't know), there's the wonderful rule that no one ever gets permanently

 Steve Tolliver (played by Ray Milland) has just been attacked
 by a giant squid, on the late, late show... 1:34 a.m.

killed in Coventrianian battles or politics; there's even a chance at immortality. And, as you see, it's not dull; it can be a real mental workout trying to get out of the situations others are trying to get you into. War is likely to break out at any time between Linn and the Confederated Republics of Phobias, which should give everybody a chance to match wits in political and military strategy. So by spending my five years as Overlord of Coventrianian Lankhmar, I shouldn't be getting into anything over my head, I'll have a fairly modern standard of living, and I have a chance for adventure without facing any really mortal dangers.