

THE JDM BIBLIOPHILE No. 11, April 1968. Edited and published by Len & June Moffatt,
P. O. Box 4456, Downey, California, 90241.
Associate Editors: Bill Clark and Ed Cox. This is a non-profit amateur journal
devoted to the works of John D. MacDonald. 25¢ a copy.

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DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE: June 16, 1969.

We HOPE to publish JDMB #12 some time in July, but please don't panic if we
are later than that. This is still a spare-time, hobby operation, y'know...

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IN OUR NEXT ISSUE: A review by Dave Locke of THE GIRL IN THE PLAIN BROWN WRAPPER.
Busy ol' Ed Cox might even have his article on JDM's science-
fiction stories ready for JDMB #12.

(There is no truth to the rumor that we plan to fold JDMB
after No. 12. Not as long as we have articles, reviews &
letters to publish. Not as long as you all are interested...)

We haven't moved, but we rented a P. O. box to take care of much of our incoming
mail. Our home-delivery postman, and the local post office, have been so cooperative
that we decided to relieve them of some of the burden.

-ljm & jmm

DON'T FORGET TO VOTE FOR YOUR FIVE FAVORITE JDM NOVELS! (SEE BACK PAGE)

SEEK 'N SWAP

RON BENNETT, 91 Namly Ave., SINGAPORE 10, has a "pile of JDM paperbacks and several British Reprint Detective Monthly and Black Mask mags, all with JDM stories. Will sell, or swap for s-f, other JDM material, or for older comics. Write Ron for details.

BILL CRIDER, 711 W. 32nd (#235), Austin, Texas, 78705, needs Weep For Me to complete his collection, if he hasn't found it in a secondhand bookstore by now.

WILLIAM D. FRENCH, 67 Stratton St., Yonkers, NY, 10701, wants to borrow the first seven issues of JDMB for copying. Will pay all costs. Phone him at (212) PL 2-6800, Ext. 298.

BELLA FREUND, 29 Moore St., #17E, Brooklyn NY, 11206, has a l-o-n-g want list of JDM titles. Will buy if reasonably priced. Write her for her current want list.

PETER R. GILL, 18 Glen Manor Dr., Toronto 13, Ontario, CANADA, wants Judge Me Not. Will buy.

WENDELL V. HOWARD, 2518 La Veta Dr NE, Albuquerque NM 87110, needs only Border Town Girl to complete his JDM pb collection. Still has many, many duplicate pbs and perhaps some hardcovers to trade.

GEORGE C. HOYT, Jr., 15723 Romar St., Sepulveda, Calif. 91343, is still in the market for old pulps containing JDM stories, American or British editions. Write him for details.

B. J. LEVINE, 230 W. 76th St., New York NY 10023, will swap Border Town Girl for equal exchange of any other "oldie" by JDM.

ETHEL LINDSAY, Courage House, 6 Langley Ave., Surbiton, Surrey, UNITED KINGDOM, will swap JDM pbs, and other pbs, for pbs by Phoebe Atwood Taylor. "I love swapping," says Ethel. "It gives me such a good excuse to go roaming through the secondhand bookshops!"

CLARENCE G. (Pete) PETERSEN, 1846 Vermont Ave., Rolling Meadows, Ill., 60008, needs Border Town Girl and The Lethal Sex. He also needed Contrary Pleasure but may have it now, as Fawcett reprinted it in March, 1969.

PETER SINGLETON, Block 4, Broadmoor Hospital, Crowthorne, Berkshire, ENGLAND, has British "Pan" edition of Death Trap to swap for The Girl, The Gold Watch & Everything.

CHUCK TOOLE, 201 W. 85th St., New York, NY, 10024, needs Border Town Girl to complete his collection, and perhaps The Crossroads.

REVEREND STEPHEN G. WILLIAMSON, 217 Bacon St., Jermyn, Pa., 18433, wants Border Town Girl, I Could Go On Singing, The Crossroads, Weep For Me, and The Lethal Sex. Also needed Contrary Pleasure, but see above.

NOTE: Because of the gap between JDMB Nos. 10 and 11, the above listings are somewhat dated by now. If you want to swap with, sell to, or buy from any of the above good persons, write to them first--as you should do in any case, regardless of JDMB's frequency or lack of same...

- ljm & jmm

NEWS & PREVIEWS

WANTED: DETAILED information on movies and TV shows that were based on stories by John D. MacDonald. Please give producer, director, scriptwriter, actors, date released or shown, etc. Yes, we want to make a checklist of the movies and TV plays (radio, too, if any)... Might also include JDM's appearances on TV.

* * * * *

TOUGH GUY WRITERS OF THE THIRTIES, edited by David Madden (Southern Illinois University Press, 1968), contains an essay by Charles Alva Hoyt on JDM's THE DAMNED.

* * * * *

The Southern California Chapter of the Mystery Writers of America devoted its February 28, 1969 meeting to a discussion of John D. MacDonald. Guests for the evening were Len and June Moffatt, who provided a display of JDM material, and who wound up doing most of the talking, answering questions and comments from the members present.

* * * * *

THE JDM MASTER CHECKLIST has been given mentions in both Matt Weinstock's LA Times column, and in Allen J. Hubin's NY Times column. Our thanks to both of these fine gentlemen!

* * * * *

THE MOVIE SCENE: Not much new since our last report, except that Rod Taylor has replaced Robert Culp as McGee in DARKER THAN AMBER, which--we assume--is now in the process of being filmed. Bob Clause is directing.

We understand that Jalem Productions has finally set up the shooting schedule for THE GIRL, THE GOLD WATCH & EVERYTHING, starring Jack Lemmon.

Calder Willingham (who co-scripted THE GRADUATE) has been assigned to script THE LAST ONE LEFT.

* * * * *

THE BOOK SCENE: CONTRARY PLEASURE was recently reprinted by Fawcett. John's current schedule (which includes work for this year and next year): the 11th McGee; THE BLOOD GAME (a novel he started some time ago but put aside until now); the 12th McGee; and THE PRIMITIVE EXPERIENCE (the second Coppolino trial).

* * * * *

WATCH FOR MCGEE SHIRT ADS IN PLAYBOY AND THE NEW YORKER. A friend of John's (and a McGee fan) runs the Eagle Shirtmakers. John will not receive royalties or a percentage of the shirt sales, just publicity for the McGee books, and some free shirts. Rod Taylor will probably appear in the ads eventually. These will be Very Modern shirts with one pocket, though both John and Travis prefer two pockets.

There'll be 18 colors, such as Plain Wrapper Brown, Deep Goodbye Blue, Cupcake Brass, Nightmare Pink, etc. They were going to call it the "John D." shirt, but John preferred "The McGee", as the use of Trav's name is less an invasion of personal privacy.

* * * * *

NASA invited John to "go over and view the launch of Apollo 9... I shall go". We hope to have more on this next issue.

* * * * *

We have it on good authority that the American Express got a federal court order enjoining John from mentioning the progress of the suit on the basis that it might do them terrible and lasting harm by revealing their trade secrets!

* * * * *

PALE LEMAN FOR PSYCHOSIS - a parody

When I finished sandpapering the tarpon hooks with medium-fine number two, the humidity of the afternoon was melting into the breeze-laden evening with its scents of mimosa and cuttlefish. Coarse grain number seven is fine for barracuda, but a tarpon in summer can blister the hook's shellac coating. The Flush angled slightly away from its fenders, those old, thrice-retreaded Goodyears I'd picked up in Valrico the year before. The tilt and comforting bristling of the puckered nerves in my left kneecap told me that Burke was back. I slipped quickly into the Flush's executive suite with its 18-story air-conditioned radiation-proof Habitat layout. A quick routine of pressups and a few circuits of the heated, chlorinated Olympic pool, and I knew that, given the breaks, I could take him. Most 20th-century Americans look back on their arid lives which dangle before them in the shape of a Wheaties boxtop or a no-trump bid, and blame it on their childhood, but the laws of chance can be evened out. Perhaps only slightly, perhaps by only the thin line between seeing another day and floating out on the tide of the delta backwash.

But, by the time I'd worked my way to the foredeck steakhouse, my optimism had had its edges blurred. He was sitting in the television lounge, a daiquiri in each giant fist. Tall, broadshouldered and squareheaded, he had that raw look of a newly caged tiger.

"The girl, McFee," he said through those grotesquely pouting lips. "Where is she? I don't mind the money, but you must have known I'd come for her."

I watched the knife-edge crease in the right leg of his dacron pants grow baggy, a sure sign of the movement to come. I ducked as the daiquiri in his left hand came up at me, and kicked out at his ankle, but he was too quick for me. For all his size he could move like an uncoiled whip. A city block fell on the back of my neck, and I went down, gasping at the suddenly stuffy room.

Suddenly something flashed through the air, and he began to claw at his shoulder blades. Irida ran into the room and hauled me to my wavering feet. The knife she had thrown was out of Burke's reach. His screams dribbled from his mouth in the thin sighs of a torn-reed woodwind. He turned and stumbled out onto the deck. I was too far behind him, and his uneven lurching was quick enough to make my going after him seem labored and slow-motined. By the time I'd reached the dock, his auto tail lights were twinkling away toward the main road. I started up the old Ford, but it wasn't necessary. The sharp bend in the side road wasn't built for the high seventies. The sound of the crash still rings in my ears on lonely nights, blending with the once-comforting merriment of the crickets and the alligators.

He was still in the car, with its wide-open crumpled doors, jammed and held upright by the shattered relics of the windshield and the trunk, a space perhaps three or four inches wide. I eased in my hand, took the knife and hurled it into oily water. Then I left him, and went back to The Flush.

Burke had planted the diamonds in the second daiquiri, and three days later I was in a motel room in Holdbrook, Arizona, talking shop with a one-time friend from Las Vegas. At first, his idea of a deal was that he took the stones on some kind of a ninety-nine year lease, but when I held my little finger against the lobe of his ear in a certain way, he agreed that my price was a just one. I'd learned the trick the hard way in Chihuahua. A flick of the terminal digit can dislocate a man's leg in four different places.

A fortnight later we were cruising round the Cays. The old Flush, Irida and I made a happy, carefree trio. Her open, honest, mature attitude to sex, free from false modesty and inhibition, was fast mending my broken neck. We emptied the shoebox onto the big boardroom table in the sundeck library, and spread out the crisp hundred thousand dollar bills into long lines of high piles.

"Take off operating expenses, income tax, purchase tax, property tax, road tax, state tax and graft," I calculated, "and split the balance down the middle." Irida gathered up her 37¢ and threw her arms around my neck.

I winced.

-Ron Bennett

NOW is the time to order your copy...

...because it is ready NOW

THE

JDM MASTER CHECKLIST

A Bibliography of the Published Writings of John D. MacDonald

The 59 pages include: A complete-as-possible checklist of all the magazine stories, articles, and books by JDM; a cross-index by titles; a brief biography, and a full-page photograph of JDM.

\$1 per copy from The Moffatts, P. O. Box 4456, Downey, California 90241

We recommend:

THE FAUST COLLECTOR - William J. Clark, 2660 Stoner Avenue, Los Angeles, Calif. 90064. A magazine devoted to the works of Frederick Faust (Max Brand, George Challis, Evan Evans, etc.). First issue features a very early story by Faust and an article by Frank Gruber. Write Bill for details.

THE QUEEN CANON BIBLIOPHILE - Rev. Robert E. Washer, Editor, 82 E. 8th Street, Oneida Castle, NY, 13421. A magazine devoted to the works of Ellery Queen. A MUST for Queen buffs!

THE ARMCHAIR DETECTIVE - Allen J. Hubin, 3656 Midland, White Bear Lake, Minn., 55110
and

THE MYSTERY LOVER'S NEWSLETTER - Mrs. Lianne Carlin, Editor, P. O. Box 113, Melrose, Mass., 02176.

TAD is quarterly (\$3 a year) and TMLN is bi-monthly (\$2 per year). Both feature articles, checklists and other information on various writers in the mystery field.

DASHIELL HAMMETT: A CASEBOOK - by William F. Nolan. \$6.95 from McNally-Loftin publishers at P. O. Box 1316, Santa Barbara, Calif. The first and only book on Hammett.

A 50-page checklist of all his works is included after the main text.

JDM'S IMAGES of the INHUMAN

by Francis M. Nevins, Jr.

One crucial reason why it is so difficult to use the formal deductive problem as a vehicle for serious literary intent is the artificiality of a genre in which the destruction of a human being serves as pretext for a display of logical acumen. This obstacle does not exist where an author adopts a looser structure and avoids the creation of intellectual puzzles, as JDM has done since the beginning of his career. Thereby he won the freedom to work, within the crime-novel form, at his intensely personal evocations of the times we live in, with their powerful images of the inhuman.

What makes one of our kind treat another as something less than human? In JDM's novels, the answer is generally greed. The acquisitiveness with which we indoctrinate our children before we throw them into the maw of some huge corporation like the one that uses us has its logical culmination in a Junior Allen, a Baynard Mulligan, or a Gary Santo. For love of money, we mutilate not only others but ourselves, as Staniker did in The Last One Left.

One of JDM's most sustained and frightening treatments of this subject is the Travis McGee novel "Nightmare In Pink" (1964). During the first six chapters we meet McGee, and Mike Gibson who saved McGee's life in Korea and is now dying in a veterans' hospital, and Mike's sister Nina who is near breakdown due to her fiance's recent death in ambiguous circumstances, and some cops and businessmen and society people, but no one very evil. McGee takes Nina to bed, feels slightly guilty at banging his buddy's sister, and begins to unearth intimations that something very dirty underlies the death of her fiance.

Three central motifs recur in these early chapters. The most obvious is the theme of the value of intense relationships. "If there's no pain and no loss, it's only recreational, and we can leave it to the minks. People have to be valued."

Second is the dehumanizing quality of megalopolis, as to which JDM resembles a less-shrill Allen Ginsberg. "I went back to my sterile, cheerful miracle-plastic automated rectangle set high in the flank of a new hotel. I shucked my jacket and lay cradled on foam, breathing air made by careful machines, supine in a sub-audio hum that silenced all the city sounds."

The third motif, subdued in these chapters, is the kinship between man and the worst beasts. "We're all still carnivorous, and money is the meat."

The themes begin to coalesce in Chapter Seven, with the introduction of Bonita Hersch. Bonita: female of bonito, a large, swift fish that lives in the open sea and feeds on small fish. "This was a guileful, perfumed monster. God knows where they come from. They clump up in the big cities. Somehow they all manage to look quite a lot like each other... And when, at last, they begin to get a little scared, they go on the biggest and most careful hunt of all... And, with all their polished skills, they wrench the poor bastard away from his wife, nail him, and--in smug luxury--ruin all the years he has left."

Not much later, her spiritual sister comes into the picture: Rossa, a whore in name as well as in fact, in her eyes "an absolute coldness, a bleak and total indifference which...was the whore's look and the whore's secret, that monumental unconcern which insulated her." But it is not until Rossa drugs McGee with a hallucinogen that we enter modern man's most fitting and definitive abode, the madhouse.

In addition to its stunning brilliance as a set-piece, the account of McGee's hallucination upon his arrival at the Mental Research Wing lifts to metaphoric level JDM's black Ginsbergian vision of the present. "I could see into horrid places and see horrid things. Grotesque copulations. Huge rotting bugs. Ghastly things eating each other." But the confrontation with waking reality--with Baynard Mulligan and his doctors--is even more shattering than the nightmare, because, like the Nazi military doctors tried at Nuremberg, they are human beings, no different from the men and women they used as experimental animals.

They have a scientific purpose for their experiments and a scientific defense for them: "It is...a very difficult thing to weigh a few isolated instances of...questionable ethical behavior against the greatest good for the greatest number." And, unlike those of Hitler's physicians, Mulligan's experiments involve no torture; they dehumanize utterly but cause no pain in the process. A wire is put into the pleasure center of the subject's brain. "Proper location was achieved through trial and error." When the patient performs the physical exercise the doctor desires, an electric current running through the wire into his brain provides him with "a simultaneous experiencing of all pleasures, emotional and physical."

In short, as McGee expresses it, if he is given this treatment, "I'll be a very happy man." And Mulligan replies: "That's everybody's goal, isn't it?" McGee visualizes "my Nina, in gray denim, with a wire in her head, with all of her world and her life focused down to a single recurrent ecstasy--(as she)--crouched and sprang, crouched and sprang..." But Mulligan's plan for McGee is simpler than all that; an amnesia-inducing lobotomy, then release.

McGee's escape, modeled to a certain extent on Philip Marlowe's escape from Dr. Sonderborg's hospital in Raymond Chandler's "Farewell, My Lovely" (1940), is unique in one crucial respect: in escaping, McGee is responsible for the deaths of five innocent bystanders. He is forced by circumstances to act on the rationalization supplied by the doctors who would have destroyed him, and thereby incurs, in his own eyes, some measure of their bottomless guilt.

"By the narrowest margin possible I had escaped spending the rest of my life as a very happy fellow working, perhaps, in a shoe factory over in Jersey." But what fate befalls Baynard Mulligan? Is he impaled on an avenging angel's sword and symbolically vomited out of space-time, like Franz Kindler in Orson Welles' film "The Stranger" (1946)? Is he buried under a mountain of dung like Dr. No? No such fittingly apocalyptic end; JDM is a realist. Mulligan is tried for embezzlement and income tax evasion, convicted, given a three years' sentence, and is appealing. It's a strange world.

But it's a world whose one great good is that long, deep love between persons is possible in it. Like the final image of the raising of the car out of the bog in Hitchcock's "Psycho", the last phrase of this novel is a liberation from Hell. McGee says of himself and Nina:

"We restored each other."

-Francis M. Nevins, Jr.

"The reason is that the hard-nosed newspaper people, realizing that they were being unfairly used by another media in competition with theirs, came up with a curiously effective defense."

-from NO DEADLY DRUG by John D. MacDonald

LINES TO A MAN WHO SHOULD KNOW BETTER

(To be read aloud, and quickly)

John MacDonald wrote fifty books
All replete with narrative hooks

Expert, lively words aplenty
John's a writing gent, he

Slashes through the English language
Like Swedish steel through a sangwich

His supple prose style rolls and flows
Will he ever stop? Who knows?

However, he has made a fluff
We thought him made of sterner stuff.

Page Six-Four-Nine, "No Deadly Drug"
From 'neath good usage he's pulled a rug

A goof, a gaffe. Alas, his Latin
Is something less than smooth as satin.

Did he err just to break the tedium
When he mixed media with medium?

His books limn miniatures and murals
So well that we forgive his plurals

But this wild horse must learn dressage
Singular medium's the mess-age!

-Knox Burger

JDM IN PERSPECTIVE

by Marvin Lachman

Articles in this publication have covered many aspects of the work of John D. MacDonald, but as yet have not attempted to place his work into perspective in the field of mystery fiction. This article is an attempt to remedy this situation.

JDM is entirely a product of the post-World War II age. The first pulp story he ever sold was completed in February of 1946 and bought the following month for use in DETECTIVE TALES. His debut in the field came at the end of an era. For over 20 years, the best detective story writers had written for the pulps. However, by 1946, Dashiell Hammett, Raymond Chandler, Erle Stanley Gardner and Cornell Woolrich were no longer writing for this market. Most of the pulp magazines were on their last legs.

This included BLACK MASK, the premier magazine among the pulps. Although some of his earlier stories were rejected by BLACK MASK, many of his later stories were accepted, and JDM's name can be included among the alumni of this famous magazine in the mystery field.

Although JDM wrote more stories (under many different house names) for the pulps than even he can remember or count, he did not neglect the "slick" market in the late 1940's. By 1950 he had had mysteries published by COLLIER'S and COSMOPOLITAN. However, as a mystery fan himself, JDM realized that he had never been published in ELLERY QUEEN'S MYSTERY MAGAZINE, the quality magazine in its field since 1941.

Then, in 1950, his short story, "The Homesick Buick" was awarded third prize in EQMM's annual contest. As JDM himself wrote to Ellery Queen, "I used to read EQMM for pleasure. Those days are gone. Every time a new issue comes, I am caught up in a horrid mess of envy and despair... Now, having wedged my way into EQMM, maybe I can start reading for pleasure again... No acceptance, at this point, could have given me more satisfaction and pleasure."

In 1954, JDM had another prize-winning story published in EQMM, "I Always Get The Cuties". Incidentally, among his fellow prize-winners in that year's contest were Philip MacDonald and Ross Macdonald, both of whom have been confused with JDM.

As the pulps died out, their place was largely taken by the original paperback mystery novel. Some excellent mystery writers eventually wrote paperback originals, including Thomas B. Dewey, Lionel White, Harold R. Daniels, William Campbell Gault, Ed Lacy, Henry Kuttner, Jack Ehrlich and even Ellery Queen. But one of the first was JDM, whose THE BRASS CUPCAKE (Fawcett Gold Medal 1950) was the first of many to come. Seldom was a medium better suited for a writer than the paperback original for the prolific JDM. It was here that he really found the audience for the quantity and quality he was able to produce.

Money and fame may exist in the paperback market, but real prestige rested (as it still does) with the hardcover novel. Therefore, JDM was not afraid to tilt at that particular windmill. In 1953, Appleton-Century-Croft published his CANCEL ALL OUR VOWS. Since then, a number of other well-received hardcover mysteries have appeared. THE EXECUTIONERS (1958) had an especially good critical reception. A 1960 novel, THE END OF THE NIGHT, was selected by Anthony Boucher as one of the 15 best mysteries of that year. Mr. Boucher called JDM's THE LAST ONE LEFT (1967) his "most impressive novel yet", and picked it as one of the two best of the year. The Mystery Writers of America were sufficiently impressed to nominate it for their annual "Edgar" award, though it did not win.

Though he had authored countless short stories and more than 40 novels by 1964, JDM still had not created a series character. Ever since Poe created Dupin a century and a quarter previously, the series detective had been one of the main touchstones by which mystery writers have been judged and remembered. Then, in 1964, JDM launched Travis McGee on the mystery scene. McGee, who needs no introduction to the readers of this publication, is a great detective, though not in the tradition of Holmes and Poirot. Instead, he is perhaps the logical successor to the Continental Op and Sam Spade in the field of the tough "private eye". Unlike them, McGee does not hire out to solve crimes per se; instead, his livelihood is earned by recovering stolen property and keeping a half share. In all other respects, he bears a marked similarity to the great characters created by Hammett.

In more recent years, the leading detectives of the hard-boiled school, Philip Marlowe and Lew Archer, have been known for their comments on the passing scene in this country, especially Southern California. Though McGee is not restricted to any one locale, a leading part of his series has been "McGee on America in the 60's".

Most leading mystery writers have had their stories adapted to other media. Television and the movies were slow at first to recognize JDM as a source. An exception was the exciting Gregory Peck-Robert Mitchum movie called CAPE FEAR (based on THE EXECUTIONERS), and even that was not filmed until the early 1960's. In 1967, WABC-TV presented JDM's "The Trap of Solid Gold" with Cliff Robertson and Dina Merrill. Later that year NBC-TV adapted JDM's "Cry Hard, Cry Fast" (1955) for its Ben Gazzara series Run For Your Life.

Now, after much speculation by loyal fans as to who would play the lead, the Travis McGee series is due to be filmed. DARKER THAN AMBER will be the first, and Rod Taylor will play McGee. On the heels of this, at least two other JDM novels will become movies.

What is left for JDM? His work is the subject of the fan publication you are now reading. Only Doyle was so honored before, and THE BAKER STREET JOURNAL is devoted to only a portion of his work, the Holmes canon. JDM's Travis McGee has been the subject of at least two parodies written recently, and, as E. W. Hornung once said, this is a form of flattery.

Has JDM been content to rest on his laurels? Not at all. Last fall, Doubleday published NO DEADLY DRUG, based on his exhaustive study of the first Coppelino trial. If my memory serves me correctly, some pretty fair mystery writers named Poe, Doyle and Gardner also ventured into the field of true crimewriting.

John D. MacDonald is not out of place in their company.

-Marvin Lachman

INFLUENCES

ON A

by William F. Nolan

WRITER

I've been a pro for 15 years, but I've been a fan since I was old enough to read. I have a photo, taken at the age of ten, of a knickered, tow-haired Billy Nolan, avidly reading a copy of Tailspin Tommy--and I recall I was a staunch fan, in those days, of World War I airmen, Tom Mix, Alaskan trail dogs, the Lone Ranger and Mandrake the Magician. In 1954, with my first published short story, I became a pro--but I've never stopped being a fan.

For years, as a teenager, I read and collected the works of "Max Brand"; for a longer stretch I was a Bradbury enthusiast, and even published the Ray Bradbury Review in '52. Now, at the moment, it's Hemingway and Hammett (see a cover poem on Papa in the current Prairie Schooner--and see a reference to my book on Hammett elsewhere in this issue).

Along the way I've written books about film director John Huston and racing drivers Phil Hill and Barney Oldfield; I've been an auto racing fan and a movie nut; a science-fiction buff and a student of hard-boiled detective stories (see my two detective novels about L. A. "eye" Bart Challis). I love Thurber (and collect him); pant at the sight of antique autos, dig two-winger Jennies, am an old-time radio enthusiast; am hipped on comic book heroes of the Golden Age, love to delve into lore on F. Scott Fitzgerald; knew Fleming and loved Bond; collect modern short fiction...which takes us (at last) to John D. MacDonald.

I had to arrive at JDM in this roundabout fashion, since he is one of many influences in my life, and must be fitted into the overall crazy quilt of my delights and enthusiasms. I'm far from being an expert on his work, but what I've read of his has left its mark on me, as fan and pro. I discovered him back in the pulp days of Super Science, when he wrote as "Peter Reed" and "John Wade Farrell", as well as under his own name.

In the vast, over-crowded universe of science-fiction, his work immediately flared with the brightness of a Bester, a Heinlein, a Bradbury, a Clarke, a Walter M. Miller...he was one of a handful of writers who handled the human equation, wrote of real people against a world of the future.

It is not my intention, here, to go into all of his individual stories--but I must mention a scattering of JDM titles which have given me special pleasure over the years: his Super Science short, "The Sleepers", and the novellette from the same magazine, "Half-Past Eternity". They still haunt the mind. "Spectator Sport" had rare power, as did "Game For Blondes".

In all, at a rough guess, he wrote half a hundred s-f/fantasy tales, during those pulp years, but I missed many of them. Still, whenever I came across one of his yarns, it stood out in vivid contrast to the pulp writing which surrounded it in any average issue.

MacDonald knew how to characterize, to illumine, to stun...and he knew how to do it with economy and style. In my opinion, aside from all of his work in other genres, he is a major science-fiction talent, and has never been given the proper attention for his work in this field.

His volume of short stories, The End of The Tiger, further develops his gift for short fiction with such superb stories as "The Trap of Solid Gold", "Afternoon of the Hero" and "The Bear Trap". Then, for a mixture of raw realism and the bizarre, there's his unforgettable "The Legend of Joe Lee", from Cosmopolitan, which Judy Merrill rightly selected for her Year's Best SF. And, of course, his classic short, "A Child Is Crying".

And I still am quite fond of his first novel, "The Brass Cupcake", tough, lean, compelling--letting us know that he could sustain the quality of his short prose with novel-length works.

Enough. JDM is one influence, of many, coloring my life as a reader, a writer, an enthusiast. In fiction, I've just three novels ((one of which, LOGAN'S RUN, MGM is due to film this year -ljm)) and 55 short stories to my credit, but--in some small way--each of them owes a debt of thanks to John D. MacDonald. He was there, along with Max Brand and Hemingway and Fitzgerald and Thurber and the others, ghostlike at my elbow, guiding my fingers at the keys.

I feel that it takes one veteran fictioneer to really appreciate another--and I fully appreciate, and admire, the talent of John D. MacDonald.

-William F. Nolan



PLEASE
PARTICIPATE
IN
PETE'S POLL,
PEOPLE!
[SEE BACKPAGE]

Please Write For Details

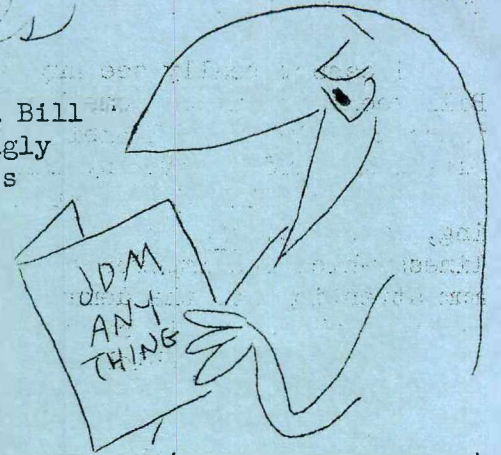
JOHN D. MacDONALD, Florida: Nice to hear indirectly from Bill Rohde after...hmmm...alarmingly

close to twenty years. The wheels are still Fords in this household. And the working habits are still the same. And the discontent with the end result the same too. I do not think of it as a compulsion, really. That has overtones of some kind of quirky thing that keeps a fellow running like a machine when maybe he would rather stop. I would not rather stop, because I like to write. I like the clean white paper confronting me, and the constant uncertainty as to whether the page, the chapter, the whole section will be a "keeper", or just spoiled paper for the cylindrical file. If once in ten days

of solid work there is a page that seems better than all my other pages of all my other years insofar as the type of happening or emotion or insight involved, then the ten days is all profit, even if but one day resulted in something that will eventually go into print. Depending on how fast things go, and how many interruptions occur, a day can give me from 3 to 30 pages of "finished" manuscript, or from 900 to 9,000 words. I put finished between quotes because the copy is always clean. Long ago I fell into the habit of tossing out pages, chapters, sections that turned sour. I do a certain amount of inked corrections, of course, on the final draft, but the revision process for me is a succession of fluttering thumps as I drop hunks of ms into the wastebasket. Nowadays, however, if the top half of a page is working and the bottom half goes clumsy on me, I take the lazy out of scissoring off the top half and taping it to a clean sheet, then before final inked corrections, I run it through the handy home Xerox. I have quirks as regards the materials too. Cheap paper turns me off. It has to be at least a 20 pound 25% rag bond. I like clean consistent type, so I use a leased IBM Selectric with carbon ribbon. I do not outline a novel. I know what the end is going to be, approximately. I use trial and error to find the right start - insofar as point of view, starting point in time, locale, etc. I know when the start is okay only because it feels okay. I cannot define those factors which makes it feel okay. The starts I toss out may be from five to fifty thousand words, and I guess I throw away three on the average before the good one comes along. Then, with a good start, and the knowledge of the ending, I have some freedom for internal invention as I go along. Some of the ideas that pop up, from God knows where, fit the pattern of the book. Others take the book too far off to one side from its direction, but they often have enough persuasion of their own so that I make a sort of memo to myself and put them aside. I must confess that I never again refer to such memos. The mere act of writing them is enough to make an imprint on memory.

I think that I avoid getting what is known as a writer's block by never trying to overpower a sour manuscript. If I cannot find a way to please myself, or in other words, a way to rescue the book, it means that I cannot discover how and where and why it went wrong through the use of any conscious objective analysis. So I put the sour one aside, and go on to something else. At times I have had four cripples on the shelf, but eventually I get back to each of them. Most of the time when I get back to them, I know how and why they went bad. I do not know whether this is because absence has made the head grow shrewder, or whether the subconscious was poking away at it while I wasn't looking. Some of the time when I go back I know that no matter what I do to it, I am going to have no book, or a bad book. Some of the ones I have let go through should better have been killed mercifully right in this work room. That is because objectivity is flawed. Were it not, there would be no bad books by anybody, no plays folding after a few nights, no TV cancellations, no motion pictures which lose money.

I do have one numerical quirk or tic which gives me a baffled amusement at myself. I have the feeling that when I type in the upper right hand corner of a fresh sheet page lll, I am past some kind of most dangerous and frangible portion of the book. Same when I hit page 222, 333 etc. in long works.



(cartoon by Rotsler)

The Readers Write...

...((The Editors Reply - ljm & jmm))

I cannot really see any of this being particularly pertinent or fascinating to anyone. Bill seems to expect some kind of couch-type confession. I cannot detect any ritualistic procedures in my work habits, nor can I detect any self-conscious desire on my part to play some kind of game by making my habits all seem terribly ordinary.

I just think that most professionals in writing, painting, composing, sculpting, acting, etc. etc. are professionals because at some point they realized that a certain orderliness which one imposes on the hours of the days is necessary if one is to free the maximum attention for the demands of the projects at hand. Later along, you learn that much of the work you do is as good or better when you have done it feeling pooped, discouraged, juiceless, as work which turned you on at the time you were doing it. Once you know this, then the temptation to break off because you don't happen to feel up to par is greatly reduced.

I suspect that the appearance of effortlessness in the end product of any creative activity can be achieved only through great diligence. For example, the public might feel that Robert Mitchum is what is known as a "natural actor", might suspect that he shows up late, drifts through his scenes, makes up bits of business as he goes along. It might astonish them to know that more often than not he is the first one on the set, and, alone, likes to walk through his scenes, pacing himself, making little chalk marks on the floor to establish where he wants to stand, turn, walk. And it could also astonish to know that he comes in with such complete control of not only his lines, but the entire script, that more often than not he is able to correct any fluff made by any of the other players.

To Wendell Howard: If I ever get around to reworking WEEP FOR ME, then I will give Fawcett the goahead on it. "Best work" is too inclusive. Some come closer than others to what I was trying to accomplish with each book. I would say that the one that comes closest to doing what I wanted it to do within the constrictions I established is A KEY TO THE SUITE. But it falls off here and there, and if I had it back, I would run it through one more time, I think.

To Dean Grennell: I goofed on 22 longs. I am dismayed to learn from you I can no longer buy them. I have a Savage single shot custom target rifle chambered for longs, vintage 1933, one I used when, as a member of the rifle team of the U of Penn, we were shamefully whipped by the girls of Drexel. Having not used it in years, I had not known it had been rendered semi-obsolete due to the sad fact that the precision lands and grooves will give a different throw and posture to the 22 long rifle projectile.

To George Berryman: Tis not sour grapes which flavor my lack of appreciation of the centerfold Playgirls. It just seems to me that the obsession to find a thirteen to fourteen inch difference between the middle dimension and the other two, limits the gallery to that specific type which blooms rather extravagantly, and is essentially a rather bovine and placid female, round face, stubby thickened hands and feet, sturdy bones - in fact the female counterpart in extravagant physical endowment with the muscle-beach type male. I think that the truly enduringly lovely female will have good bones, liveness, slenderness, a lasting elegance of face and figure, and that at the age at which the pictures of the Playgirls are taken, such lasting ladies might measure a disappointing 30-22-21. But most of all, they would have that special "sense of herself" which would consider such public display not only unsexuctive, but an a-sexual or anti-sexual hangup. Centerfolds age badly, as do beachboys.

JOSEPH J. COFFEY, PROF. ANDREW HACKER, MRS. W. H. J. KENNEDY, FRANCIS M. NEVINS, Jr., and BILL WILSON all answered Steve Marinakis inquiry about an old movie he had seen on TV. The film is Touch of Evil (1958), written and directed by Orson Welles and freely adapted from Whit Masterson's novel Badge of Evil (1956). A good analysis of the film is in Peter Cowie's pb The Cinema of Orson Welles (1965). The cast included Welles, Charlton Heston, Janet Leigh, Marlene Dietrich, Akim Tamiroff, Joseph Calillia and Joseph Cotten. It was the first feature movie to have an original score by Mancini, who was practically

The Readers Write...

...((The Editors Reply - ljm & jmm))

unknown to the general public at that time. Although the film was set in Mexico, it was actually shot in Venice, California. Whit Masterson also wrote the Max Thursday private detective novels under the Wade Miller byline.

JOSEPH J. COFFEY, Long Island City, N.Y.: Ted Serrill's letter satisfactorily answered doubts I've had on Chandler's praising Philip Atlee.

FRANCIS M. NEVINS, Jr., Lawton, Okla.: Several bravos to Ted Serrill for his inspired hunch about Philip Atlee being James Atlee Phillips. Besides Suitable For Framing (1949) and Pagoda (1951), Phillips has also published under his own name The Deadly Mermaid (1954). Perhaps the publisher of the Atlee paperbacks can be persuaded to reissue all three now that the author has made it big.

From both your point of view and mine, one of the key events since I last wrote was the publication of The Girl in the Plain Brown Wrapper. An unbelievably stunning book-- who but JDM could so brilliantly fuse serious concerns with a strict formal problem plot; could express his meanings through the minute details of that plot; would dare to use story elements smacking of Fu Manchu but in such a way as to make them chillingly real and burningly relevant?

MRS. W. H. J. KENNEDY, New York: I note that Elijah Stern does not mention The End of The Night nor The Price of Murder in his critique. Both of these books, especially the former, seem to me to be at once highly satisfactory crime novels and to make pertinent comments on nihilistic trends in our society.

MRS. GLENN CLAIRMONTE, Downey, Calif: What I consider the best story in The Lethal Sex ((edited by JDM)) is by my friend Gladys Cluff. ((Sleeping Dogs)) H. Vernor Dixon (Harry) was a good friend of mine while I lived in Carmel.

((Glenn is one of our local writers, as well as a freelance editor, and advisor to the Downey Writers Guild. Among her published work is a thoroughly-researched biography of Calamity Jane. Glenn has also been trying to locate H. Vernor Dixon. - ljm))

BILL WILSON, Atlanta, Ga.: H. Vernor Dixon is alive and well, and published a novel, The Rag Pickers, in 1966. ((BUT where is he now? -ljm))

I thoroughly enjoyed JDM's parody of Papa H. He has the style down. I personally didn't care too much for Mr. Leman's effort, but at least it was an effort. Some time ago I read a parody of the super-tough style, called "I Am Tough". I can't recall the name of the author (shame on me), but it was an excellent example of the thing Mr. Leman was trying to do and that JDM brought off in his answer. ((For a really superb example of the "super-duper-tough" parody, may I recommend "The Night He Cried" by Fritz Lieber. As Damon Knight put it, Fritz is at his best when sticking pins into some member of the American Paranoids' Association, in this case Mickey Spillane. -jmm))

As to Francis M. Nevins, Jr., I think he has missed the point of my comments. My only real variance was in referring to Carr, Gardner, Christie and Queen as "supreme untouchables". My comment about a lawyer (for which jmm rapped my knuckles) was based on my personal acquaintances in the legal profession, who, except when they are playing "Hamlet" for the benefit of a jury, are usually cautious with superlatives. I have no quarrel with anyone's right to his own preferences, but one's preferences are just that. Nothing more. ((Right! -jmm)) What is of interest to me is that I had a kind word for Carr. I did not exempt him, I said he had written some real good stuff, e.g., "The Burning Court" and "Fire, Burn", so Mr. Nevins proceeds to put the blast on Carr, one of his "untouchables". ((How about "The Devil In Velvet"? -jmm)) If you will read my article as an entity and not out of context, it merely says what I like and do not like and some of the more pertinent reasons why. It also says that I like JDM because he writes about

"real" people. Incidentally, one of my favorite JDMs is "Cancel All Our Vows", which has nothing at all to do with crime or mystery, but has some very real people in it. In fact, I have never read a JDM that didn't have many types in it that I didn't know or had encountered at some time. Further, "Cry Hard, Cry Fast" was almost like old home week. And I am especially intrigued by the introspection of the characters. My personal dislike of the so-called classic mystery or detective story is this: Doyle popularized a super hero who was the prototype of all the super detectives to follow. His foil is the stupid inspector. Super hero solves everything in spite of the incredible stupidity of the inspector. Holmes and Lestrade, Vance and Heath, Mason and Tragg (or is it Trask?), it all adds up to the same formula. Again, if this is what you like, have fun. But for me, I'll take JDM and his real people any day with Sunday doubleheaders! To repeat, this is my personal opinion.

I have been making reference to a book as "God Bless The Mark". I've been making a bubu. The title is "God Save The Mark", by Donald Westlake. This is what happens when you write off the top of your head and trust too much to memory.

"The Girl In The Plain Brown Wrapper" is not my favorite by a good distance. First off, I take each McGee as an entity, just as I took each episode of "The Fugitive" as an entity. The final episode of "The Fugitive" was horrible, as it was based on an impossible premise.

Back to "Brown Wrapper". On the positive side; the characters are all well delineated and that bit about standing in a corner and not thinking about elephants is worth the price of the book. Also good is the commentary about the personality of a sociopath. On the negative side is the final wrap-up. I think JDM got McGee boxed in and reached away out into left field to come up with a solution. I can't imagine any DA with the personality described going along with the setup. I'm not going to comment about what I think would have been better, because that is second guessing--a little pastime I happen to dislike. All I'm saying is that personally I didn't dig it, but after all that is only my opinion.

On the factual side, however, I groaned when I read page 175 where McGee checked the knurled safety on a revolver! They ain't no sech animal. This was the subject of some comment by Mr. Grennell in his comments on my remarks in JDMB #9. Mr. Grennell and I didn't see quite eye to eye on some points, but that is readily understandable to me. We have a different attitude toward guns. Roughly comparable to the difference between a sports car buff and a taxi driver. ((I would say that Dean Grennell's attitude toward guns is roughly similar to his attitude toward many other things--a healthy irreverence, coupled with his own brand of dry and salty humor. -jmm)) But we were in agreement about safety knobs on revolvers. Now, one of two things may have happened here: If JDM was referring to one of those rare off-brand foreign revolvers he ought to have mentioned it. The other possibility is this--from reading "The House Guests", I gather that JDM doesn't have a firearm in the house. Also, as an officer in the Army, he would have used a cal.45 auto-loading pistol which has a safety of the type described. However, no standard made American revolver (that I know) has a safety of the type described. Pictures of revolvers have what looks like a safety, but it is actually the release catch for the revolving chamber.

I am also thinking in terms of a technical inaccuracy in "The Last One Left". In this, he mentions a revolver with a one-inch barrel. Now since this is in the words of the narrator, it is understandable, since this type of revolver has what looks like a one-inch barrel. In fact, it is rated as a two-inch barrel, since barrels are measured by the inside length. So, since JDM doesn't apparently own a revolver, he may have looked at a revolver and made a mistake about the safety.

Oh well, he is still my favorite story teller. And if people get botched up on guns, you should see them with musical instruments. I've heard some attempt to talk (and write) about jazz and they don't know the difference between a vibraphone, a xylophone and a marimba, or that there are at least 7 different types of saxophone and there are two types of clarinet which, in general, look like a saxophone, just to mention a few little gems. ((The Touch of JDM Makes It, eh? -jmm))

Just finished "No Deadly Drug". I enjoyed it a lot. At first I was disappointed that he didn't cover the second trial, but then realized that JDM played it smart, as the second case is under appeal (one appeal has been denied) and the book might give cause for comment in case a retrial was ordered. Either Doubleday missed out on proof reading or JDM muffed one. On page 195 and again on 196, reference is made to adiposier; then on page 479 it is called adiopsere. It is actually adipocère. Years ago I missed a test question dealing with adipocere and the damned word got fixed in my mind. And to double check, I just looked it up in the medical dictionary. It seems that the root word for the last syllable is the Latin word cera, meaning wax.

The insight on page 36 is the most! How true. This is JDM at his best.

PAUL KNIEPP, Los Angeles, Calif: Am I wrong--or was "Girl In The Plain Brown Wrapper" the best McGee yet? ((Welllll--since you asked...-jmm))

CLARENCE G. PETERSEN, Rolling Meadows, Ill.: JDMB #10 was lots of fun. Some of the correspondents are beginning to go for the throat now, which will contribute, no doubt, to somebody's master's thesis on "The Contributions of John D. MacDonald to America's Propensity to Violence".

I think it is a bit late to worry about turning the fandom into a cult. Clearly the cult already exists, and should you decide to formalize it by passing out lapel pins, membership cards, bumper stickers or whatever ((Would you believe a Travis McGee sweat-shirt? -jmm)), I think you should pick a name that shows honest and unabashed recognition of things as they are. Instead of some cutey-cute name like The Busted Flush Irregulars, why not call it The John D. MacDonald Cult?

I'm not blaming you or even the JDMB for it--I'm just saying that a cult exists, and if you are getting very many letters that merely gush and fawn, in addition to those you print, that only reinforces my claim.

A cult, in the sense I use the term, is "an instance of an almost religious veneration for a person or thing, especially as manifested by a body of admirers". That from the American College Dictionary. ((A pox on you and your Dictionary, sirrah. "Cult" is a semantically negative term, as far as I/we am/are concerned. -jmm))

I think John has lots of fans of that kind, and I'm not even sure it is necessary to eliminate the fans with a critical sense. By their very exertions in sending you and the JDMB these vast argumentative constructs, these almost-theological disputes (I mean lots of times, not always), there is an implicit veneration, the depths of which I can only imagine. But I do imagine them to be greater than those attendant to the work of most writers. ((Have you ever met any Georgette Heyer fans? -jmm)) The appeal of the latter--outside the "literary community" and even within it--is more often a matter of lots of people reading the "right" books so they can keep up with the cocktail party conversation.

John's fans--for better or worse--bring nothing to the cocktail party that anyone wants to hear. For the fans, that is decidedly for the better; for John maybe it isn't, although I should think he would be well satisfied with the size of his audience and the intensity of their devotion, and he certainly ain't in any financial pain. There is, of course, this widespread myth that John would like nothing more than to break into the literary establishment, that he is injured by the lack of "serious" attention in the book reviews. He denies it, and although I would find it hard to believe that he wouldn't like to be recognized as an Author with a great big capital A in those circles, I am inclined to believe that he is too rational to worry about it.

A couple of things happen to the McGee personality in "Brown". He is so busy with the mystery and with the action--including an unusual amount of sack action--that he scarcely has time to indulge his well-known preoccupation with the sound of his own opinions. He also drinks an inordinate amount of Plymouth gin, which, I suggested to John in a note yesterday, seems a reckless squandering of precious reaction time for one in McGee's line of work. He does have time for a second lecture and object lesson in how to deal with sturdy and streetwise young Nigra ladies, and I suggested to John that McGee now owes it to us--as well as to himself--to tumble one of them into the sack with all the other girls, explaining in no more than three pages how he is able to accomplish it without any inordinately racist self-consciousness.

Mostly I'm in awe of the plotting. If someone had told me all that was going to be involved, I would have expected a piece of junk, messy and loose-edy and impossible to untangle. But it all hangs together and it moves right along. Damned if I know how he does it.

So I asked him. He hasn't replied. But of course I only mailed it yesterday.

EPH KONIGSBERG, Sierra Madre, Calif: May I share an odd bit of humor with JDMB readers? Observing, but not understanding a cricket match, I looked it up in the 14th edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica. In 11½ pages of text plus 2 pages of pictures, the article fails to describe the rules, number of players, method of scoring, method of retiring a side, etc. etc., except perhaps by the inferences a reader can make from the information on the historical development of the game.

What magnificent self-assurance. Every civilized person is presumed to know these fundamentals, and it only remains for the EB article to elaborate on the more recondite aspects of the game. The second reading was, to me, funnier than the first, and I can only compare my mental state with the semi-hypnotic fascination with which I once watched an incredibly bad Zsa Zsa Gabor movie just to see whether it could sustain (if that is the word) its nadir.

In re JDM, I have by now seen all too many sneering references to his "sex therapy". Indeed he does have a recurrent theme of a man caring very intensely and responsibly for a woman, with no, or only a wistful desire for a permanent relationship, i.e., marriage. If I have read JDM correctly, sexual intercourse is but one--not necessarily concomitant--aspect of a relationship in which a loveless person comes to believe that someone cares for her, and blossoms thereby.

Can any JDMB correspondent quote a passage in which a woman responds "therapeutically to merely intercourse, or even orgasm? Though my memory fails me, I would wager that JDMB readers could cite chapter and verse in which MacDonald describes a woman responding to love without sex, either then or implicit in future relationships.

That such non-romantic, non-marriage-headed love of one person for another is rare in our society, I would admit. Perhaps this arises from our sex drives or overweening self-interest. No matter. But we should be chary of reading society's (and our own?) inadequacies into JDM's superbly set forth belief in the need for, and the response of every human being to love, compassion and understanding.

JAMES R. GOODRICH, Middletown, NY: The So. Illinois Univ. work on tough guy writers is strangely enuf entitled TOUGH GUY WRITERS OF THE 30's. Edited by Madden, it is now out at \$6.95. There is a companion volume, PROLETARIAN WRITERS OF THE 30's, which I'm told contains no 'tec authors. One of my colleagues in the teaching faculty at the college at New Paltz (I'm an associate librarian) Herb Ruhm, contributed a chapter on Raymond Chandler.

VALERIE BERG, Little Neck, NY: By the way, some of your readers may be interested to know of another science-fiction story which has a similar plot to "Wine of the Dreamers". The author, Frank Herbert. The book is "The Heaven Makers". It was just published this year.

E. S. SEELEY, Jr., Brooklyn, NY: Elijah Stern was very pleased to see himself in print again in No. 10. So much so, in fact, that I have been able to persuade him to let us try to market the novels he has been working on for the last few years. As I mentioned, all these novels are set against the background of a Castro-style revolution in Latin America and are most impressive. We had one of the novels typed up and are now taking it around to publishers. This is a new experience for me and I am finding it very interesting. The novel is called ALL TOGETHER ON JUDGMENT DAY and deals with a group of people who are involved in one way or another with a CIA-inspired plot to assassinate the leader of the rebel government on the first anniversary of the revolution. I will keep you informed of our progress.

Stern has also done some work on a new essay about JDM. It explores the relationships between McGee, Jimmy Wing, Sam Boylston and (believe it or not) Roman Catholic

priests. His ideas are fascinating and I am trying to get him to finish the essay so I can send it on to you.

((We're looking forward to Mr. Stern's novels--and to that new essay on JDM! -ljm))

ORDEAN HAGEN, Grand Forks, ND: If you are interested in my book, "Who Done It", it is definitely being published in June. I have read proof on the index and expect the rest of the galleys any day. Al Hubin has written the introduction to the book. From every indication it is going to be very successful. You might also be interested to know that I am doing the same thing for the western story and am about halfway through that.

((Yes, we are definitely interested in "Who Done It", and in the one on westerns. So thanks for the info, and please continue to keep us informed. Although we can't afford to open the pages of JDMB to lengthy discussions of all writers in all fields, we are willing to publish plugs for books in which we think our readership might be interested. -ljm))

EARL M. MATTHEWS, 2009 Huron Pkwy, Apt. 6, Ann Arbor, Mich. 48104: Received my copy of The JDM Master Checklist, and after going through it (at least 3 times already), I have but one complaint to make. Looking at the list, I wished that I could run down and buy each title listed, or wished that I knew of some place where I could send and try to buy back magazines. Here in Ann Arbor we have no used bookstores, so no place to really hunt for such magazines which date back so far. Maybe someone might put a bee in Fawcett's ear that these earlier MacDonald stories would sell great if they were reprinted in volumes of short stories. I am sure other JDM fans would agree with me. If you happen to know of any places where I could write to try and locate any of these titles I would be most thankful. Keep up the good work.

((Part of this letter belongs in the Seek & Swap Dept., but we like to think that all of you read each and every word in this mag, and that someone will be able to help Earl in his search for the oldies. -ljm))

JEREMY BARRY, China Lake, Calif: Latest JDM was digested and enjoyed, though I really prefer lamb chops.

How about doing more on other authors? Some that I have in mind: Henry Kane, Brett Halliday, Creasey, Craig Rice, William Irish (Woolrich?), etc. Would like to know more about them and their works.

((We suspect that you're putting us on, but as we've said before, JDMB is not the only mag in mystery story fandom. You can read--and write about--other mystery writers in THE ARMCHAIR DETECTIVE, THE MYSTERY LOVER'S NEWSLETTER and THE QUEEN CANON BIBLIOPHILE. We recommend all three--or we wouldn't have plugs for 'em in JDMB... -ljm))

ELISE C. STROHMEIER, Ashland, PA: I have difficulty getting John D. MacDonald's books. I have had Pale Grey For Guilt and The Last One Left on order from Brentano's in New York City since March 3 ((1968)). Our local paperback bookstore has no choice, seemingly, because if I ask for books not on the racks, the owner says he can't promise to get them.

((The distributors--not the publishers--are the villains in cases such as this. You might do better by writing directly to the publishers. -ljm))

MARGARET KENNEDY, North Charleston, SC: I did not like JDM's piece of fiction in the May '68 PLAYBOY, but I thoroughly enjoyed his letter in the August '68 issue. He can certainly give out with the "repartee" when necessary, and thru his letter I can visualize Travis McGee so vividly.

NANCY POTTER, Greenville, Ga: We have been searching and seeking the Pale Gray For Guilt since October '67, noting you said it actually did get published in February '68. I do not believe it has ever hit the Atlanta-Marietta area; I have checked every major book outlet constantly and repeatedly

since then, with no luck. Have about decided it's some nefarious plot to do away with JDM in this area because he makes sense; now I note there's a new one on the way! Have about decided we'll have to write Gold Medal for a copy and ask why?

((Good idea. -ljm))

MISS BARBARA KOHL, New York, NY: Hint for those having trouble getting "Three For McGee": The Donnell Library (W. 53rd St.) usually has one or two copies available in their rental section.

ALLAN S. LASSNER, New York, NY: Here's a tip for those in the New York City area. The Open Book, a paperback store located on the concourse of the Grand Central Terminal, is a great spot for JDM fans. Recently, I found 26 JDM titles on display, which was not only more than that of any other suspense author, but more than that of any other author. The books are all in prominent positions.

BILL FRENCH, Yonkers, NY: Wish I could help in compiling your lists, but have no files and back issues. You can tell the folks that in August I counted 31 different JDMs on sale at Grand Central.

You have rekindled my interest in JDM. I am now buying and reading all his books. Have you ever thought about a contest--"The BEST JDM Novel" and why, in 200 words.

((Such a contest might be interesting, but first let's see what this issue's Poll brings in the way of Response. -ljm))

MRS. PEGGY KEELEY, Markham, Ill.: In the "Please Write For Details" column, I enjoyed the items of Dean Grennell and Bill Wilson, but when I read a book, the technical jargon doesn't faze me. If the words I'm reading make sense to me, I could care less about the type of gun or any other weapon the author decided to use. ((Spitballs at 20 paces? -jmm))

JON L. BREEN: Issue #10 made a very quick crossing of the Pacific--I received it yesterday, only four days after it was postmarked. As always, I found the various viewpoints stimulating. I hereby align myself in the following camps: Those who like McGee's "soapbox" and always look forward to its appearance, those who view with alarm the selection of Robert Culp as Trav McGee, those who would like to see an EQ Bibliophile (I've written Rev. Washer on this), those who appreciate Josephine Tey and Earl Stanley Gardner both, and those who want JDM to write what he feels like writing--whatever it is, I want to read it.

JDM's comments on parody interested me, of course, since parody (and pastiche) have been my literary bag up to now. I think he put his finger on what a good parody should do--it also made me think my own tries in this field may have failed because they were too affectionate, not devastating enough. ((On the contrary, an affectionate parody is much more likely to hit the mark. Trying too hard to be devastating can be ruinous to the effect you want to create. -jmm)) I'm really looking forward to the appearance of my own potshot at McGee--to see what the reaction is. Maybe some day I'll be able to lampoon another writer's style as well as JDM does Hemingway's. Right on target.

((You can stop worrying about Culp as McGee, and--perhaps--start worrying about Rod Taylor as McGee. We're reserving judgment until we see the movie. -ljm))

DEL ESKESTRAND, Havre, Mont.: This might be a little out of line for your interests, but I am enclosing a clipping on the Ellery Queen duo. The final quotation by Dannay that, "the literary historians will go back to the good mystery novels to find out what was really going on", is very relevant to Mr. MacDonald. Now for a more contemporary theme. The Mackle kidnapping should be a natural plot for MacDonald. It has all the ingredients, locale, wealthy father, grisly entombment, and to date, unexplained disappearance of the lady accomplice. I think Mr. MacDonald must have worked for a company similar in scope to the Mackle corporation. He shows considerable knowledge of the operations of construction and real estate firms. Am I right on this?

((See biography in the JDM MASTER CHECKLIST. However, it doesn't cover JDM's interest in local--Florida--conservation, building, real estate, etc. It is obvious that he keeps himself informed about such things, whether or not his studies of and work in the world of business included construction and real estate. -ljm))

DAVID & BARBARA EISENDRATH, Brooklyn, NY: The U. of Florida who is collecting manuscripts should offer a complete microfilm offering of the Master collection. If they are not interested, several people I know in microfilm business have expressed some interest. Is there any source that might have a complete collection or nearly so--if they got interested enough to publish such a master anthology?

((A microfilmed anthology of everything written or published by JDM? We assume you mean that the University should make duplicate copies of the film, and rent it to interested persons. I doubt that the University of Florida has a complete collection of JDM, as that would have to include all of the old pulp and slick mags, etc., etc., as listed in the MASTER CHECKLIST. If you mean only the pb and hardcover books, we're sure that more than one of our readers has a complete collection of them. -ljm))

NICHOLAS S. HODSKA, Stratford, Conn: I've just purchased and read "No Deadly Drug", a fabulous book! (I feel as though I've served my apprenticeship to an embalmer!)

JIM McKEON, Bronx, NY: I'm looking forward to another of the color books, but would much prefer to see some longer suspense with non-superman-type protagonists. To the Reichenbach Falls with McGee.

There is a certain amount of escapism in my reading patterns, and after reading the Times in the morning and the News later on in the day, I have read all that I want to read about fact crime. I am certain that "No Deadly Drug" is an excellent book of its type, but I just ain't interested.

GORDON J. WEEL, Doubleday & Co., Miami Beach, Fla: I have finished the mss. of NO DEADLY DRUG. Anybody who expects this book to be even remotely related to anything John has ever done before is completely wrong. "No Deadly Drug" is by all odds the longest, most powerful and most important book that JDM has ever written. To my mind, "No Deadly Drug" is about as much like the usual book about a murder trial as "In Cold Blood" was like a Perry Mason TV mishmash.

In brief, it is the anatomy of a celebrity murder trial--the Carl Coppolino case. It is a study in depth of a great trial, both inside and outside the courtroom. It is the first book, to my knowledge, which has ever thoroughly examined all the tactical, strategic, and human ingredients of our adversary system of criminal justice; and takes the reader thru all the fascinating and unforgettable steps of jury selection, evidence, testimony, to the final verdict.

It is hard for me to convey my enormous enthusiasm for the book. It is most certainly a tremendous breakthrough for John. If there is any justice, the reviewers will treat it as the major literary event it most definitely is--none of this short review back on the mystery page, but a work fully worthy of the big multi-page leadoff spreads that the papers, TIME and NEWSWEEK use for the books that are "events" in themselves.

It is written on at least five different levels, so that you not only view through the prism of light of the expert spectator, but with the insights of diverse but highly specialized and trained legal minds; the hardnosed skepticism of the "old pro" newspapermen; the variegated mentalities of a twelve-toned personality called a jury; and the defensive-aggressive knee-jerking nerves of witnesses, from Marge Farber's love-hate to the Milton Helpers "reputation-on-the-line" stance.

Most amazingly, the hardest personality to find in all this welter of human personality is John MacDonald. He's there, but as an extraordinary 360° all-seeing eye, not as an individual voice discernible in itself, as in any previous JDM book.

Please feel free to put my reputation "on the line" by quoting this letter in any way you wish. The opinions may be personal, but I am totally committed to them.

((Having read NO DEADLY DRUG, we share your enthusiasm and are looking forward to the second one. -ljm))

CHUCK TOOLE, New York, NY: Thanks to JDM, who found a past parody dreary, and thanks to him for writing one of his own. Hemingway would have loved it. (By the way, how many others have tried the McGee Martini as described on page 21 in "Pale Grey"?) And thanks to Len's statement on page 8 of #10... "we don't mind brief comments on writers other than JDM, but if you want to argue at length about them, you'll have to do it elsewhere..." To me, this was the most sensible statement in the entire issue. ((Me too! -jmm))

Len and June, to indicate what an enormous interest your readers have in your publication...I called the gentleman in Wyckoff, NJ, who had extra copies of Wine and Ballroom, and was told they had all been grabbed. See? John, this should show you how eager we are to read your earlier works.

PROF. ANDREW HACKER, Ithaca, NY: Let me add another (petty but still annoying) JDM gripe to the catalogue that seems to be accumulating on your pages. Prior to the appearance of ONE FEARFUL YELLOW EYE on the bookracks, an abridged version was advertised as appearing in Cosmopolitan. I of course bought that issue and read the story; but abridged it was, and it seemed awfully jumpy--that is, you could see where whole sections of transition had been cut out. This meant, of course, that I had to buy the book when it came out a month or so later and read it unabridged all over again. But then I knew the plot, the ending, etc.: very unsuspenseful. I don't ask JDM to refrain from letting abridgements appear in magazines prior to book-publication; that's his business. But I do suggest that JDM-ophiles such as myself would do well to pass by those appetizers (if any more are to appear in the future) and wait for the real thing in paperback. If you don't, you will pay a price for your impatience...

((We never have liked abridgements or condensations whether they be of the Reader's Digest type--or even worse--the "complete novel in this issue" magazine type. -ljm))

BOB BRINEY, W. Lafayette, Ind: Much as I hate to say it, JDM should have got at least a slight twinge from Bob Leman's parody--at least from the passage where McCurd applies his phallic therapy for mixed-up broads. (I prefer Paul Newman's less elegant phrase--bottom of page 69 in the July Playboy--but let's keep this clean for a family magazine...) That is something that has bothered me throughout the McGee series. Surely, one of these days McGee has got to meet a woman who won't want to go to bed with him, or who won't be miraculously cured of her emotional and psychological problems by doing so. ((Stuff! -jmm))

As you undoubtedly know from your work on the "master checklist", a large number of JDM novels have appeared in hard-cover editions in Britain: ones like DEADLY WELCOME, THE NEON JUNGLE, SLAM THE BIG DOOR, THE END OF THE TIGER, and at least three McGees. I have had no luck whatsoever in getting copies of these books. By the time I hear about them, they have gone off sale in their original edition, and none of my correspondents or the booksellers I have queried seem able to find second-hand copies. Apparently the people who buy these JDM books keep them. I think that's very inconsiderate...

Maybe you could get Mr. Hale to be more specific about future JDM books, and when they will appear?

((How about it, Mr. Hale? In the meantime, the MASTER CHECKLIST indicates that at least 3 of the British reprints are currently available from Robert Hale, Ltd. -ljm))

DR. GEORGE J. RAUSCH, Jr., Des Moines, Ia: I hope that you will stick with MacDonald as long as possible but then broaden the magazine rather than letting it die if material on JDM gets scarce. What I am really saying is, I am very fond of JDM but I think we need this kind of a magazine in the field, so keep it going permanently if you can.

((Have you tried The Armchair Detective, The Mystery Lover's Newsletter and The Queen Canon Bibliophile? -ljm))

One of the current topics of discussion seems to be The Last One Left, so I will comment on same. I was rather disappointed in this one. It is a good enough book; if it were written by someone else, I would probably think it was great. But, it seems to lack that something special that is JDM. It seems to lack pace and the insights seem less frequent and less perceptive. I really think that JDM has more sensitivity to social and cultural factors than to psychological factors. I have the feeling that in The Last One Left he leaned too heavily on his weaker talents rather than his stronger.

((I disagree. One of JDM's strongest points is his ability to handle the emotional valences of a situation with delicacy and grace. It's there--if you know what to look for! -jmm))

DAVID B. VAN CAMPEN, OAKLAND, Calif.: Re: Ted Serrill's letter. His notion of "mainstream", "psychological", "penetrating insights", working against what he calls "good characterization" puzzles me. To each his own, and Mr. Serrill is particular, to be sure; however, in The Last One Left, to which he refers, I find his idea of "the amoral Parker...a more chilling person" compared to "the bitch... whatshername..." in The Last One Left, a little bit strange. Parker is probably an example of a "talked-around" character development; his actions speak for him--slightly reminiscent of the Dragnet "just the facts, ma'am" bit.

What JDM does for his "bitch..whatshername" is paint her in several different lights, the end result in MY view is that she is much more chilling because of JDM's stylistic portrait and that what is being done has not much relevance to the "mainstream, psychological" bit. JDM makes her appallingly human through his style, which is the reason I read and love JDM. Parker doesn't measure up in the same way. It's rather like Parker is etched, but JDM's "bitch" is painted. "Style IS everything," as one of my ex-professors of English lit. used to say. JDM has a lot going for him, in my humble opinion, which, individually, is always "where it is".

BOB DREWS, Patchogue, NY: Mostly in answer to Ted Serrill: perhaps my job (news director of a radio station) has an overpowering influence on my taste, but when indulging in escape literature (and I do need to indulge in it) I lose interest immediately if the people involved are not completely credible. (I can't stomach the James Bond type.) Real people, talking and reacting believably, hold my interest even on such unreal conveyances as space craft or small boats (I am a Long Island land-lubber). Thus, I prefer the believable JDM folk on the water to stick or stock characters faking their way through motor racing (which is my sport). Characterization, motivation, even personal philosophies of the characters, are needed to convince me to spend some of my all-too-little free time with any given book. JDM, Donald Hamilton and Eric Ambler always have first lien on my recreational reading time.

HARRY WARNER, Hagerstown, Md: A curious thing: Anthony Boucher's death has been described in several fanzines by now, and yet this first page in the 10th JDM Bibliophile is the first eulogy that does not depend mostly on biographical material. The death leaves me mourning as much for lost opportunity as for anything else, since I never met Boucher. I'll never know the delight that so many fans found in his convention activities, I'll never hear his radio programs based on old records, and I'll never write the letter expressing how much pleasure I'd found reading his science fiction that I always meant to write the first time a real excuse for writing such a letter came up. I hope that either science fiction fandom or mystery fandom does something elaborate to demonstrate how much affection he inspired. A few energetic people with a mimeograph and the willingness to gather and publish about 50 pages of anecdotes about him, personality sketches, and similar material, would be ideal.

William L. Rohde wrote about a fascinating topic. I've never known personally a successful mystery writer, so I can't contribute amazing revelations about the rituals and must-musts associated with those people. But I know that journalists, on their more grubbing level, share exactly the same proclivity to work best when they can clutch some literary version of Linus' blanket to their stubble-covered cheek. We had one reporter who couldn't type a line if he didn't have all his notes for the story spread out before

him, no page obscuring a line of another page, even if this meant covering the entire large desk with the small pieces of yellow tablet paper he insisted on using. He nearly broke his fool neck, twisting it to see the pages of notes that were on the far corners of the desk. Another one, working on the same morning paper that I remain in bondage to, could not write anything before 7 p.m., even if this meant sitting around idly for two or three hours after getting several important stories at an early afternoon meeting.

One curious thing is the tendency of all journalists on small-town newspapers like Hagerstown, where writers double as photographers, to refuse to write a caption for a photograph until the film has been developed. This is probably superstition, a fear that writing the caption will cause in some magical fashion the latent image to vanish from the emulsion, but it gives neophytes the impression that the reporter is never quite sure what he took a picture of.

I suppose I have quirks of my own at the office, but I'm aware of only one. The margins on my typewriter must be set at the figures 10 and 75 on the tabulator scale. There is minor justification for this totem, because it produces a full line of typing that will normally produce two lines of type if set in 8-point single column format, thereby making it possible to calculate how much space the news article will occupy in print: four lines of typing, one inch of type. But obviously one or two more or fewer typing characters per line wouldn't change greatly the calculations, and the paper is wide enough to permit starting 65-character lines at some other point on the scale.

I'm unhappy about two letters in this issue, those by C. Camarota and Remsen T. Schenck. They typify an attitude that is manifested too often toward many types of hobbying and special interest activities. It's a sort of intellectual dog in the manger behavior: I don't find so much for me in such and such a field, so you guys shouldn't knock yourselves out over it because when you do you're behaving stupidly in my estimation. Why shouldn't we have a cult of a living writer, if there are enough people willing to do it, and they proceed with their activities in a way that doesn't obtrude on the daily life of the uninterested?

It's a roundabout way of trying to control what should not be controlled. You'll find it in science fiction fandom in those letters to fanzine editors which assert that fan fiction shouldn't be published in fanzines, or convention reports shouldn't appear in fanzines. Obviously, these people are trying to announce that they don't like fan fiction or convention reports, and they are betraying some inner compulsion to rearrange the world to suit their own preferences. Of course, there's nothing wrong with debunking a writer or a hobby or an activity, but there's something wrong with efforts to persuade other people that they shouldn't indulge in these sources of innocent merriment.

JDM's parody is a trifle too successful. I don't think that anyone would suspect it, if it were inserted into a Hemingway story that was being published for the first time. I also doubt that Papa is one of JDM's betters. Fifty years from now, I suspect that MacDonald will be read and written about by more people, in more intensely admiring manner, than Hemingway's future fandom.

Incidentally, I've begun purchasing MacDonald (and Carr and some others) with more vigor. The local Goodwill Industries store suddenly put about 500 paperback crime and mystery titles on its dime shelf and I couldn't resist. Now I wish I'd carried out my intention to get all the JDM titles at the AAUW used book sale last fall; I would probably have three-fourths or so of all the books in the canon by now.

I still wish you'd skip past my letters most issues when you're assembling your lettercolumn. I simply haven't the background to do a really good job in commenting on a MacDonald fandom fanzine, and you would be doing much better to encourage by letter publication all the people you're unearthing and introducing into the field of amateur journalism. ((We'd rather do both, Harry! -ljm))

PETER R. GILL, Toronto, Canada: I didn't realize, or even dare hope when I answered that note from Riverside Quarterly, that a fanzine on JDM would be forthcoming. Even after two years at SF fandom, I tend to think of all other fans as Elvis's or the Beatles's, and it is a great treat to find that another one of my literary tastes has a vocal following. Now if we could only start something for Mary Worth.

The unfortunate thing, (on my part, not yours) that as a neofan in SF I constantly read other fanzines and letter cols. As I started to read yours, I thought "at last here's a LoC Column without a (brilliant) letter by Harry Warner Jr.--and then I found his letter in the column. This effectively ruins any chance of my writing a LoC (for at least 2 issues) so enclosed is a check. Honest, it's not that I don't like his letters, I do, it's that who can compete with that type of letter?

((You just did! Is there really a Mary Worth fandom? -ljm))

C. G. DANZOLL, Canton, Conn: A library of over 30 JDM paperbacks testifies to my admiration of JDM as a writer. He has a marvelous way with dialogue. His skill at bringing a scene to life, especially a scene of violence, manifests itself without strain even in the pages of his lesser efforts. A sympathetic understanding of human character, a fascination with violence and horror, a critical awareness of how life is lived in America today all are part of what gives a MacDonald story a very special kind of distinction.

BUT! (Well, not really that emphatic a "BUT"...) I do have one peevish complaint. In my JDM library there are too many:

1. Wellbred, sexually charged young ladies with wry sense of humor and unflagging warmth of heart,
2. villains of unalloyed evil (Junior Allen, Boone Waxwell, the jailbird in Cape Fear, etc.), and
3. old coots from the country who look like characters played by Walter Brennan and act like Howard J. Hughes.

But, no problem. Sometimes we meet the same people but, like friends, we shouldn't complain. All the same, some day I'd like to read about a major character who is like no one else in the world of JDM--no boats, no Florida, no Plymouth gin, no complicated real estate deal, no politically corrupt middlesized town, no sunbronzed wenches, no madman, no middleclass hero. Of course, I wouldn't like the book.

JOHN T. BROWNE: Just a few random thoughts on JDM.

I agree with JDM that Travis McGee is a beach bum, a cultural dropout. Although I like the stories, I don't like McGee, in fact there are only a couple of heroes in all the JDM books that I like. (And I have read all except the lost.) I can't put my finger on the reason exactly. This is no knock on the author; perhaps he doesn't want them to be liked.

I do like all the villains and villainesses. They are the best parts of the book. The worst parts are the love scenes between the good guy and the good girl. I find this writing false and unconvincing and impossible to read. I just skip it, now.

I believe that JDM could write the book on Big Business. Whenever the business "world" entered his crime stories, it was handled magnificently.

The fact that JDM has an article or story published in Playboy Magazine is interesting. The impression I gained from his stories is that he would be against all that Playboy stood for. So he sold out, eh?

Don't publish my address if you publish my letter, please.

((JDM has had at least two stories in PLAYBOY. The fact that he may not like some aspects of the magazine does not mean that he should not write for it. Years ago he sold stories to DOC SAVAGE MAGAZINE, for instance, and I'm reasonably sure that he was not a Doc Savage fan. He didn't write the lead novels about Doc; he wrote short stories suitable for any adventure magazine. To the best of my knowledge he has never photographed any of the airbrushed nudes, nor has he written anything for the magazine that he did not want to write.

I assume you are referring to the McGee references to Hugh the Heff, etc. Part of McGee is MacDonald (or vice versa) but just how much is something that only MacDonald knows. See page 5 of JDMB #10: JDM's comments on Stern's article. Before we can assume that JDM would be against all that PLAYBOY stands for, we must first determine exactly what that means--i.e., what does PLAYBOY stand for? Ask a dozen readers, and you'll get a dozen different answers... -ljm))

((You sound like one of the emotional unfortunates who was brainwashed at an early age to associate "goodness" with only negative virtues--such as someone who is "good" because they don't drink, smoke, or whatever. -jmm))

GARRY ENCKENT, North Bay, Ontario, Canada: The article by Bill Rohde was quite interesting, however, more interesting is his admission that he is one of the writers for the "Nick Carter" series. (I speak of treason now in JDMB, ljm and jmm!) I thought writers never reveal their pseudonyms so outrightly, but rather leaked out by other sources. Would that somebody would reveal all the pseudonyms of suspense writers in the field today! (hint.)

((No treason here, Garry. Your comments re Nick Carter are brief and to the point. However, again we must recommend TAD, TMLN, TQCB, for info re suspense writers' pseudonyms, etc. As for JDM, he has appeared under "house names"--see MASTER CHECKLIST--but has never deliberately used a pseudonym. -ljm))

STEPHEN L. LENT, APO NY: A few months ago, the Army Times presented an interview with JDM in which he said (according to my memory) that he was planning to end T. McGee. If he does, he will probably lose me as a fan. I may have misread this statement, or not presented it in its entirety.

In JDMB #10, William Rohde stated he has ghosted four Nick Carter books. I have recently started to read Nick, and I have wondered why there is no stated author(s). Is this a round robin going from one author to another, or does some individual present material to different authors--that is either the truth or so close to the truth that the establishment can take reprisal--for Nick Carter stories. This has me intrigued. I like to know who I am reading what by.

((Whether or not there will be more than 12 McGees depends entirely on how JDM feels about it after he has written the 12th one. So there could be more if John doesn't tire of ol' Trav... // The Nick Carter books, as well as other series characters, have been "ghosted" for years. My grandmother used to read Carter books to my mother when my mother was a little girl. I'm 45, so you figure out how long old Nick and his umpteen writers have been operating... -ljm))

LARRY TAUBER, Memphis, Tenn: I can't help but feel that when the first Travis McGee film does appear that the critics will pan it as being patterned after Frank Sinatra's Tony Rome films (the next of which is Lady In Cement). Although, when the first one, Tony Rome, was released, one alert critic in Memphis mentioned that he thought it had an amazing resemblance to JDM's Travis McGee.

DAVID S. GADZIOLA, Asst. Prof. of English, Muncie, Ind: Barbara Hendra, of Fawcett Publications, has kindly provided me with your address so I may inquire about the JDM Bibliophile. I am interested not merely because I am a long-time JDM admirer, but also because I am currently using The Last One Left as required reading in two of my classes here at Ball State. The classes--both sections of an Advanced Comp. and Lit. course--have taken up the book with a good deal of enthusiasm. (In fact, one student told me that it was the first required text he had ever enjoyed reading.) Furthermore, The Last One Left has turned out to be very teachable, a real treasure-shop of the arts of fiction. I hope to do more with MacDonald in the future and in other courses.

DAVID BROWNELL, Cambridge, Mass: I suspect that others, as well as myself, will want to comment on the rumor that McGee will not be seen in more than twelve books. This seems plausible, and may even be a good thing. Mr. MacDonald has in the past tended to write several books dealing with one general theme or locale, after which he has moved on to a new subject. It would be a pity to compel him to become a formula writer. ((Do you think you could? -jmm))

Then, too, McGee seems to offer a limited number of types of possible plots, given the need for a reward at the end of the book, and the fact that Mr. MacDonald has not chosen to develop McGee's character, or age him from book to book.

(While some of my favorite writers do allow their detectives to age--Margery Allingham, or example--there are many respectable precedents for a hero who never changes or ages in any significant way. Among these, despite ingenious efforts of monomaniacal annotators to prove the contrary, is certainly Sherlock Holmes.

Also, perhaps the end of McGee's career, whether caused by death, or a fate worse than, marriage to some dependent doll who hasn't the strength of character to disembark when McGee pronounces her cure done, will lead to a new series character. (Who would give up Miss Marple to have twice as much Poirot? or vice versa?)

However, before McGee leaves us, as he has left so many before, I find that I want to get into the act by suggesting some subjects I'd like to see MacDonald and McGee handle. Since McGee is a Floridian, I wonder what his attitude is to the politics of his native turf. Surely an inhabitant of the land where the Wackenhuts roam, no great distance from the domains of Lester Maddox and George Wallace, could easily find himself involved in some interesting activities?

Another interesting study these days is the way in which successful mobsters attempt the infiltration of legitimate business, providing themselves with respectability and a visible source of income. What happens if a gangster acquires a bank, for example? ((And the poor, helpless banker goes to Travis for help? Hoo-hah! -jmm))

Will McGee ever meet a girl who doesn't need therapeutic sex? or is unaware of the pill? Papa Trav?

Finally, I hope we'll see at least one more book of the McGee outcons con-man type, since I particularly enjoy Mr. MacDonald's con men. But enough of such kibitzing.

Thank you for catering to us fans, and allowing vent for such speculations.

ANDY ZERBE, Montgomery Ala: Sound familiar?: "Meet Johnny Double, down-beat Don Quixote in a society that frowns on windmills, hunting for one last dragon to slay. Johnny Double, ex-cop and semi-private investigator, who makes his living wallowing thru the aftermath of innocence and the tattered ruins of once-clean souls. A guy that gets his kicks stepping on the stepper-ons, tearing up their hate-filled little worlds and watching the pieces blow away. Meet Johnny Double, a once-white knight in counterfeit armor, the poor man's Peter Pan."

The above is the blurb for a new comic book detective due out from DC comics some time in August. The description could easily fit Travis McGee. ((If you like deep purple, I suppose it could. -jmm))

Nice to know that BALLROOM OF THE SKIES and WINE OF THE DREAMERS have been reprinted by Fawcett. I read these two years ago while working my way through the science-fiction section of the base library. Years of acquaintance with them has convinced me that the people who buy hardcover science fiction books are the people who buy them for libraries on military bases. They always have copies of those books you never can find anywhere else. I'm probably wrong, but hasn't WINE OF THE DREAMERS seen a previous paperback edition from Pocketbooks? ((Yes, as PLANET OF THE DREAMERS -ljm))

The tastes of the reading public can be judged by the fact that Ellery Queen, Erle Stanley Gardner, Richard S. Prather and Mickey Spillane all have more books which have sold more copies on the best-seller lists than John D. MacDonald, according to 70 Years of Bestsellers.

NORMAN RABE, Niantic, Conn: When an author has been as prolific as JDM, his many characterizations blend in the mind. Names are repeated, situations reappear and T. McGee again explains his bag. The several Christys and Christines particularly interest me. They tend to be tall, not overly slender--perhaps robust is the word--and often blond. I hope to develop this collective personality in some detail soon. ((Define "tall". -jmm))

I am most leery about the T. McGee film. The books are too well developed to film well. DARKER THAN AMBER might succeed if JDM's characterizations are retained. Who is doing the screenplay? ((Ed Waters. -ljm))

BILL CRIDER, Austin, Texas: I think that Rod Taylor will make a better Travis McGee than Robert Culp, but I think that Rod Taylor is too short and broad (with muscle, at least, and not fat.)

DON THOMPSON, Mentor, Ohio: Sorry to hear about Rod Taylor (who can't act, doesn't look the McGee type) nosing out Bob Culp (who can act, looks like McGee). Hope this isn't going to be another miscast mishmash like the Matt Helm abortions.

Culp is ideal for McGee--the kind of fellow who, when the villain is swimming for his life in a storm-tossed sea, forgets his rancor and throws him, from the goodness of his heart, an anchor.

If the reissued MacDonald stf novels sell, is there a chance we could get a collection of his shorter science fiction?

((There's always a chance... Buy the books, write to Fawcett... JDM already knows that readers would like to see more collections of his work, s-f and otherwise.-ljm))

CHUCK TOOLE, New York, NY: Am sure you've thought of it--but I thought an interview with Lemmon and/or Rod Taylor would make good reading. What they think of the characters, JDM, etc. Do these people work out of LA or NY?

((Getting Jack Lemmon or Rod Taylor to sit for an interview for a magazine with slightly less than 500 readers would be a most difficult feat to accomplish. JDM himself has never met Lemmon, Taylor, etc. I met Joe E. Brown once, but that was on Saipan, circa 1945. -ljm))

ROBERT D. MORTON, Seneca Falls, NY: As always, I'm glad to hear from the JDM Bibliophile. And glad to hear that your schedule can be changed and delayed. I subscribed to the JDMB because I am a fan and I have enjoyed the JDMB, but I must admit to being leary of becoming involved with a good thing gone amok. It's my observation that amateur groups lose their appeal when the professionals take over. In other words the appeal, the individual thing, is lost to need by the pros to appeal to a bigger group. Guess that is why I am not a joiner. In any case, the JDMB sounds like it will continue to be a good amateur (in the true sense) publication, and I'm glad.

Have read both WINE OF THE DREAMERS and BALLROOM OF THE SKIES and enjoyed them. And I'm not a science-fiction fan. And whooped with joy at the prospect of JDM taking on the American Express machine. He may set the bloody machine back a few years from its planned takeover. Great!

STAN WOOLSTON, Garden Grove, Calif: I have noticed that JDM uses the living world as his "fodder" for a story, and gathers it into a little world of its own. This isn't new, and if it sometimes reflects the psychological and emotional feeling of the author, that does not disturb me either. I'm not bothered by those who have their own idea of the "ideal mystery", such as Ted Serrill's view that there must be a certain balance between "characterization" and other story elements, and avoidance of "penetrating insights" particularly of a psychological nature. I enjoy them in fiction, and need not feel it is out of place in mystery fiction or science fiction. To me, the categorical divisions are not as important as the individual story, and so I enjoy the sense-of-wonder aspects that Ted Serrill mentions in any fiction, including mysteries.

I read fiction and non-fiction of all sorts--and enjoy it whether it is historical, SF, "suspense" or whatever. Personally, I prefer the longer story, but whether it is "serious" or "humorous" (or both) depends on context as demanded by the story-line.

Mr. Remsen T. Schenck comments on the danger of an "outsider" discussing professional aspects of a story. There is one matter that I'm sure may touch on some of us; at one time every "pro" was a beginner, and at some time in the future (or maybe now) some who are not professionals are reaching toward it. If we were separated from all thoughts concerning the structure of a story, and how an author produces a certain

effect, every beginner would be eternally a neophyte. Writers have to begin somewhere.

ED COX, Arleta, Calif: I will admit that I agree, to a degree, with Elijah Stern concerning the method by which JDM exposes (possibly a poor choice of a word due to its misuse in a sensationalistic mode the past decade or so) the underside of various rocks of our God-Mother-and Apple Pie culture. Not to denigrate any of them, only that they are paid lip-service and set up as lip-service symbols in a crass, seamy society whose real dedication is to the GNP. I think another title, to be added to those he cites as earlier good examples, would be ONE MONDAY WE KILLED THEM ALL, if I remember correctly. I think, to continue (therefore I is?) that one of the big problems of the big, accepted best-seller type novels is that it is written to a strict formula designed to Sell the maximum number of copies, saying all the usual things, only with a new dose of Sensationalism and more detailed, clinical sex-action each year. To read one is to come away with a bad taste in one's mind for the sheer cardboard superficiality of it all. I've read a number of "best-sellers" in my many years of eyeballing the printed page. Few remain fresh in my memory. One of those few is by Mary Renault and it really doesn't fall into the best-seller syndrome.

Concluding my rambling commentary re Mr. Stern's critique, I find myself among those that JDM would categorize as relishing the asides in the McGee novels. After all, aside from the asides, the novels are always to be relied upon to furnish a damned good Story!

The page by Bill Rohde (so that's how come Nick Carter is still appearing...!) was interesting and evocative of a few remarks by meownself to wit... I read Frank Gruber's excellent THE PULP JUNGLE wherein Frederick Faust became more of a real person to me than only a Great Legend...well enough deservedly so in the latter case. I also saw where he mentioned an old friend and summer neighbor of mine (in Lubec, Me.) name of Ryerson "Johnny" Johnson. Perhaps this is or is not the right place for this (hey, ljm, you wanna start a "Personals" column?) but does anybody know the current whereabouts, especially a specific address, so I can get in touch with Johnny? I'd sure appreciate it if some fellow JDMer could furnish this info.

Pursuant to Bill Rohde's main theme herein, I do want to mention that to write 1,000 words a day is not a great accomplishment, given the time. I've done that a lot of the time in just my spare time. The Great Thing is to write that 1,000 words a day as salable copy! That's my desire...and I sure hand it to everyone who does just that!

Let me second the opinion by Wendell Howard of AlbuQQ, NM, re WEEP FOR ME. I secured a copy of it recently from a Hollywood 2nd-hand joint. And I read it right quick-like. It was a hell of a good yarn. I can't see why JDM would rather it not be reprinted. Of course, they're his druthers, so be it. But I think it would sell like hotcakes.

Whatever the hell hotcakes are.

And, I wonder, what does JDM think, if he much considers it at all, about being referred to as "JDM" allatime? Of course, I find it hard to picture myself writing to, or speaking to, John D. MacDonald as "Dear John" or "Hey, John, there's a hole stove in the side of your boat!" or something. It'd always come out "Dear John D. MacDonald" or, "Hey, John D. MacDonald, there's a hole stove in the side of your boat!" At any rate, I hope there's never a hole stove in the side of his boat, or the Busted Flush, either.

I disagree, however, concerning the reprinting, or not, of some of the old pulp stories. Especially those I mentioned in "Early JD". They were merely predecessors to the first paperback original sales. They had all the elements that make up the first Gold Medal jobs. They hold up well and ought to see much wider circulation than those few remaining copies of aging paper-back size pulp magazines. I strongly implore Mr. Knox Burger to reconsider and get Conde-Nast to relenquish reprint rights...or whatever is needed. The book could be titled "Two (or Three) Before McGee"... And then again, it couldn't... But...

I sat there at the table, drinking my beer, and laughing like hell at the dialogue in JDM's letter. Having been a Hemingway reader from way back, I enjoyed the hell out of this. Anything that can make somebody laugh right from the bottom up can't be all showoff!

Come, come, C. Camarota of Haverstown, Pa., surely you can see that the group of JDMB people are not blind adulators! We like to read his written word and agree, it would seem,

largely with his ostensible philosophy inasmuch as it would seem to parallel our own. But we do see some flaws, subjective or otherwise, in the Works. Witness the Revolt Against (to our eyes) The Needless Killing Off of Luscious Heroines Who Threatened McGee's Solitudeness...etc. We know that John D. MacDonald, Man and Writer, has irrefutable Weaknesses. He likes cats. For instance. Do I ever know what a weakness that is (in non-catlovers' eyes) as my three cats and seven kittens (we have dispersed three to now-ex-friends) can attest to. He also sort of likes to have people like and admire his work as witness his full cooperation with the intent of JDMB. This shows that he is regrettably Human. And Self-Conscious, boy they don't hardly come no more self-conscious than John D. MacDonald! He won't even let them reprint certain old stories of his, won't let the television networks hash up his character and has with some reluctance and with yet some fingers on the pulse allowed Hollywood to pay him lots of money to make pictures of some of his books. Yes sir! Maybe you could go and read Couples by John Updike. He's an accepted Literary type who doesn't always use the same girls but with different colored hair. He's going to make a mint with that book and the movie rights because he used the same colored Formula...

You want to see some self-conscious writing, try some of the Other current hardboiled types. Like Richard Stark's The Green Eagle Score. I couldn't even get far into this job (and sorry, Knox Burger, old friend--anybody who prints JDM is a friend of mine--if this falls in your bailiwick at Gold Medal). It was self-conscious and too hey-look-how-hard-boiled-we-are! There's a lot more like it around. I don't disagree that Hammett and Chandler are Greats, but even they, less so than Doyle and Poe, who especially somewhat fall behind the pulse of our present socioeconomic milieu. McGee and company are right with us, reflecting us and that among which we live in all its faceted reflections of greed, narrowness, bigotry and materialistic-grasping self-centered isolation! Yeh. Isolation from the rest, that great mass of people who have been so motivated that it's just Them Against Everybody Else in Status and Accumulation and blasting off from the stop-light in their 8000hp Blechflame V-16 in which the main desire is to be In Front Of Anybody Else in front of them if there's any space at all in which to do it, safely or not. In which even some of the commercials are presenting prettier music than the stuff which they're sponsoring on the am (and even fm band) radio programs full of snarling, noisy, conformalistic "music" of "protest". ((Your radio got no off-switch or station selector? -jmm)) All this is reflected, and its myriad ramifications, in the background of the JDM stories, only often subtly and in a more telling manner than that which I've just used! Hard-boiled, yes maybe, but nihilist? Hardly.

I gotta agree with George R. Berryman re the attitude re Playboy monthly foldouts! Lives and breathes there a healthy, even married, male that does not look upon the lovely female form nude or otherwise without an appreciative eye, then there is a person who is in Deep Trouble or isn't honest with himself. Man, it isn't Dirty and Lecherous to look upon a/the lovely unadorned female form (altho in some cases it no doubt is). I mean, take an artist who has at one time sat on the westering shore and painted the fulminant glories of the setting sun over the molten wastes of the Pacific. He captures it and has it shown to great critical and financial acclaim in the galleries. You mean to say he isn't going to view further and future sunsets without appreciation even though he may not endeavor to paint them? Hmmm? I'm with you, George. Trav is probably too clinical...

Re Francis M. Nevins, Jr.'s letter: The LA Times, every several years, seems to do a cyclic story about Erle Stanley Gardner and his fiction factory out in the desert. Seems as if, in recent decades, he has a regular production line out thar wherein he shoots off a germinal plot idea/story outline and it goes through a production line of writers, much as a filmed cartoon would do. It's not quite like the old days when E. S. Gardner was, as Frank Gruber was quick to point out, one of the accomplished pulp-craftsmen of great output! All on his own.

LJM, your comments to Remsen T. Schenck were very well put. Ol' Remsen seems to overlook the occurrence of critics and reviewers, not to mention educated and articulate purchasers of the various wares offered to buyers in the world of art and letters, fiction and movies, and what have you? The laity often has a lot more time to devote to analysis than the professionals who best devote their time to production of that which

makes them professional and keeps cash in the checking account! And I sort of wonder if the phrase "...the laity..." isn't also rather condescending and amusing...

DAVE LOCKE, Duarte, Calif: Schenck feels that lay writing, of the type found in your publication, is "precious". He thinks we should leave the analyses to the pros. You, Len, invoke the arguments that 1) the intelligent man can talk with the expert in the expert's own field, and 2) the reader has the right to his say because he buys the product.

Schenck seems to believe that the cat may look at a king, but that it can't really see the king. Your "intelligent man" answer justifies the worthwhile material that you present, but obviously Schenck has read some too clearly "lay" remarks in JDMB and will agree that you haven't completely satisfactory justification in this part of your rebuttal. You may feel that the man who buys has a right to sound off, but surely not in your publication unless he sounds off knowledgably, intelligently, and interestingly.

Justification for what you print doesn't interest me as much as do the reasons for your publishing in the first place. Why do people who like to read John D. MacDonald like to read the words of anyone who writes about him? Why do they want to make up lists of his stories? Why do they, who like to read his fiction, want to know about the man himself? Why do they want to read reviews and critiques of books they have already read? Why do they want to involve themselves in more of MacDonald than just his books?

Probably for the same reasons that movie and tv magazines flourish. When people find something that they enjoy, they wish to overindulge. ((Not always! -jmm)) To a certain extent, a MacDonald fan will probably sooner or later become jaded with it all, though not so much with the stories as with the fandom. For now it's an interesting pastime, and there are worse ways to kill a few hours.

Justification for what you print, for our analyses and reviews and shop-talk? Because we want to. What other justification is necessary? And, because we want to, no justification is necessary.

ANDY R. CAMPANARO, Daytona Beach, Fla: On the next-to-the-next-to-the-last page of JDMB #10 some (YOUNG, SOPHOMORIC, KNOW-IT-ALL; I'll betcha) person named SCHENCK from Bangor, Pa., has sneered on the people every writer writes for. Writers write, just as JDM does, because they see the world as it should and could be, and they also(DAMN IT!)see it as it is.

In our area of the woods, most of the JDM fans are over 50, and I've wondered about this. I would like to think this is because the people under 50 are too busy working at their jobs and reading required material for college and extension courses or improving their minds on serious material from the libraries. That is what I would like to think.

But way down inside the truth keeps gnawing at me. I am a very average student...a very simple person who simply likes life. But I have been labeled by the system as an honor student, scholastic, genius (by the IQ graders), schizophrenic (by the behaviorists) and bright by the layman. Why? Because the large body of "students" at my school are busy studying either the genitalia of homo sapiens or the local "scene" or the goon-tube. And that goon-tube will get you every time!

To make a long story short, Schenck, there're too damn few of these mags (JDMB) around. We're loaded down with the non-communicative \$2 horrors that jam the newsstands and the 25¢ toilet paper sickies that jam the drug stores. I edit the college literary magazine SPORRAN and my advisor has given me a lot of leeway. It is, basically, now a semesterly mag based on the same idea as JDMB...people and their writings.

I wish I could scream at all the younger students at DBJC, "Get with it! Read MacDonald or Hoffer or C. S. Lewis or something besides MAD mag and your required homework. Don't listen to McLuhan...he'll drive you to nothing but the Orwellian or Huxleyian superstate." ((Au contraire, my friend. McLuhan more drives me to distraction, and I find that MAD at least partially encourages the thinking process, which even you must admit is not a bad idea. -jmm))

But I probably can't reach them. So I have my room, and I "do my thing" ((so do we all -jmm)) and hope that the "Establishment" of my own generation will slow down in this hectic modern age and learn how to read, and enjoy, somehow.

Another letter mentioned this JDMB might turn into a strong cult thing. It won't. Simply because the participants are too knowledgeable to be fanatics. We each realize there are many other fine writers and JDM is just one of them. He's simply a very special one.

And...to we philosophers...he has a very special mind.

JACK WEATHERWAX, 23 Windham Dr., Willowdale (Toronto), CANADA: I learned of the existence of your group as a result of seeing an interview with JDM on TV. It was produced here in Toronto and distributed across Canada as part of a series known as "The Pierre Barton Show". The JDM episode was taped in New York. The producing firm did a good research job on JDM, and the interview was excellent. Our hero came across just as wise and warm as in real life. Anyway, the researchers found out about what they described to me as "The JDM Fan Club". You can print my address.

((Far as we know, there is no formal "JDM Fan Club". JDMB is not a club organ, but more of an informal amateur journal for those who are interested. -ljm))

VIRGINIA H. STONE & CHRIS MOBLEY, P. O. Box 1511, Bishop, Calif: The problem here in Bishop in the Eastern Sierra, with a permanent non-tourist population of about 5,000, is that we have no book store. We have one store which calls itself such, but the stock consists mostly of cards, toys and gifts.

As a result, we entered into a four-month hassle with Fawcett in an attempt to obtain 16 JDM titles they listed, among others, in a current catalogue. We sent the order, with proper payment, then sat back anticipating the pleasure we had coming. The anticipation went on and on and on. Finally, the books started trickling in--one, two, three at a time. In every shipment, there was an error. We have nothing against Donald Hamilton, etc., but when we order JDM, that is who we want, and no one else. As stated, it took over four months to complete the order (sent on one of their order blanks) and there was finally one title we never did receive! This was after half a dozen letters to them, practically begging them to get things squared away, not to mention having to return books several times which they duplicated from previous partial shipments or which had not been ordered originally. If we cannot order from the publisher, we must depend on supermarket and drug store racks, where it's catch-as-catch-can, and this is a very unsatisfactory manner in which to obtain reading material. As possessors of a library of roughly 2,500 books of all types, we know whereof we speak.

Again, congratulations on an admirable effort. In this age of "non-involvement", it's a pleasure to know some people do care enough to speak up, no matter what the subject matter. Also, JDM's comments and letters prove that he cares also, which is gratifying for his fans. If by any chance you want to publish any part of this letter, please feel free to use either or both names, and the address.

((After reading this, Mr. Burger will probably see that some hell is raised in the proper department at Fawcett. This sort of thing seems to happen in more than one publishing organization. I recently had to write a letter of complaint to American Heritage because their subscription department had acknowledged a gift subscription I had purchased, but failed to send the issues to the giftee. Not just one issue of the magazine--but several! I can assure you that I did not write a "begging" letter... -ljm))

BILL BOSWELL, Wilson, NC: Your comments on the Collins Senate campaign strike a loud gong with me, although I saw none of the material used against Mr. Collins. Some of the arguments and literature used in this part of the country, particularly by the more raucous of the Wallace campaigners was incredible. I found myself identified by some of the choicest epithets I have heard since basic training one day by several of them for objecting to the simplistic stupidity of their characterization of the Supreme Court as "Communist".

The Chicago commotion of August both inside and outside the stockyard arena and the, in my opinion, lamentable behavior of the city's mayor inside the convention hall and of

some of his police force outside the hall, also rang a bell. I found that the noise emanated from my copy of McGee #8, ONE FEARFUL YELLOW EYE, where on page 46 in the middle of one of JDM's usual short, sharp descriptions of cities, this time Chicago, I found the following sentence. "For untold years the city has limped along under what might well be the most arrogant, ruthless, and total political control in the country."

This man MacDonald continually amazes me.

I have read WINE OF THE DREAMERS and BALLROOM OF THE SKIES, those twin treasures from the good old days of SF, which I happily found side by side on a local newsstand in October. I found these two gave me a curious feeling of nostalgia mixed with up-to-the-minuteness due to the facts that on the one hand it has been several years, at least, since I have read any space travel type SF and on the other hand, many facets of these two novels make you think that they might have been written yesterday rather than the early fifties. I wonder if any other readers had the same reaction.

I had not read these two novels before, which I suspect is true of most of JDM's more recent regular readers, and I suggest we all give Gold Medal the traditional "great big hand" for making them available again.

Now, while the applause is ringing and we have Gold Medal's ear in a receptive mood (you are listening, aren't you, Gold Medal? Knox Burger? Somebody?) may I ask why not a collection of JDM's science-fiction/fantasy short stories as a companion volume to the two novels? And why not another collection of non-categorized MacDonald stories to go alongside 1966's END OF THE TIGER which was, to my taste, one of the most enjoyable MacDonalds (books, not hamburgers) of them all.

I admit to being a little old-fashioned. I like good short stories as well as novels when they are well done, real short stories, not just NEW YORKER character sketches, and Mr. MacDonald proved to me in END OF THE TIGER that, at his best, he can cook them up to please a gourmet. Friends, it gets harder and harder for a reader to find them and tougher and tougher for a writer who pens one to find anyplace to get it published. Last week Chet Huntley informed me of the demise of the SATURDAY EVENING POST. Now the POST was never my favorite publication, and I never read it regularly, but I am going to miss it just as I miss COLLIER'S in whose pages, back in high-school days, I first encountered Ray Bradbury, another of my favorite writers. Both these magazines published much fiction mainly notable for its space-filling duties, the eternal story about the cute, freckle-faced blonde who finds a means to ensnare the tall, dark, handsome and shy young man across the street, but both (and especially the POST in recent years) also managed to publish many fine examples of story-telling craftsmanship. Now they are gone the way of that old breeding ground of many of their better writers, the pulps, as the tube takes a continually larger bite of the advertising revenue and a continually larger majority of the middle-class audience.

It seems to me that if the short story for a mass audience is to be preserved the paperback publishers are going to have to assume a large part of the responsibility and with considerable gall I suggest to the folks at Gold Medal that one good way to tackle this responsibility is to give us (dependent, of course, on Mr. MacDonald's agreement and cooperation) another couple of collections of JDM's better short fiction.

Naturally, all magazine stories are not worth reprinting in book form, but I would think JDM, even with his high self-standards, could round up a dozen or so science-fiction/fantasy stories from the old pulp days which he would not mind seeing reprinted. And perhaps some of more recent vintage. He has one in Judith Merrill's 10th YEAR'S BEST S-F (THE LEGEND OF JOE LEE) which would grace any collection.

Getting momentarily back to the POST, I can remember a story, but not a title, of several years ago; a bitter-sweet love story with three characters, a man, a woman and a boat; and certainly worth book collection in another general collection of the type of END OF THE TIGER. I am sure there are quite a few others in the MacDonald library of approximately equal quality, more than enough for another general collection.

How about it, JDM? How about it, Gold Medal? How about it, Len and June? (Your Checklist might be of considerable help in making the selections.) How about it, JDM Bibliophiles? Anybody still listening?

Peace and health to you all throughout the new year.

the JDM POPULARITY POLL

- Conducted by "Pete" Petersen

"Wouldn't it be interesting to poll your readers on their favorite JDM books?"

Clarence G. "Pete" Petersen, who writes a paperback review column for the Chicago Tribune, asked this question last June, and we agreed that it would indeed be an interesting project...especially since he volunteered to tabulate the results and to write a commentary.

So we ask all of you to please participate in Pete's poll by listing your FIVE (5) favorite novels by John D. MacDonald--in order of preference--on the back of a postcard, and mail it to:

Clarence G. Petersen
1846 Vermont Avenue
Rolling Meadows, Ill. 60008

Be sure to sign your name, and BE SURE TO USE A POSTCARD. Tabulating the poll will be enough work for Pete without adding the chore of opening envelopes and handling variously sized pieces of paper.

Remember: to have your votes counted, you must sign your name, use a postcard, and list exactly five titles.

DEADLINE: Your card must be in Pete's hands on or before June 16, 1969.

The results, and Pete's commentary, will be published in either JDMB #12 or JDMB #13, depending on how long it takes Pete to count votes, and on how our JDMB publishing schedule works out.

Do it now, while you're thinking about it. What are YOUR five favorite JDM novels?

-ljm & jmm

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