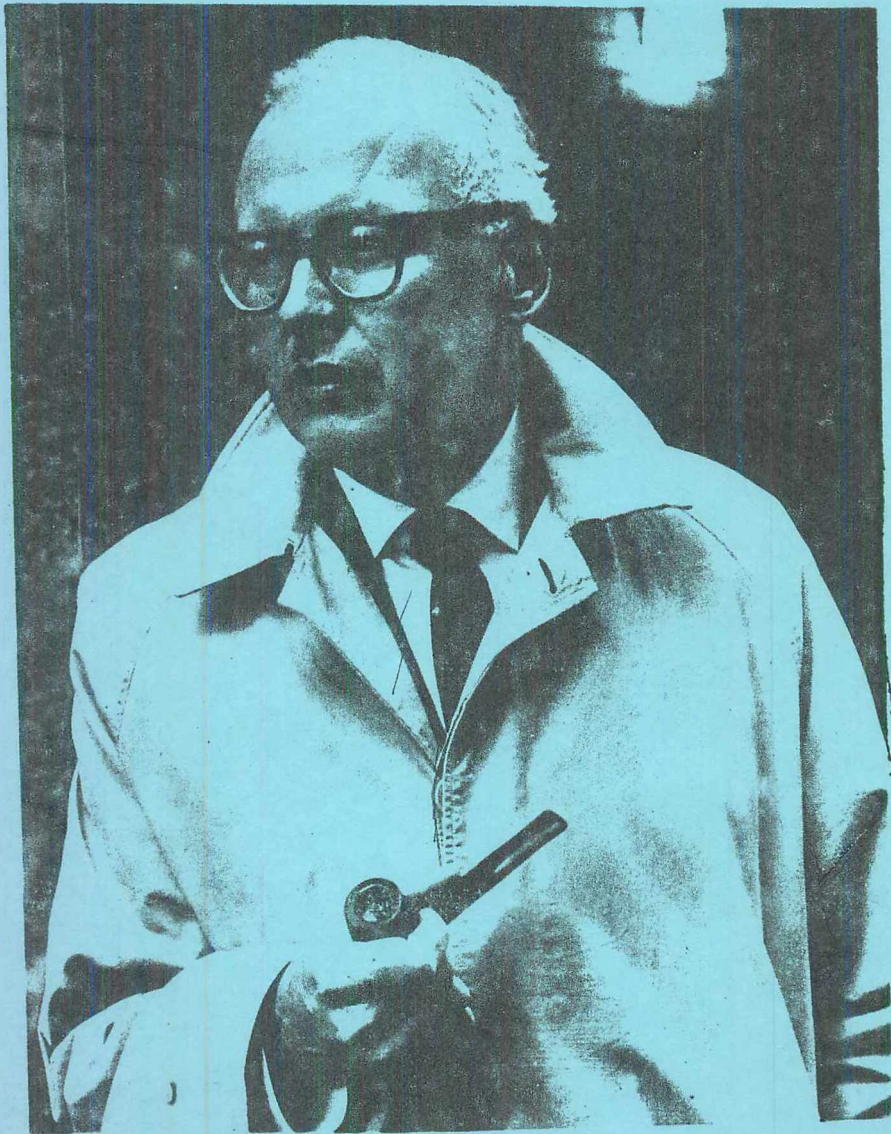


# THE JDM

# BIBLIOPHILE #18



Credit: Jerry Bauer

Author John D. MacDonald

# APRIL 1973



# The JDM Bibliophile No. 18

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April 1973

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DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE: August 1, 1973

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# NEWS & PREVIEWS

We last heard from JOHN D. MacDONALD in a note dated December 6, 1972. The MacDonalds had just returned from their annual visit to the Adirondacks, and were preparing to leave for New Zealand to visit their son, daughter-in-law and grandchildren. They expected to be home again (Florida) by January 25<sup>th</sup>.

The 14<sup>th</sup> McGee novel, SCARLET RUSE, was with Fawcett and should be published any time now. (Perhaps it will be on the stands by the time you read this, but in any case we assume that it will be published this year.)

We also assume that the other novel John was working on (working title: OPPS!) is with the publisher. (See News & Previews, JDMB.#17)

John also reported that the Lippincott hardcover edition of PALE GRAY FOR GUILT has Bob Bender, the art director, using himself as the model on the dust jacket, and that the Lippincott edition of BRIGHT ORANGE FOR THE SHROUD has the Lippincott sales manager on the dust jacket.

\* \* \* \* \*

June and I are sorry that this issue of JDMB is so late. We had hoped to publish it in the latter part of 1972, but it just didn't work out that way. As it is, we are pushing to get it in the mails before we leave for England in April.

Our problem is that we are inclined to take more than a passive interest in the various activities that both science-fiction and mystery fandoms have to offer. In 1972, we were involved--to one degree or another--with three different conventions, three different clubs or local organizations, and so on into the night. All this, plus both of us working at full-time jobs, family, buying and moving into a new home, social life, etc. I am so far behind in my reading (which, ironically, is the basis for all of these hobby activities) that I wish I could somehow get by without any sleep in order to try to catch up. I console myself with the thought that even if I lived hundreds of years I would always find myself "behind in my reading".

This year we are not directly involved with any conventions, but we are still quite active in the local club scene. June and I are Co-Procedural Directors of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, Inc. for the first six months of '73. That means we run the weekly meetings and try to come up with program ideas, etc. I'm also on the Board of Directors of LASFS, Inc. The Board meets every other month. One of us has been on the Board since its inception, June having just finished a 3-year term.

I won't go into detail on the other clubs whose meetings we attend, or the amateur press organizations to which we contribute. Suffice it to say that even without being on one or more convention committees, we have more than enough things to keep us busy. And that isn't all...

There is TAFF. TAFF--the Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund--was created some years ago to bring well-known and popular science fiction fans across the Atlantic. Over the years TAFF has sent American sfan delegates or representatives to England and Germany, and on alternate years has brought European sfan representatives to the U. S. The trips are usually timed to coincide with the major science-fiction convention being held in the host country that year, be it a World SF Convention or a national SF convention.

June and I were nominated for TAFF last year and, as many of you know, we won the election. So, we travel to England in April to attend their science-fiction convention in Bristol, and, hopefully, to West Germany. We will be gone three weeks. The Fund

# BOUCHERCON 3

- by Leo Rand

The 3rd Annual Anthony Boucher Memorial Mystery Convention, held at the International Hotel, Los Angeles, October 20-22, 1972, was up in attendance from previous years, although the Bouchercons still have a long way to go before they match the attendance figures of science fiction conventions.

However, many feel that smaller conventions are more fun, as it is easier to meet and visit with fellow-attendees and to seek out those you especially want to meet, without having to buck a large crowd.

Bouchercon III enjoyed more advance publicity than the two previous cons, and this paid off, not only in an increase in membership, but also (and perhaps more importantly) in getting people there who were truly interested in attending a convention devoted to the mystery field.

The committee consisted of Co-Chairmen Len & June Moffatt; Treasurer Bruce Pelz; Registration Gail Knuth; Expediter Drew Sanders; MWA Liaison Clayton Matthews and Program Assistant Bill Clark. They provided two full days of program items that ranged from very good to excellent. (Friday night, October 20th, was the Welcoming Party, and Saturday and Sunday were devoted to the various panels and speakers.)

They were aided by Craig Miller and Mike Yampolsky, who ran the films shown each night. (Father Brown, Detective; Foreign Correspondent and A Study in Scarlet--with the late Reginald Owen as Sherlock Holmes. The Holmes film was loaned to the Bouchercon by Ronnie Lee James, who specializes in collecting films, stills, radio shows etc. dealing with the Great Detective. There was also something called The Bowery Champs, but we won't talk about that.

Bouchercon III honored Ellery Queen. Unfortunately, the surviving member of the EQ team, Frederick Dannay, was unable to attend, but Rev. Robert Washer, editor of the QUEEN REVIEW, did an excellent job as Featured Speaker at the Banquet Luncheon on Sunday (where he accepted a plaque for Ellery Queen, as well as receiving one for his own good work). He spoke of Boucher as well as Queen and how these three men had affected his life, as indeed they have affected the lives of all of us.

Preceding his talk there was a tape of Tony Boucher's voice, excerpts from his mystery review radio show. The tape was provided by Phyllis White, who was there with her son James and his wife Mary. The other "Boucher" son, Larry, and his wife (also named Mary) were unable to attend, which may or may not have been good for the poker players...

Jon L. Breen, Francis M. Nevins Jr., and Larry T. Shaw appeared on two different panels, one devoted to Queen and one devoted to Boucher. Breen was also on the State of the Art panel, with Pat Briscoe, Howard Browne, William P. McGivern, Randall Garrett and Bruce Pelz, moderator.

Joe Gores and Clayton Matthews, good old dependables, gave the '72 Market Report, and John Ball talked on the Importance of Research when writing stories.

William Cox, Bill Clark and Richard Deming covered the third edition of the pulp panel, this year devoted to Black Mask Magazine.

Bob Eriney talked on Sax Rohmer; Dean Grennell on Firearms in Fiction; and Sean Wright and John Farrell entertained us by reading selections from Boucher's Sherlockian stories.

Noreen Shaw, Bob Washer, Bob Briney and the Moffatts discussed Amateur Journalism and Mystery Story Fandom.

... All of the speakers and panels brought forth good audience reaction. Programs ran overtime both days, as the question-and-answer sessions with the audience were longer than anticipated and quite lively indeed. Unfortunately, in the space allotted here, I can't go into detail on every program item, but I do know that the committee, as well as the audience, were most grateful to the people on the program for making Bouchercon III so entertaining and fascinating.

I must mention one non-program item: the group of picture puzzles that John Niemin-ski brought with him. One was supposed to guess the name of a famous detective by looking at the rebus-type puzzle. Some were quite easy, but others were difficult indeed, and John's offer to buy a beer for those who guessed all of them was safe enough as far as I was concerned.

The 1973 Bouchercon (can it be the fourth one already?) will be in Boston, with such good people on the committee as Robert E. Briney, Stewart Brownstein, Lianne Carlin and Robert E. Washer. I am sure there will be a notice about Bouchercon IV somewhere in this issue of JDMB.

And I hope to see you there!

- Leo Rand

-oOo-

# BOUCHERCON IV

THE FOURTH ANNUAL ANTHONY BOUCHER MEMORIAL MYSTERY CONVENTION

OCTOBER 5-6-7 1973 (Columbus Day Weekend)

*Sheraton-Boston Hotel*

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

*Committee:* ROBERT E. BRINEY, STEWART BROWNSTEIN, LIANNE CARLIN,  
ROBERT E. WASHER

*Membership fee: \$4 until Sept.  
1, 1973, then \$6*

JOIN NOW BY SENDING FOUR DOLLARS AND YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS TO:

BOUCHERCON IV  
P. O. BOX 113  
MELROSE, MA 02176

THE FIRST PROGRESS REPORT (WITH HOTEL RESERVATION CARDS) SHOULD BE AVAILABLE BY THE TIME YOU READ THIS. THE EDITORS & PUBLISHERS OF JDMB URGE YOU TO SUPPORT BOUCHERCON IV!

# HARD TOUCH

a column  
by Bill Wilson

Our prison systems, like our police systems, have just grown; and in many cases the growth borders on malignancy.

In considering prisons, we have to arrive at a common definition of jail, penitentiary and reformatory. A jail is a place where people are confined pending trial or appeal or where they serve short sentences. A penitentiary is a place where convicted persons serve longer terms, and a reformatory is a place where juveniles are sent for reformation. The exact definitions may vary from locale to locale, but these are the most generally used.

The whole system founders right at the start. When one is arrested, he is taken to a police station and booked. Then, if the offense is serious, he is placed in the jail for a hearing before a judge. Regardless of the crime, the record, or adult age of the arrested person, he goes in the same area. Thus, a first-time offender for a technical felony is placed in the same area as a professional holdup man. Often, a young man arrested for the first time on a traffic felony charge is placed in detention with case-hardened psychopaths, and frequently is brutalized by these people.

Ideally, the traditional holdover room should be eliminated and each detained person should be placed in a separate cell for the minimum time possible before his preliminary hearing. After the preliminary hearing, if further detention is necessary, he should be kept apart from other offenders if his offense and age warrants it. Thus, a young first offender would not be placed in with a group of old-time professionals.

In the case of conviction, the person should be taken to a reception center for processing. There, he should be examined physically, examined mentally, and given psychological tests. After these tests, the prisoner should then be classified according to his suitability for rehabilitation and training. Then he should be sent to a penitentiary which is suited to his classification. Accordingly, if a first offender is not a psychopath, criminally insane, or a homosexual, he should be sent to an institution composed of all first offenders like himself, and the prime object should be rehabilitative education and training, with parole or release at the earliest practicable time.

In the case of second offenders and/or parole violators, a longer period of study would be indicated to determine the factors involved in the return of the person to crime.

Homosexuals would be segregated into a separate institution and given education and training to effect their rehabilitation from crime, but unless the prisoner were cooperative, attempts to cope with the homosexual problem would be silly.

The criminally insane should be sent to appropriate maximum security institutions for incarceration until medical authorities deemed release feasible.

The criminal psychopaths and three-time offenders would be sent to maximum security prisons to engage in useful work under close supervision, with a rigidly enforced system of rewards and punishments according to discipline.

It seems to me that where our present system falls down is in the failure to classify and segregate offenders right at the beginning. Further, in seeking the ready answer, many penologists keep talking about rehabilitation when they ought to know that rehabilitation of a criminal psychopath is practically impossible, because these people

cannot conceive that they are ever in the wrong, and they readily seize upon such jargonistic cliches as "I am a victim of society". The first step toward any rehabilitation is the acknowledgment that one has done wrong, is in the wrong, and wants to correct the situation. This is something that the psychopath can never do, precisely because he is what he is. These are invariably the leaders of prison riots and demonstrations, and because they are usually intelligent and articulate people, they are able to set forth sophistic arguments blaming everyone but themselves, and rationalizing any counter-arguments. Caryl Chessman was nearly a classic example of this type.

However, to institute a system such as I believe would do a great deal to improve our present system of prisons, a considerable amount of money would have to be spent. Money to build new and modern institutions and provide the facilities and equipment. Money to hire professional help and to upgrade the salaries and quality of the guard personnel. And ask yourself how much would the average taxpayer like to see his annual tax bill increased in order to inaugurate a prison system of this type.

As to so-called prisoner's rights, I think this borders upon the ridiculous. The vast majority of persons are in prison simply because they committed a crime of some sort and got caught at it, and it is a natural human trait to try to avoid the unpleasant consequences of one's acts. However, the notion of doing away with penal institutions is, in my opinion, so much stuff from the septic tank. There are people who are dangerous individuals and they have got to be put away in order to protect the average citizen from their attacks and depredations. When people of this type are incarcerated, they should be fed adequately and treated fairly but firmly, and given reasonable recreation. However, at the first sign of any rioting, all privileges should be suspended, and absolutely no bargaining of any sort. Bargaining with criminal psychopaths is like playing poker with a pinochle deck.

-- Bill Wilson

--oOo--

NEWS & PREVIEWS (continued from p. 4)

will pay most of our travel expenses but since there are two of us (we ran as a team), we will have to provide our own funds for some of the expenses, as TAFF is set up to handle only one person per trip, so to speak.

TAFF is considered a kind of a reward for the work one has done for science fiction fandom, and of course a TAFF representative is a kind of good-will ambassador from his country's fandom to the host country's fandom. But there is a bit more to it than getting some money to help finance a fun trip overseas. The most recent TAFF winners become Administrators of the Fund. Current Administrators are Mario Bosnyak of West Germany, Eddie Jones of England, and June and me, taking over from the last American winner, Elliot Shorter of New York.

After making the trip, June and I will be writing and publishing a trip report. We plan to finance the publishing ourselves (using our own equipment, including the good old John D. Gestetner) and the trip report will be sold in the hopes of recovering our publishing expenses and making some profit, the latter going into the TAFFund.

And we will have to help plan and publicize the next two TAFF campaigns--until there is another American winner to take over the job on this side of the pond. TAFF exists solely through the support of world-wide s-f fandom. In order to vote, one must make a donation to the fund. Only one vote per voter, but naturally there is no limit on how much one may donate, the minimum being one dollar. Auctions are also held to raise money for the fund, as well as publications such as the trip reports and The Hobbit Coloring Book.

So, as you can see, we still enjoy an embarrassment of riches when it comes to our hobby activities. All we need are 48-hour days and no need for sleep.



# PREVIEWS from the PUBLISHER

relayed by David Stewart

Fawcett Gold Medal is one of a large number of publishers with whom I have been in correspondence (fruitless, so far) regarding a book of poetry that I am attempting to sell. Into the course of this particular correspondence, the topic of JDM has been introduced, he being one of their prized authors, and one of mine.

As I write this, Fawcett has quite recently received the next two McGee manuscripts from JDM. They explained, quite gently, when I pressed them, that they couldn't supply me with pre-publication copies, galley proofs, etc., but--since I was such a fan--could at least let me see the cover copy for the two novels.

McGee's next adventures sound no little bit intriguing, and I see no reason why Fawcett should mind--in fact, they might appreciate--my sharing these small tidbits with the readers of the JDM Bibliophile. The order in which these two novels are to appear has not been set, I understand, nor are the titles necessarily final, but the cover copy reads as follows:

## A COURTESY IN CRIMSON TRAPPING

(Front) "McGee liked his dollies ripe; he liked them willing; he even liked them young. But not this young, and not offering themselves to him like this one was, as if to say 'C'mon, dads, you know I'm doin' you a favor.'"

(Back) "Chester 'Choc' Gardy and his bitsy wife, known as Dunk, were dear and old friends of Travis McGee. In fact, McGee was best man at their wedding, and Sergeant-of-the-Guard that night, the night the girl-child had been conceived.

Now, sixteen years later, Choc and Dunk needed a sitter. Not even McGee could walk away from something like that. But how could McGee have known that the girl was up to her dewy cheeks in the most ruthless dope ring this side of Roanoke? And how would fifty cents an hour possibly cover expenses?

## SOME WHITE TERRIBLE EVENING

(Front) "Vanessa Barcowicz had been told every day of her twenty-six years that she was a dog. Inexorably the weight of that cruelty had backed her into a closet. And now she was barking for help."

(Back) "McGee explained carefully that the furthest thing from his mind was sticking around this tin-can village on the coast of southeast Georgia for one second longer than absolutely necessary, and that would be the time it took to fix the thrunkis on the Busted Flush's flying breen. But the three men in hoods and brandishing shotguns were adamant.

"Mister, we'll give you to three to get this here city slicked yacht away from our dock," threatened one.

"Two," growled another."

## CRIMSON and WHITE

(Passim) "Meet Travis McGee, bush league romantic, mustard-slopped dropout from a Saran-wrap culture...Here's Travis McGee, that fectotah philosopher, that left-handed shlep, that peach-pincher, tax-dodger, frequent beater of savage dead horses...Follow McGee, that recrudescant roustabout, through the most hair-tingling, blood-raising, spine-curdling adventure(s) of his long and ever-colorful career..."

Coming to your newsstands soon!

# Early JDM:

## IN EQMM

- by Francis M. Nevins, Jr.

Out of the hundreds of pulp stories that JDM published during the late Forties and early Fifties, a grand total of four have been selected over the years for reprinting in that inexhaustible storehouse of the genre's development, Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine. And only one of the quartet represents the early JDM at his best.

In EQMM for June, 1953, JDM's "Manhattan Horse Opera" (Black Mask, 9/47) appeared under the new title "Heads I Win, Tails You Lose". The story deals with an ox-like petty grifter named Hugo Stanwicz who has stumbled across the secret of winning every bet he makes. Hugo gets himself entangled with an assortment of high-stakes gamblers playing the same kind of system, and the labyrinth of double-crossings climaxes in a Wild West gunbattle where only the loser wins. The seedy milieu is well-evoked, and the gaming ploys delightful, but the arbitrary and rather silly resolution knocks the story out of the winner's circle.

Less than a year later, in his April 1954 issue, Queen reprinted JDM's "Heritage of Hate" (Black Mask, 7/49) as "Triple Cross", and this time he chose from the pick of the crop. The protagonist is a young go-getter named Larry Hask who rises in the Syndicate by playing his superiors against each other until the latent violence explodes into another bloody gunfight survived by few. See my column in JDMB #15 for further details about this excellent piece of pulp storytelling magic.

It was a full dozen years before Queen dug out another tale from JDM's salad days. EQMM for April 1966 included "Never Quite Tough Enough", which was Queen's new title for "Fatal Accident" (Shadow, Fall 1948), the story of a vacationing cop who witnesses a rural Pennsylvania auto smashup that he suspects may have been the work of a very clever killer. Unfortunately, the scheme turns out to have required a whopping chunk of unconscious cooperation from the police.

And in his October 1967 issue, Queen resurrected JDM's "Dead to the World" (Dime Detective, 2/47) as "No Business For An Amateur". Narrator Bud Morse gets a job as pianist at his war buddy Howler Browne's nightclub, and takes a hand in the game when protection racketeers try to squeeze tribute money out of the Howler. What distinguishes the story from hundreds of other pulp action-mystery tales is that Morse makes a royal ass of himself at every step in the proceedings. But even with JDM's highly competent storytelling skill, the resolution of the problem is utterly arbitrary (if the right guy didn't walk in the right door at the right time, our boy's brains would have been littering the floor) and the plot is just too routine to qualify the story as among JDM's best.

Even among the handful of stories I've discussed in prior JDMB columns, there are several worthy of revival in EQMM, like "You've Got To Be Cold", "A Corpse in His Dreams", and especially "The Tin Suitcase". Since no other magazine cares at all about reprinting quality short mystery fiction, it would seem that the fate of all JDM's finest pulp work lies in Queen's hands.

(Unless some JDMB reader owns his own printing press...)

# The Uses of

# ASTONISHMENT

- by Lawrence Fleming

In a way, it is too bad that sci-fi publishers happened to appropriate the terms "amazing" and "astounding", because they fit other kinds of fiction well--in particular, a whole category of mystery and suspense stories. The elderly will recall that the sf magazine titles once meant just what they said. When Hugo Gernsback, the talented Luxembourgian, started AMAZING STORIES in 1927, readers were in a real mood to Thrill At The Wonderful Possibilities of Science, per se. This Gee-Whiz Feeling was the nominal reward, at the time, for reading the stories. It was later that the sf background became more familiar, and a setting for social comment and the like, touched off, perhaps, by Aldous Huxley.

Nevertheless, the astounding, the incredible, the inventive, the improbable, the romantic and the exotic are solid traditional ingredients in all sorts of good popular stories, including classics. The amount used in the recipe for a story may run from half-a-pinch of amazement, etc., as in Jane Austen, to over two cups per quart, as in Ian Fleming. When the dose runs as high as three cups, the result may not suit everyone, but may still have high quality for the right tastes, as in the works of Lord Dunsany and Charles Finney\* (who have been quite popular, even though a lot of people couldn't see what the hell they were up to).

If the astounding, the exotic, etc. is herein called "A-1 Sauce", its opposite needs a name too, e.g. "Oatmeal". "Oatmeal" is the analysis and dissection and exposure of the innards of a fictional character's feelings. It can be used to make top-rank literature, as in J. D. Salinger, or it can (even as can A-1 Sauce, ill-applied) be the chief ingredient in a piece of junk.

The academic community seems generally to prefer "Oatmeal"; hence the official preference for mainstream novels and the official neglect of the mystery. The reason for the academic emphasis on "Oatmeal" is that it is simpler and more standardized stuff. When you put the psyche of a character under a high-power microscope, you are doing something fairly well definable. You can officially score the literary work in question in proportion to the number of diameters of magnification, and the resolution of the image in lines per millimeter. A school course in Literature must, after all, do something that responds to bookkeeping treatment, like the manufacture of cars. In such an operation, there is little room for "A-1 Sauce". It is too complicated. You can recognize it, but you can't put numbers to it. It is out of place in a factory.

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\*The top greats in the imaginative and astounding fields are, perhaps, S. T. Coleridge and Jorge Luis Borges. The fact that Coleridge, c. 1800, is in the academic textbooks is significant. The fact that Borges, c. today, won the International Publishers' Prize (\$10,000) in 1960 and rates space in the New Yorker is even more significant. It may also be significant that the work of Charles Finney bulks as small, in wordage, as that of Borges and Coleridge. Finney's main works came far apart, Dr. Lao in 1935 and The Magician Out Of Manchuria in the 1960's. Readers over 30 may have put down the Magician as too risqué, ten years ago. If they did, they missed something of quality. Of the group, Lord Dunsany had by far the largest output. Although he was independently wealthy (see Burke's Peerage), he appears to have written from the position of a pure pro. His best work, e.g., Tales of Three Hemispheres (1918) and Don Rodriguez (1922) is poetic, and memorable as hell. His last book, His Fellow Men (1954) is an elegant exercise in the fusion of imagination and irony.

There is, I think, more variety in the things that people do than there is in their inside psychological psyches. This, if true, makes "A-1 Sauce" the better ingredient. One person can conduct an orchestra, another can write mysteries, another can make money at arbitrage. These abilities are so incredibly different that it is strange that such people should all look about alike--two eyes on top, nose in the middle, and so on. By rights, one should be nine feet tall, another perhaps should be flat, another should have five or six arms. But they don't. Their innermost psyches may well be quite ordinary too, hardly worth mentioning compared to the things they are able to make happen. There is no evidence, for example, that there was much of special interest in the personal lives of Isaac Newton or Richard Strauss\*.

"A-1 Sauce" has been a standard ingredient in a good many literary classics since the beginning, and has shown no signs of obsolescence. The Gilgamesh Epic\*\*, an unbelievable poetic narrative of the fabulous and the supernatural, is the first story preserved. Its successors in ancient literature and myth were little less astounding, and many live today.

Classics in children's literature have lots of "A-1": Alice, Little Black Sambo, The Wind in the Willows, Charlotte's Web. Peter Rabbit isn't "Oatmeal" either, nor even gum arabic. Its setting, just beyond Mr. McGregor's garden, is a whole new invented world. Geography is not necessary to an exotic setting.

The milieus of Philip Marlowe, Archie Goodwin, Sam Spade and Travis McGee are easily as exotic and astounding as the Bangkok of Bill Ballinger. Gawd, the strange things that may lurk behind an ordinary office door! James Bond's milieu is more amazing still, a good 2½ cups of "A-1". The virtues of such works must be, in great part, their appeal to the reader's imagination. There are no doubt some people who lack imagination and try to take a mystery or a thriller literally, but they are tone-deaf and should not try. The others, as always, appreciate a good Story of Astonishment and Improbability.

---

\*But Gregor Mendel ought to be a good subject for a biography. Abbot, leading citizen, popular at church picnics and socials, and well-liked by children. People said, What on earth is he doing with all those damn sweet peas? When he published The Law, nobody noticed it until 12 years after he died.

\*\*1st ed., cuneiform on clay, 3,000 BC

- Lawrence Fleming

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NEWS & PREVIEWS (continued from p. 8)

The next JDMB? Hopefully, later this year or early next year. If John was as prolific as he used to be, we would feel guilty about not bringing it out more often. If John stopped writing altogether (perish forbid) we would prob'ly continue the magazine as long as you, the readers, were interested. Remember, JDMB is devoted to the readers--as well as to the writings of JDM. It was started to aid in collecting information for the JDM MASTER CHECKLIST, and that project--except for the occasional additions and corrections--was completed some time ago. But somehow the magazine developed a life of its own, independent of the Checklist project, and that life comes from all of you. All we do is edit and publish the material you send to us.

Some time ago--I forget how many years--one of the early readers of JDMB wrote and requested that we drop him from the mailing list. Somehow, he had gotten the impression that all we, the editors, read or cared about reading was John D. MacDonald. Obviously, he had not been reading the mag very carefully or chose to ignore what he read, as even then we were discussing other writers in these pages. We tried to make it clear from the first that although this magazine was primarily for those who enjoyed reading and/or collecting the works of JDM, it was not a "fan mag" in the sense that we all believed JDM to be the Only Writer Worth Reading.

# THE ANATOMY of "ROMANCE"

by Stan Woolston

"Romances" are fairly long tales of wonder and mystery. To me, that exemplifies many, at least, of the stories of JDMacDonald.

I say this because to most of us the term isn't limited to the epics of old (they were based on adventure, chivalry, gallantry and of course religion). But the attitude of mysteries seems to be in this category in many ways.

I'm not just thinking of THE GIRL, THE GOLD WATCH AND EVERYTHING when I write this, or similar stories based on imagination beyond the more mundane fiction of murder and mayhem. In their ways, some of the mystery reading fare from JDM and others could be described as being in this category. It is because the attitude of readers--at least this one--seems to fit it in the area of "romance" as described above.

Most fiction is read for the fun of it, but in "romances" there is an attitude involved that sets it off from other fiction. If I have anything to back this claim up, it may be explained by a little side-stepping into the statement of Frank McCarthy, producer of the movie "Fireball Forward", a World War II movie designed to leave out the violence of war and still express its urgency. (He was involved in the movie "Patton", too.)

Anyway, he has said "I had two grandfathers who told me stories about the Civil War. They were stories of chivalry, and had nothing to do with me personally. Therefore, it took on an aura of romance." He says about "Patton" that there were no placards or demonstrations because World War II has in a sense become a romantic war-- "It is far enough back in history that nobody feels threatened."

Of course, we might say wars are never romantic if we look at them head-on--and neither are the violent crimes that are the bases of most mystery fiction. But in a way these stories are a game, or recognized as entertainment, even by people who feel strongly that we have too much crime. They separate the mysteries they read about into a form of entertainment; otherwise few would read so many.

And I think a JDM story is a little more. It has feeling behind it, and while I don't see Travis, for instance, as riding a white charger, he does come to the aid of the "ladies in distress". Even though the stories include very human elements, without the attitude of readers that despite it all the story is read for fun, we'd probably find that all such stories would appeal only to the violent extremists and sadists.

Another John D.--Carr--who writes tales of wonder and mystery--seems to avoid some of the more violent contacts in his approach or language by his way of approaching the field, and I know that in consequence he has readers to think MacDonald is too violent. But the Carr readers are also able to suspend belief in the horrendousness to a degree by making it a "locked room" story, let us say. In some mystery fiction the "puzzle" is a few degrees less involved in human flesh torn asunder than some of the more realistic "romanticists" indulge in. So each reader has his own attitude to help him decide the story he likes.

It may be that the lovers of "sword and sorcery" tales are inclined to be more able to judge such a story as a "romance" than the people who are inclined to feel it is brutal and not their type of fiction. Some will like the S&S story for its violence and so get a thrill from the idea of hurting others, just as some may get the same from a Mickey Spillane book. I'd like more S&S myself, if someone with the insights of JDM would write them. For the same reason, I find JDM one of the authors I read in the mystery field--at least in the fiction mystery field. So far, I've indulged a prejudice against reading "nonfiction" on famous crimes, except for some short material now and then. Maybe I'll read JDM's incursion into the field some day--I most likely will--but may need some urging that the book is as far beyond most nonfiction works as his mystery stories are of many another author.

In a way, I'm mentally comparing John Dickson Carr with hard-core SF, due to the fact that both are apt to involve extrapolation as a key part of the tale. To the degree that sword and sorcery stories touch the red blood of life--romanticized--I'd consider MacDonald closer to S&S.

While I don't read as much historical fiction as mystery or SF, I feel there may be some valid points in common of historical fiction with other types. SF is future-oriented, with extrapolation on what is now, or what we think we know, into the future--scientific, engineering, sociological and all the rest. Just as such an author tries to build a somewhat convincing world-picture for his story, a historical or mystery author needs "background". One of the elements I like about JDM is the vividness of his technique in introducing the human element into his stories--mystery, fantasy or SF. I've not read all his fiction, but have dipped into many sources including PLAYBOY, pulps, paperbacks. He's masterful.

But you know that. And it would take individual investigation to find why each of us like those we do, including the psychological reasons. A poll designed to get some response on this might be interesting.

The February 1972 issue of THE WRITER has a couple pages called END GAME in which it is claimed the reason we like mysteries is because of the endings--the courtroom scenes of Erle Stanley Gardner and so on. If this is so, it is the expected rather than the suspense, vividness and novelty of the material leading up to the finale that clutches the reader. As I think this is an exaggeration, I'd not agree--but it has enough truth to it for me to admit that the endings of the MacDonald stories do grip me, so I'm inclined to say that the man's partially correct. Without the commentary of JDM, his stories would have a different color, surely, and not just the Travis tales.

- JSW

-oOo-

NEWS & PREVIEWS (continued from p. 12)

Compiling the Checklist and publishing the magazine began by a series of happy coincidences, as a matter of fact. It might just as easily been some other writer whose works we enjoy. Of course, we are glad it all happened the way it did as it has brought us many new friends, including John and Dorothy. Theoretically we could have expanded the mag to include news, etc., about other writers and books in the mystery/suspense field, and we could have started compiling checklists of the works of all these others, but we felt that others were more qualified to do this. After all, there are other magazines in the field, covering the very things that don't appear in JDMB. (See the Recommended Reading Dept. every issue.)

But we cheerfully dropped the carping reader from our list, as requested, and couldn't help feeling that perhaps he was miffed because nobody was publishing a magazine with his initials in the title, or compiling a checklist of his works.

(continued on p. 20)

# A SECOND JOHN D.?

by J. M. Carter

I would assume that most subscribers to the JDMB have, like myself, pretty well read everything that John D has written in book form and now exist on such crumbs as the JDMB itself, rereading the novels, old issues of EQMM, Dime Detective, Cosmopolitan, etc., which come to hand and which contain one of the stories, a rare review or bit of criticism in Newsweek or the like. We all live for the day (about once a year) when the latest McGee hits the bookshops. Then we rush out, buy it, read it at one sitting, and are back in the old dilemma. One way out of this impossible situation, obviously, is to get John D to boost his production dramatically to six or seven books each year. A more realistic solution, however, would be to find someone who is similar in style, plot characters, setting and, most importantly, in the quality of his-- or her--writing.

Absurd, you say? Not at all. As a few of those reading this already know, there is just such an author. He has written some twenty books, and is still going strong. His similarity to John D is truly uncanny--so much so that when I first started to read him I was certain it was John D under another name. Now, a-quiver with anticipation and alert for more info as to who, how and where, let me dash your just-raised hopes, somewhat, by adding that, for some unfathomable reason, this author is also mostly neglected by the publishers, un-criticized and out-of-print!

Charles Williams is the man. He has been writing JDM-type thrillers for 20 years, is a former Merchant Marine radioman and is alive (63 years old) and well and living in Palo Alto, California. A few of his novels have seen the light of day again recently (in paperback) and we may even see a few more in the near future (see list at end of this article). Williams is, in my humble opinion, one of the most competent and effective writers of adventure mystery stories in the past quarter century. He is the only one I have ever found who truly gives John D a run for my money. In most of his books he is the equal of John D--in one (Dead Calm) he is superior.

Williams is a southerner and almost all of his stories have delta-country or Florida or Bahamas or Gulf of Mexico settings. They nearly always involve the same physical types John D uses with such skill and in the same dramatic-fast-paced violent situations. John D himself has been quoted as saying of Williams: "No one else can make violence seem so real". Williams makes frequent use of a McGee-type character; however, with the exception of Aground and Dead Calm, there are no series characters.

The protagonist, always a man, is a different person (or at least has a different name) in each book. I say "McGee type" because he is invariably a great big strong, "knuckly", young-to-middle-aged rawbones roughneck-with-refinement, stony-fisted but sensitive, iron-headed but intelligent, usually attractively ugly to the women. And the women are counter-posed to these galoots: young, physically devastating, worldly, tough-but-tender, equal in every way to the heroic, larger-than-life qualities of the men. Williams has his heroes approach these females with a sense of awe and apprehension, for they are always mysterious, ambiguous and, above all, dangerous. If not

dangerous themselves, they serve as catalysts to danger. In a CW, hero meets female, female sets things going wrong, and brings in the heavy. And the heavies, though not quite a terrifying lethal as John D's best (or worst), are still quite impressive.

CW's plots are usually chase-escape scenarios involving murder, mayhem, lust, robbery, gun-running, romance, shipwreck, fornication, skullduggery and various other such goodies. He absolutely excels in stories involving sailing ships and the sea generally. He can in fact do more and do it better aboard ship than any author I've ever read. I would go so far as to say that he has sole possession of the sea-thriller trophy, with no real challenger or even competition in sight. Each of his stories is full of action, very fast-moving, ironic, tough-minded-cum-sentiment (like John D) but without the social criticism found at times in John D's works.

The reason I compare CW so favorably to JDM is that he too is able to take all these essentially preposterous people and plots and weave them together in such a way that they become real, believable. And more than believable--compelling. This "suspension of disbelief" which John D talks about is what the writer of quality always inspires in his readers. This is what makes everything work, this is his art, and it is not capable, in the last analysis, of being analyzed or quantified. One good test of this is: Would you re-read him? With JDM and a few (all too few) others, the answer is almost always a resounding yes (well, there are a few clunkers like Trojan Horse Laugh, for example) and with CW, at least with me, the answer is the same.

So, if you can find any of the books, enjoy, enjoy. Don't confuse CW with another author of exactly the same name--and a very common name at that; Williams, by the way, is the third most common name in the US. The other Charles Williams died in 1945 and was a rather prolific writer of religious novels (egad!). So take care that you don't buy Greater Trumps or Descent Into Hell, or the like. The list below will help to keep you straight, although some of the titles may be duplicates, and the list is probably incomplete.

If any Fawcett Publishing types are reading this, I would like to ask them to wake up and consider reprinting the many Gold Medal Originals which CW wrote for them years ago. Given the success Fawcett has had in publishing and promoting JDM, it is nothing short of incredible that they have let CW lie fallow for so long. Three cheers for Pocket Books, which has come out over the last year or so with three of his titles and may soon have a fourth in the stalls as well. Huzzah for New American Library-Signet which has recently printed a couple. Let's hope all of these paperback publishers keep up the good work.

Aground	Pocket Books
All the Way	Avon
And the Deep Blue Sea	NAL-Signet
Big Bite	Avon
Big City Girl	Fawcett
Catfish Tangle	Pan Books, Britain
The Concrete Flamingo	?
Dead Calm	Pocket Books
Diamond Bikini	Fawcett
Girl Out Back (aka Operator)	Avon
Gulf Coast Girl	Avon
Go Home, Stranger	Fawcett
Hill Girl	Fawcett
Hot Spot (aka Hell Hath No Fury)	Pan Books, Britain
Long Saturday Night	Pan Books, Britain
Man On The Run	Fawcett
Mix Yourself a Redhead (aka Touch of Death)	Pan Books, Britain
Nothing In Her Way	Fawcett
Nude on Thin Ice	Fawcett



River Girl  
Sailcloth Shroud  
Sailcloth Shroud  
Scorpion Reef  
Stain of Suspicion (aka Talk of the Town)  
Touch of Death (aka Mix Yourself a Redhead)  
Uncle Sagamore and His Girls  
Wrong Venus (aka Don't Just Stand There)

Fawcett  
Pan Books, Britain  
Pocket Books  
Pocket Books  
Pan Books, Britain  
Fawcett  
?  
NAL-Signet

- J. M. Carter

-oOo-

## SEEK & SWAP

INTERNATIONAL BOOKFINDERS, Inc., Box 1, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272 advises us that they have good sources for out-of-print books by JDM, and do not charge for their service.

JACK IRWIN, 16 Gloucester Lane, Trenton, NJ 08618 wants BLACK MASK for October, 1921, November 1925, and June 1928. He has 200 duplicate BLACK MASK mags from April 1920 to March 1951 for trade or sale.

JEAN LINARD, 24 Rue Petit, 70000 Vesoul, FRANCE wants American paperback editions of Travis McGee books "whose landscape is not that of "The Busted Flush"--other than NIGHTMARE IN PINK and A PURPLE PLACE FOR DYING, as he has these two. Will buy.

ROBERT T. McKEARNAN, Moffett Studio, 30 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60603 wants to buy, borrow or rent early magazine stories and books by JDM. Wants them to read and, if possible, to keep. Send him your lists, make him an offer. He has read everything now in print.

J. M. CARTER, 201 E. 66th Street, New York, NY 10021 (Apt. 3G) has xerox copies of the following JDM stories from old Cosmopolitans and Good Housekeepings for sale. All 5 for \$2.50 plus postage.

Novelettes: The Doll  
Suspicion Island  
Six Golden Pennies  
The Widow's Estate

Short: A Criminal Mind

and a variety of other material on JDM and on Ross Macdonald. Write for price list.

JAMES R. GOODRICH, 5 Ulster Road, New Paltz, NY 12561 has two BLACK MASKS (9-47 and 5-49) with JDM stories for sale @ \$1.75 each.

DAVID A. BENJAMIN, 24 Peabody Terrace, Apt. 518, Cambridge, MA 02138 needs the first ten issues of JDMB, THE HOUSE GUESTS, MURDER FOR THE BRIDE, I COULD GO ON SINGING and WEEP FOR ME, as well as any and all info that would be helpful in writing a thesis on JDM. David is a teaching fellow at Harvard.

# Fawcett Gold Medal Books by John D. MacDonald

All These Condemned	95¢	Murder in the Wind	75¢
April Evil	75¢	The Neon Jungle	75¢
Area of Suspicion	75¢	One Monday We Killed Them All	75¢
Ballroom of the Skies	75¢	On The Run	60¢
The Beach Girls	75¢	The Only Girl in the Game	75¢
Border Town Girl	60¢	Please Write For Details	75¢
The Brass Cupcake	60¢	The Price of Murder	75¢
A Bullet For Cinderella	75¢	SEVEN	75¢
Clermie	95¢	Slam The Big Door	75¢
Contrary Pleasure	95¢	Soft Touch	75¢
The Crossroads	95¢	Where Is Janice Gantry?	75¢
Cry Hard, Cry Fast	75¢	Wine of the Dreamers	75¢
The Darned	75¢	You Live Once	60¢
Dead Low Tide	75¢		
Deadly Welcome	75¢	THE TRAVIS MCGEE SERIES:	
Death Trap	75¢	The Deep Blue Good-By	75¢
The Deceivers	75¢	Nightmare in Pink	75¢
The Drowner	75¢	A Purple Place For Dying	75¢
The Empty Trap	60¢	The Quick Red Fox	75¢
The End of the Night	75¢	A Deadly Shade of Gold	95¢
End of the Tiger and Other Stories	75¢	Bright Orange For The Shroud	75¢
The Executioners	75¢	Darker Than Amber	75¢
A Flash of Green	95¢	One Fearful Yellow Eye	75¢
The Girl, The Gold Watch & Everything	75¢	Pale Gray For Guilt	75¢
Judge Me Not	75¢	The Girl in the Plain Brown Wrapper	95¢
A Key to the Suite	75¢	Dress Her In Indigo	75¢
The Last One Left	95¢	The Long Lavender Look	95¢
A Man of Affairs	75¢	The Tan And Sandy Silence	95¢
Murder For The Bride	60¢		

If you can't find the title you are seeking on your local newsstand, you can order it from the publisher at the cover price plus 15¢ for postage and handling. Send payment with order to:

Mail Order Service  
Fawcett Publications, Inc.  
Greenwich, Conn. 06830



# UNTITLED OPINION

by Edward A. Nickerson

It seems to me that David Stewart, despite his disclaimer, is implying that JDM is guilty, in a sense, of the death of Donna Fitzhugh--guilty because he has added to our culture of violence. MacDonald defends himself effectively in the same issue of JDMB, but he does not make one point that I believe should be made. That is, that it is basically illogical, in a publication whose reason for being is interest in the works of a crime writer, to criticize him for being a crime writer.

I am reminded of the student who recently commented in an evaluation of a Chaucer course, "there was too much Middle English". But even that analogy doesn't cover the situation, because the student, conceivably, was not entirely a willing volunteer; doubtless he would have preferred something else but was closed out by the registrar's computer and took Chaucer as second.

But David Stewart and Edward Nickerson and all the rest are willing volunteers. Let us assume now, that way down there at the bottom of us there's a little shameful pleasure, a little Schadenfreude, in the suspense and the danger and the imminence of death in the novels of JDM or half a hundred other writers. How about accepting this fact as part of the human condition? The taste of danger and the fascination of mystery--aren't they what hook us? The point is not the hook, but what is done once we're pulled along. Are we taken on a trip in which we are induced to participate in a sick enjoyment of violence, as I think we are with much of Spillane's work, or are we encouraged to become more civilized?

I think the subscribers to the JDMB, including David Stewart, know the answer to that one.

-oOo-

-EAN

NEWS & PREVIEWS (continued from p. 14)

We report all of this because the time may come when we may alter our policy to include even more discussion and reviews of writers and titles in the mystery field. We have already done this to some degree, but at the moment we feel that it isn't an immediate necessity, as such magazines as THE ARMCHAIR DETECTIVE and MYSTERY READER'S NEWS-LETTER are doing very well in covering the field in general. We are not professional publishers, and consequently are not in competition. We feel that the various amateur journals in mystery fandom tend to complement each other. Perhaps there is room for another one--i.e., another one of general interest rather than devoted to just one author or phase of the field, but at the moment we expect to continue JDMB pretty much as it is now.

What mystery fandom does need, perhaps, is a regular news magazine--published once or twice a month. It could run reviews, too, but its main purpose would be to circulate news about the pro and the fan sides of the field. Anybody interested? In doing the job, that is--I'm sure that almost everybody would be interested in receiving such a magazine or paper.

All you need is a mimeograph, typewriter, sundry supplies and the time, money and energy to keep it coming out on a regular schedule. In time you might get enough regular paying readers to take care of most of the expense--but the time and energy has to come from you. You would also need news--something to publish. That might be the hardest part of the whole job. Getting publishers and writers to send you advance info on forthcoming books or magazines; getting readers and others to send in news related to the field. A newsmag or paper does need reporters, so best to line them up before announcing your first issue.

Anyway, when you do get around to it, be sure and let June and me know where to send our check for a subscription.

-ljm

# Please Write For Details

BILL WILSON, Douglasville, GA: Apparently Mr. Nevins did not read my column in JDMB #16 very carefully, or if he did, he was so offended by it that he overlooked or forgot the second paragraph.

This column was intended to explain the "cop's eyes" look and what was bugging policemen in general. It was based upon the consensus of law enforcement officers and jurists I have had contact with or whose published articles I have read, and therefore, in every instance they were not necessarily my own positive opinions.

However, lest anyone get the notion that I am trying to wriggle off the hook, I am taking the advocate's stand of supporting this consensus 100% for the purpose of rebuttal.

Mr. Nevins started off with a funny parody (always begin by telling a joke or humorous story to warm up the audience). Then he used the debater's tricks of furnishing statistics based upon his own standards and/or frame of reference and then proceeded to refer to his opponent's attitude with a repetition of pejorative terms, and finally dismissed him with a contemptuous figurative backhand which was comparable to the trial lawyer's "I have no further questions for this witness!"

Now as to the commentary--here are my rebuttals, item for item.

(a) Mr. Nevins states flatly that I am wrong on the facts. Then he states that, "Of all the major Supreme Court decisions on defendants' rights only---- (2) were 5-4." I do not know what standards Mr. Nevins used for major decisions, but apparently he overlooked or disregarded the Wade decision of 1966. While Mr. Nevins may not personally consider this as a major decision, the U.S. Congress was disturbed to the extent that remedial legislation was introduced. Further, I used the term "most of----5 to 4" which was based upon a score which appeared in U.S. News & World Report. This score started with the Mallory decision of 1957. Finally, he drew an unwarranted conclusion regarding my polemic. I noted that 5-4 (and no other figure) was in essence a squeaker. He, in effect, was saying that he can interpret what was in my mind other than what I had stated. And incidentally he comments on my "outrage". May I take exception to his term; bothered--yes; concerned--yes; outraged--hell no. Again he has placed his own interpretation upon my mental attitude.

(b) Again Mr. Nevins has misinterpreted my thoughts. I do not get angry at the rain for falling downward, but I do express displeasure when the rain falls on a particular day, and who hasn't done this? But this is a rather faulty analogy to begin with because the falling of the rain in any direction is considered to be an act of nature or of God, if you will, whereas the decisions of the Supreme Court are the acts of mortal men, or does Mr. Nevins believe...? The comment of Chief Justice Hughes is typical of the judicial arrogance that many find objectionable. It seems that instead of interpreting the Constitution and the laws in terms of their social philosophies, the courts ought to be more concerned with what the Constitution and the laws actually say, or their real intent. Or, as one noted professor of law has aptly put it, "To rely more upon analytical reasoning and less upon (so-called) intuitive justice."

(c) I plead guilty to some sloppy writing, however, the wording of the Miranda decision had an ex post facto effect on some cases being tried but not adjudicated and of hundreds of others awaiting trial, since it affected the admissibility of confessions which had been taken in good faith under the rules in existence at the time. The Johnson case ruled that persons who had been tried and sentenced before the Miranda decision were not to be released or retired solely on the basis of that decree. And in passing, with reference to the Miranda decision, Justice Hugo Black in dissenting (one of the four), said "The desirability of bringing criminals to book is a far more crucial consideration than the desirability of giving defendants every possible assistance."

(d) In this instance I was only pointing out one of those governmental anomalies. Congress can't make an ex post facto law, but the courts take this authority unto themselves (The law is what we say it is.). The general public isn't aware of some of the judicial usurpation of power, and certain elements of the legal family become annoyed when it is suggested that at times the courts act in a high-handed and tyrannical manner, and yet, in the opinion of many of the legal profession, the courts have taken on the role of law-maker and law-enforcer-by-edict, in addition to their constituted position of law

decider. Mr. Nevins pointed out that the judicial attitude of ex post facto decisions was one of long standing. However, the concern over judicial usurpation is likewise of long standing. Thomas Jefferson noted that "The germ of dissolution of our government is in the constitution of the federal judiciary, an irresponsible body...working like gravity by day and by night, gaining a little today and a little tomorrow and advancing its noiseless step like a thief over the field of jurisdiction until all shall be usurped from the states and the government of all shall be consolidated into one."

(e) Perhaps I haven't the foggiest notion of what stare decisis means. I got this concept from an address by a retired prosecuting attorney who explained that for many years certain precedents had stood and then were suddenly overturned on the precise point over which the previous ruling had been made. Further, that because of the Warren Court's general and seemingly deliberate disregard of the principle of stare decisis no officer or prosecutor really knew if the evidence he gathered legally today would be acceptable tomorrow. Incidentally, my layman's legal dictionary defines stare decisis as "To abide by; the decisions of the court should stand as precedents for future guidance".

(f) This is some of the sophistic reasoning that is so often advanced. I have personal knowledge of cases that were dismissed or reversed solely because it was alleged that the officer had erred in his arrest procedure. The Mallory case is a prime example. The evidence and confession in this case wasn't even questioned. The accused was tried and found guilty by a court, but the decision was reversed over a technicality in the booking and arraigning of the prisoner. And I notice that Mr. Nevins drags out the weary cliches of "coerced confessions" and "unlawful searches" and caps it off with a platitude.

(g) Here I go again being "outraged", and here Mr. Nevins goes again with his specious argument. The convictions I was referring to were not erroneous. (See (f) above.) The jury had heard the case and in some instances the accused had entered a plea of guilty. May I quote: "No matter how atrocious the crime or how clear the guilt, the Supreme Court never discuss in their opinions or even mention the fact that the murderer, robber, dangerous criminal or rapist who has appealed to their court for justice is undoubtedly guilty; and they rarely ever discuss the rights and the protection of law-abiding people in our country. Instead, they upset and reverse convictions of criminals who pleaded guilty, or were found guilty recently or many years ago, on newly created technical and unrealistic standards made of straw." These are not the mouthings of some "outraged" policeman, these are the words of Chief Justice John C. Bell of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania.

(h) Once again, the old putdown. I am fully aware of the sentencing procedure as it exists. In my writings I have tried to avoid being pedantic and have assumed that most of the readers were able to figure out things for themselves and therefore I tend to be laconic. Perhaps I am guilty of understatement in this instance. I know perfectly well that a sentence can't be mitigated under present conditions, for the reasons I stated, but it seems that the laws could be amended to cover this state of affairs rather than to go through retrials and delays. This is what I was referring to, and if I misled anyone, I apologize.

Then Mr. Nevins goes on to say that he won't bother to attack my comments regarding police brutality, etc. All I really said about police brutality was that policemen were human beings. Does he reject this? And as for a howler (to use Mr. Nevins' word) that final sentence of his takes the prize. Large numbers of attorneys, etc., are in disagreement with my view. So what else is new? Large numbers of attorneys, etc., agree with my views. What are we going to do, play numbers?

And I liken his reference to JDM to that of the little boy, who, to clinch an argument says "Well, my big brother say so, so there!" I don't know what JDM really thinks and for that matter, Mr. Nevins is only drawing his own conclusion as to what JDM thinks. But, in that connection, JDM could totally disagree with me and that would have no bearing on the issue. I was being spokesman for a consensus, and as to whether that consensus is right or wrong neither Mr. Nevins nor anyone else can say with any certainty. Trite but true, only time can tell.

J. M. CARTER, New York, NY: Whatever happened to THE BLOOD GAME by JDM? Now you see it (in the JDMB) and now you don't. Also, I see a number of rather sour references to the two books of short stories (in pb) which have been published by John D: SEVEN and END OF THE TIGER. I wonder why no one ever proposes which stories he would LIKE to see together in book form. As for me, it seems obvious that since John D's stories fall generally into two broad categories (mystery and sf) it would make sense to bring out two more paperbacks: one featuring the best of JDM in mystery and the other the best of JDM in sf. I would nominate, respectively, the following for inclusion:

Mystery	SF
Homesick Buick	Legend of Joe Lee
Funny The Way Things Work Out	Game for Blondes
I Always Get The Cuties	Common Denominator
Hit and Run	Spectator Sports
Death's Eye View	The Flaw
Homicidal Hiccup	Shadow on the Sand
There Hangs Death	A Child is Crying
Make Mine Murder	Ring Around The Redhead
Never Quite Tough Enough	Hunted
Case of the Gorgeous Gams	Miniature

(in no particular order)

Certainly you and other fans have your own favorites. I happen to be a reader, not a writer, and the thing I've found with publishers, especially of pbs, is that they are stupid and incompetent (for openers) and real pressure has to be brought (from some direction, usually from all directions) before they will do the obvious. So why don't WE, as a more or less organized group, work on getting into print the things we would like to read??? Like WEEP FOR ME, which is on everyone's wanted list.

((THE BLOOD GAME, at last report, was unfinished. WEEP FOR ME is JDM's own least favorite novel, and he has previously expressed the wish that it never be reprinted! -ljm))

HARRIET N. STEVENSON, West Linn, OR: I'm glad I had read TAN & SANDY before JDMB arrived; otherwise I might have been influenced by Dean Grennell's appraisal. TAN & SANDY excited me until McGee got bopped over the head. Sounds to me like the old lady that walks down the side street at midnight with her purse hanging on her arm...or the young girl that thumbs a ride from a strange man...what else could he expect? I mean McGee.

But then I got really interested in McGee getting into the ocean. He says: "There is no such thing as an undertow. Not anywhere in the world. All you ever find is a rip. To have a rip..." I don't need to quote more than that. I live in the Pacific Northwest. For years I have heard of people drowning because of the undertow. We're warned not to swim when the tide is going out. So McGee says there's no undertow, only a rip. ((More a case of "a rose by any other name", I think. -jmm))

Thirty years ago I used to read the Perry Mason books by ESG; and I liked them before I met Chandler and a few dozen other authors. But from Perry Mason I remember only one clue that pin-pointed the murderer: sidereal time. I had never heard of it. According to my dictionary: "Sidereal time equals 23 hours, 56 minutes, 4.09 seconds of mean solar time". Should I ever have to face a rip, I hope I'll remember what the sidereal time is...but maybe James Bond or Superman or Peter Rabbit will be along to help me. ((That definition of sidereal time sounds like half a set of parameters. Where's the other half? -jmm))

After reading Dean A. Grennell's contribution to JDMB...what do I mean, "reading"? I suffered over it the way I suffered over LOLITA. My dictionary does not include everything. I know Sherlock Holmes and Christopher Morley...but who is Reichenbach? ((Can you know Sherlock Holmes and still not be able to recognize the Reichenbach Falls when they are referred to without their identifying noun? Tsk. -jmm))

Since I seem to be reading Mr. Grennell word by word (how else could I read his obfuscating prose?) I'll pause to ask what's wrong with Canada?

((And I'll pause to ask what's wrong with Dean's prose? Obfuscating, indeed! Lucid is more like it! -jmm)) Why is it that when American books are turned into movies, nothing is the same as the book? ((I'll get arguments about this again, June, but mostly it's true.)

DAVID STEWART, Asheville, NC: Dean Grennell's review was, simply, a masterpiece. I laughed until my sides hurt and have still not looked up all the funny words he used. I mean, I looked them up but haven't found them all. Also, I dig the use of front cover art. More, more, please. Pass on my compliments to Grennell when next you write him. ((We'll be seeing him next week, and will tell him then. -jmm))

JOE L. HENSLEY, Madison, Indiana: I was interviewed on tv yesterday on a new book I'd done, and managed to get MacDonald's name in. Got asked who was the best.

I rather imagine that, as time passes, MacDonald will become more famous. A hundred years from now, assuming that the species survives and prospers, then I think that many of those authors around now and popular now with the critics will be forgotten, but JDM will live on, be read. It seems to me as an omnivorous reader that he has managed to capture the slightly acid taste and the carbon monoxide smell of these years better than any other writer.

HARRY WARNER, Jr., Hagerstown, MD: Dave Stewart's article in the new JDM Bibliophile is thought-provoking. I feared that he was going to Werthamize the JDM books, but his real message is considerably more subtle than that. But I'm afraid that there are several gaps in the logic of the message. First: the obvious fact that writings which preach love and non-violence and all the other good things have been accepted by millions as the basis for religions, despite which the very people who give lip service to these doctrines proceed to make war and commit crime and therefore, what real effect would result from a JDM who put his powers to work deliberately to influence the behavior of his readers? There's the secondary problem of cause and effect: nobody has the slightest proof that the cathartic usefulness of fiction is not a greater force for good than whatever evil the same fiction may create by its effect on the behavior of readers. Wertham simply ignored the problem with a passing hint that comic books were potentially harmful for all children, not just the ones who got into trouble... And I'm not altogether convinced that it's possible to write consistently good fiction which tries to be edifying and moralistic: maybe it's prejudice resulting from those dreadful little stories which I read as a child in Sunday school leaflets, but I always feel uncomfortable and self-conscious when I'm reading fiction with social purposes, instead of forgetting everything in the enjoyment of the story.

Imho should attain the fame that yhos once had in science fiction fandom. But why should we stop with a couple of such abbreviations? A few scholars in each subfandom could go to work, finding the stock phrases and cliches that are most frequent in fanzines, discarding a few that are obviously unsuitable to the tongue, (like splendid, but flawed which turns up in every second review of a science fiction book) and publishing indexes to the remainder. Only the most inventive writers will avoid using at least one such abbreviation in every paragraph, and the ecology will benefit by the cumulative saving in ink and paper through shortening of the text.

It's a shame that the second Bouchercon didn't draw a bigger crowd... If the publicity campaign doesn't improve attendance this fall, why not take the show on the road? After all, the science fiction worldcon might have continued to draw a couple hundred fans, if it had alternated down through the decades between New York City and Philadelphia. ((As a matter of fact, the Bouchercon did draw a better attendance--of detective-mystery-suspense fans--and the fourth Bouchercon will be held in Boston. See ad for same, elsewhere in JDMB. -jmm)) There must be lots of people in mystery fandom who won't travel a thousand miles or so to experience a Bouchercon for the first time, but would be hooked if one occurred nearby, and would follow it around in future years just as convention fans do in fantasy fandom.



I continue to feel that Bill Wilson is on the side of the angels, even if he isn't always totally accurate on factual matters, as someone complains in this letter section. My latest bafflement involves a trial held here for the operator of a night spot on charges of aiding and abetting prostitution. At this trial, some months ago, the jury deadlocked hopelessly and the judge declared a mistrial.

Everyone assumed that the hung jury came from a questionable wording in the indictment: it charged the operator with doing these things in the nightclub. Testimony showed that the arrangements were made in a coatroom adjoining the nightclub's drinking and entertainment area, and the defense contended that it was a defective indictment.

Several weeks ago, the night club operator was tried again (and I don't know if it was on a new, corrected indictment or on the old one) and entered a plea of guilty this time. Now I can't comprehend why he shouldn't automatically be prosecuted for perjury, as a result of the contradiction between this plea and the denials of wrongdoing that he'd made from the witness stand during the original trial. I don't know why he admitted his guilt when the second trial began, either; it might have something to do with other charges against him involving such things as helping to arrange for abortions.

Even if Congress can't pass an ex post facto criminal law, it apparently has been coming terribly close. A day or two before the end of 1971, Congress enacted a change in federal income tax rules. One bank where I have money invested interpreted my "savings certificate" as falling under the changed provisions, some weeks after it had sent out its statements of interest paid during 1971 for tax purposes. I'd filed both my federal and my state tax returns on the basis of that statement. When I got a new statement, I had to go to all that work again, filing amended returns, and quite likely starting a chain of confusion.

The change in the law involved a requirement to average interest payments during the entire life of the savings certificate for certain types of investments, instead of reporting actual interest credited during the year. My interest was credited every three months, as I understand it. I paid estimated income tax quarterly on the basis of this interest expectation during 1971, and Congress decides at the end of the year to alter the rules which had been in effect more than a half-year earlier. It's not criminal law but I'd be a criminal if I refused to pay the modest sum in additional tax. And I still think the bank made a mistake, because the change in the law as I understand it was aimed at the kind of investment where the investor receives no interest at all until the termination of the agreement, then gets a lump sum.

A particularly horrid example of movie-turned-into-novel: Dr. Strangelove. The film could be turned into an excellent novelette. Peter George, who worked on the screenplay, stretched it into 145 printed pages, and destroyed the climax completely by cutting from paragraphs describing the destruction of the planet to preceding activities in the War Room. But I always snatch any such books in Rescue Mission and Goodwill Industries stores through a pathetic belief that someday I'll find in a novelization important material that was cut from the film just before general release, after the book version was being published. Usually it's the other way around. George doesn't even hint at the phallic significance Kubrick achieved by the angle at which he photographed Slim Pickens riding the atomic bomb down onto Russia.

DAN GOODMAN, Los Angeles, CA: A question that Dave Stewart doesn't go into: to what extent are the people who try to keep society stable responsible for violence? Not just the obvious things, like the brutality carried out by conservatives to keep themselves in power. (I'm including societies like the Soviet Union.)

The authorities at UC Berkeley could have saved a good deal of trouble if they hadn't banned free speech because "it might make trouble". The man who killed the migrant workers was able to get away with it because migrant workers are oppressed. (At the least, if those workers had belonged to a union, someone would have come around to see why they weren't paying their dues.) Because the farmers don't care what sort of men become labor contractors.

There is also the matter of people who commit violence in what they consider to be perfectly rational self-defense. The psychotic who kills as many of those leagued

against him as he can reach; the slum kid who joins a gang for protection against other gangs; the woman who carries a tear-gas gun in her purse and then uses it on the man who tries to put his arm around her in a bar. ((While a tear-gas gun is a bit extreme, the question of violations of one's personal territory is a moot one. Or are you saying that she shouldn't go into a bar if she doesn't want strange men trying to put an arm or two around her? -jmm))

On the question of how closely McGee's moral code is related to JDM's: take a glance into the sf field, at Poul Anderson's Dominic Flandry series. (Since these are spy stories, they're appropriate for discussion in a mystery fanzine.) ((Right! -jmm))

Flandry is working, sometimes by means hard to justify, to prop up an empire which is corrupt, venal, rotten to the core. He is presented as a hero.

I don't think Anderson could write these stories, if he did not feel that Flandry were doing the right thing by supporting a government whose one virtue is that it is superior to anarchy. (In Flandry's--and presumably Anderson's view; I would take the chance of anarchy being better.)

Back to the mystery field--Eric Ambler's work from the Thirties. I don't think Ambler could have written as he did, if he had not been left of center.

I think you can tell when a writer believes in what he has written, just as you can tell whether he has actually experienced what he's writing about. I don't think JDM could write about a hero like McGee if he were an absolute pacifist; a believer in total chastity; an advocate of the theory that might always makes right; or a man who believed that it was always useless to fight the system. ((Might not sell very well, either -jmm))

On Bill Wilson's column: When the British introduced the secret ballot, voting fraud died out in England. Like that, apparently. It didn't work the same way here, which suggests that what works in one country will not necessarily work in another. Unless I could be sure that the safeguards which keep Britain from being a police state would work as effectively here, I don't want to try the British system of allowing prosecutions no matter how faulty the arrest. Any more than the average American cop would want to go on duty without a gun.

(Query: British police are not, strictly, unarmed; they carry clubs. When the British police force reached something resembling its current form, were guns easily available to British criminals? I suspect not, I think it would have been far harder to establish a police force without guns. A club can be effective against knives and other clubs, but not usually against firearms.)

A gloss on my letter: I wasn't going out of my way to acquire information on illegalities while in Europe. I had no intention of spending part of my trip in a foreign jail, or associating too closely with people who might land in jail.

The information was picked up in casual conversation, mostly with people who were themselves law-abiding (or preferred not to seem otherwise; or saw nothing wrong with a small bit of smuggling but would have shied off from any major crime). I think anyone traveling in Europe can pick up such information, as easily as he can find panhandlers on a skid row. ((I might question the validity of such information. Maybe they need the equivalent of a Better Business Bureau. -jmm))

I think it would've been easy to dig deeper. And that anyone who wishes to observe the international underworld at close hand, and doesn't look too much like a cop, could easily arrange for on-the-job training. It might be a bit of trouble explaining that you were merely doing research for a mystery novel, however. ((And I suspect that any on-the-job training that you might be able to arrange for so casually would be either very superficial, or undertaken for the purpose of parting the tourist from as much of his money as could be arranged for. I'm sure the US of A didn't invent the pigeon drop! -jmm))

I think I met a good many people who were engaged in illegalities. I was traveling on a low budget, among others traveling on low budgets; and the less money one has, the less is needed to tempt one. A lot of them mentioned in casual conversation that they used psychedelics; some probably took enough for their own use across frontiers, or tried to mail it home to countries where prices were much higher. (And if you're taking enough for your own use, why not a bit more for a few friends? And perhaps enough to sell to a few extra people?)

Quote from George Orwell's essay, "Freedom of the Park" (7 December 1945):

"The British police are not like a continental gendarmerie or Gestapo, but I do not think one maligns them by saying that, in the past, they have been unfriendly to left-wing activities. They have generally shown a tendency to side with those whom they regarded as the defenders of private property. There were some scandalous cases at the time of the Mosley disturbances. 'At the only big Mosley meeting I ever attended, the police collaborated with the Blackshirts in 'keeping order', in a way in which they certainly would not have collaborated with Socialists or Communists. Till quite recently, 'red' and 'illegal' were almost synonymous, and it was always the seller of, say, the Daily Worker, never the seller of, say, the Daily Telegraph, who was moved on and generally harassed." (Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell; Vol. 4.) ((Considering the amount of inflamed (and idiot) rhetoric from both sides, perhaps the wonder is that it wasn't worse. -jmm))

MARVIN LACHMAN, Bronx, NY: Sorry that other commitments have prevented me from doing anything for the JDMB recently. However, I have not neglected JDM entirely. In an article entitled "Tennis and the Mystery Story" which I sold to WORLD TENNIS MAGAZINE (it ran in their January and February 1972 issues) I mentioned two Travis McGee books (YELLOW and BROWN) in which tennis figured, albeit slightly.

In the Florida segment of my continuing series on the American Regional Mystery, I, of course, mentioned many titles by JDM. That article should be published later this year in the MYSTERY READER'S NEWSLETTER.

Finally, in an article dealing with boxing and mysteries (to be published in a future issue of THE ARMCHAIR DETECTIVE) I described the scene in LAVENDER wherein McGee discusses boxing and spars with his captor at the Cypress County jail. McGee is told by this former professional that he could have been a pretty good boxer had he started early enough.

Time permitting, some day I hope to do a full-blown article for you exploring the past life and history of the McGee. Some day...

DAVE LOCKE, Duarte, CA: #17 is a good issue. Lots of things to disagree with...  
((THAT's my boy! -jmm))

I'll start off with Dave Stewart. There are a lot of grim situations that can make life rotten, but they can also make some pretty interesting escape literature. Or good movies. This doesn't mean that you have to subscribe to a double standard. Just because I enjoy a good murder mystery, it doesn't follow that I'd enjoy having my family or friends involved in one.

Theodore Sturgeon said the following in a postscript to VENUS PLUS X: "I once wrote a fairly vivid story about a man being unfaithful to his wife and no one made any scandalous remarks about me. I then wrote a specific kind of narrative about a woman being unfaithful to her husband and nobody had anything scandalous to say about my wife. BUT I wrote an empathetic sort of tale about some homosexuals and my mailbox filled up with cards drenched with scent and letters written in purple ink with green capitals."

Sturgeon was making a point about sex, but there's something else inherent in what he said. You can't pass judgment on a writer's morals based on the content of the fiction he writes. What sells well isn't necessarily the type of story the author likes best. Even if it is, so what? Some writers of pornography are virgins. Some of the teen-age confession stories are written by 45-year-old men.

Here's the double standard. We're in the tell-it-like-it-is generation. But that applies only to sex. Now it's violence that's taboo. I understand that in Michigan there's no prejudice against Blacks. They pick on the Indians, instead. If the Indians ever move out, the Blacks are in trouble. Now, with sex in technicolor and panavision, everyone's picking on violence.

It used to be a common belief that reading sex books or watching pornographic movies would cause a person to lurk in alleys and grab passing girls for the purposes of forcible intercourse. Today's tell-it-like-it-is generation scorns such old beliefs. However, they then turn around and want to censor violence on the grounds that "one act of moral irresponsibility assists and encourage subsequent acts. Violence accumulates. Any

unpunished or unprotested act of hooliganism--particularly one on the front page or over network prime time--makes another more likely next week".

Well, horseshit. Maybe he's right, but still horseshit. If something is a part of life, let's drag it out and take a look at it. Don't beat me to death with it, but don't hide it from me, either. And if it's a part of life, it's fair ground for fictionalizing. I like to read stories about going to Mars, but you'll never get me inside a spaceship. I like murder mysteries, but I'll never poison anybody. You won't find me exploring any rabbit holes, either.

Actually, a good dose of violence in the cinema can be good for you. Not the clean, bloodless deaths they serve up on television, but rather the blood and gore of a DIRTY HARRY. On television, violence appears harmless. Even fun. In DIRTY HARRY you see it for what it is. You walk out with two things. First, you've been entertained. It's a hell of an engrossing movie. Second, you want to stay as far away from violence as possible. The point is, there's a difference between portraying violence as being something exciting, and showing it as it really is. It's the difference between THE WILD, WILD WEST and DIRTY HARRY, or the difference between the writing of John D. MacDonald and Robert E. Howard. This doesn't keep me from being entertained by all four, which after all is the prime purpose of all four from my viewpoint (from the creator's viewpoint, pride of workmanship and food for the belly). But showing it like it is doesn't hurt anybody. It doesn't follow, though, that not showing it like it is should be taboo to the field of fiction writing.

Stewart is taking a pretty far-out shot to make a connection between the ingredients of a JDM novel and violence in the real world. His girl friend died a violent death and he's shook up about it, and reading a novel with violence in it doesn't set too well with him at this time. When my father died on a hospital bed I wasn't keen about watching a hospital-series on television, but I didn't accuse such shows of having some small part in causing people to die on hospital beds. Normally, people wouldn't object to receiving an ad from a mortuary, but it might jar you a bit if someone in your family were critically ill at the time. I suppose science fiction might be blamed for the deaths of those astronauts a few years back, since fictionalizing space travel must have made people want to travel in rocket ships. Or maybe the reason we went to the moon a second time was because Walter Cronkite did such a bang-up job in telling us about the first moon landing.

What Stewart is advocating is a form of censorship. Don't write about people dying violent deaths. Don't write about people who incur violence. Let's go back to Alice in Wonderland, and let's incorporate some real moral judgments in all fiction, and let's not show that such things as violence really do occur in real life. But let's leave out the bit about the rabbit hole. Kids might try it and get nipped by angry rabbits. ((Back to Alice in Wonderland? You going to leave in the scene with the Duchess and the baby? -jmm))

I sympathize with Stewart. I really do. But he's looking for implication and guilt in the wrong places. What's eating him is that he has to find that guilt in somebody or something, and he has to hack at it because that's a small way of filling the void which resulted from the loss he incurred. But gut is over-ruling his intelligence, and he's striking out in the wrong places. He doesn't care, though, because it feels better to strike out at something, even if it's the wrong thing, than to put up with that empty feeling of outraged indignation long enough to hunt down the real things at fault.

Dean's wordage is overpowering, as usual. I don't remember a damn thing he said about TAN, but the way he said it was enthralling. However, a small degree of suspicion settled about me as I read his review, and on impulse I grabbed my dictionary and looked up a few of those \$3.50 words he was scattering throughout. Sure enough, some of them ain't in there. ((\$3.50? Has inflation hit word-values too? Maybe it's your dictionary that's at fault, not Dean's word-sense. I have an illiterate dictionary here at the office. Almost any word I want to look up isn't in it. -jmm))

I rather liked SEVEN, and JDM's previous short story collection. I'd rate either collection among his ten best books.

Further to L. Fleming's questions about seemingly impossible exhibition shooting, I've heard about a fellow who could pour a steady stream of lead into the bull with a hand-held machine gun. I heard that from Grennell.

I see that John didn't choose to answer my question. I really would like to see him take another shot at writing science fiction, or another light fantasy in the vein of THE GIRL, THE GOLD WATCH AND EVERYTHING. John has certainly written enough science fiction short stories, plus two str and one fantasy novel, to indicate that he at least had more than a passing interest in the field at one time. How about it, John? And are you aware of the current status of the str field? It's changed a lot since WINE OF THE DREAMERS and those early issues of GALAXY. For one thing, characterization is no longer subjugate to gimmickry. Plot and suspense are no longer hind-tit to galloping action (no, that's westerns. I'm thinking of blasting action). What's the possibility of your turning out something in the str or fantasy field again?

Everybody needs a change of pace once in a while. I even write occasional letters to mystery-fandom fanzines.

JACK CUTHBERT, Greensburg, PA: In case you may have thought I had been taken away, I have not yet, and upon receiving #17 in the near past, I thought it might be propitious and even essential to inscribe a few thoughts--using the word loosely. I haven't bothered you lately as I have been doing same to Al Hubin in the form of additions, corrections and such on his Alphabetical Bible which I hope to live long enough to receive the Z's.

I was a little surprised to find that sundry readers agreed with my impressions of S-E-V-E-N (I don't have no star). I was not too excited over it, for while it was naturally well written, was not as readable as most of his other volumes and I must agree with one Fred Blosser who opines that a collection of the JDM pulp work would be more entertaining. ((No star? Poor baby, here're a few for you: \*\*\*\*\* -jmm))

As for the Nevin pseudo-biography of JDM, he neglected to mention that JDM had a brother Phillip who also wrote and that JDM's father owned a farm and was known sometimes as Old MacDonald. He also neglected mention of his nephew MacDonald Carey, who is an actor. ((Actual, Phillip was a cousin--on the Morris side of the famby. -jmm))

I was also interested in J. Smith's comments on book distribution, etc. I am nearby to several Walden stores, and find that they all have a large selection of JDM including all the books of many colors in brand new covers and also prices. I find that the local Walden stores seem to get the larger publishers' paperbacks before the drug stores and record marts, while the obscure publishers seem to land in the department stores first. I still haven't fathomed the PB distribution system--if any. Oftimes I find a book in only one outlet and then it is never seen again and, since I average about 20 stores (those selling books and other stuff) a week, it isn't because I don't look. Several books I have wanted have never appeared, so I had to write to the publisher which results in at least a four-week wait before anything happens.

For some reason, the article by Dave Stewart leaves me with the impression that Dave Stewart is somebody appearing in a JDM book. The style and context add to this impression. Since JDM has answered DS in great detail, I shall not get involved--though I do wonder if Mr. Stewart expects JDM and 9000 other writers, reporters, commentators and such to devote their entire output to essays on participation, involvement and morality in general. If such would happen, there would be an epidemic of starving writers, reporters and commentators--not to mention readers.

Is Virgil Finlay still producing? I always admired his handiwork in assorted SF publications. ((Sorry to have to tell you this, but Virgil Finlay died some time before our last issue came out. -jmm))

PETE JARRETT, Norman, OK: JDM comments that in the eyes of some of the literary establishment he is of small stature or words to that effect. NOT SO. After reading some of the trash the "literary establishment" is turning out, it seems that these people should be looking up to John D. MacDonald. JDM's word pictures are a mirror of our times and the people around us.

L. Fleming of Pasadena may have answered his own question about the trick shot artists (or some of them). A handgun and a rifle are aimed, a shotgun is pointed. Shot shells? Probably.

Like Bill Crider (JDMB#16), I have come to distrust the reviewer of the NY Times. Anthony Boucher, rest his soul, was excellent. Allen Hubin did a commendable job. But "Newgate Callendar" does not appear to have the background, knowledge of interest for this column. Failure to review SEVEN and/or TAN was a gross error of omission. Regardless of their quality they deserved a mention.

Obviously, I am an intense MacDonald fan. I even read the other MacDonald. (John Ross leaves me feeling that I am reading old R. Chandler.) ((Could that be bad? -jmm)) But none of the writers grab me with the same fervor as JDM.

Of course JDM does not write as much as he did in the past, I'm grateful for what he does. TAN indicated that T. McGee is getting old, even slipping somewhat. McGee is a long way from being over the hill; I hope there is a lot more to come.

DAVID B. VanCAMPEN, Oakland, CA: I just reread APRIL EVIL for the third time, I think, and found a terrible flaw in the plot. Young Toby Piersall has cutting from friend's crime magazine on villain Harry Mullin in his possession, i.e., in his room or someplace at home. This is reinforced twice. I leave it to page freaks to find it, but it is there. Toby shows up missing. No search of his room and possessions is made (typical police procedure followed prodigiously in most JDM books). Why? If so, plot breaks down, because the robbery may be cancelled by APB on Mullins--food for thought?

There was one other inconsistency I noted, which escapes my mind at the moment, but the above is blatant.

I wonder what JDM would have to say about that.

STANLEY A. PACHON, Bethlehem, PA: Your mention of an interview by Roger H. Smith of JDM for Publisher's Weekly appeared in the issue of March 27, 1972. Half page with a picture. I get the impression from reading Mr. Smith's article that his subject was rather reticent in talking about himself. To quote Mr. Smith, "With the success of the Travis McGee series and his other books, Mr. MacDonald has developed considerable concern about his own privacy".

Further on, Mr. Smith says "He never goes to New York, rarely gives interviews, and no longer appears on television talk shows. He dislikes being recognized by strangers who have read his books, and instructs his publishers, when they are asked for a picture of him, to give out one that is deliberately out of date".

Mr. Smith further quotes the author, "If the books weren't selling, I'd probably do more of the publicity thing". One wonders if "success has spoiled John D. MacDonald"?

((Not spoiled him, but made him more appreciative of the privacy to which every human being is entitled, regardless of his or her line of work. -ljm)).

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