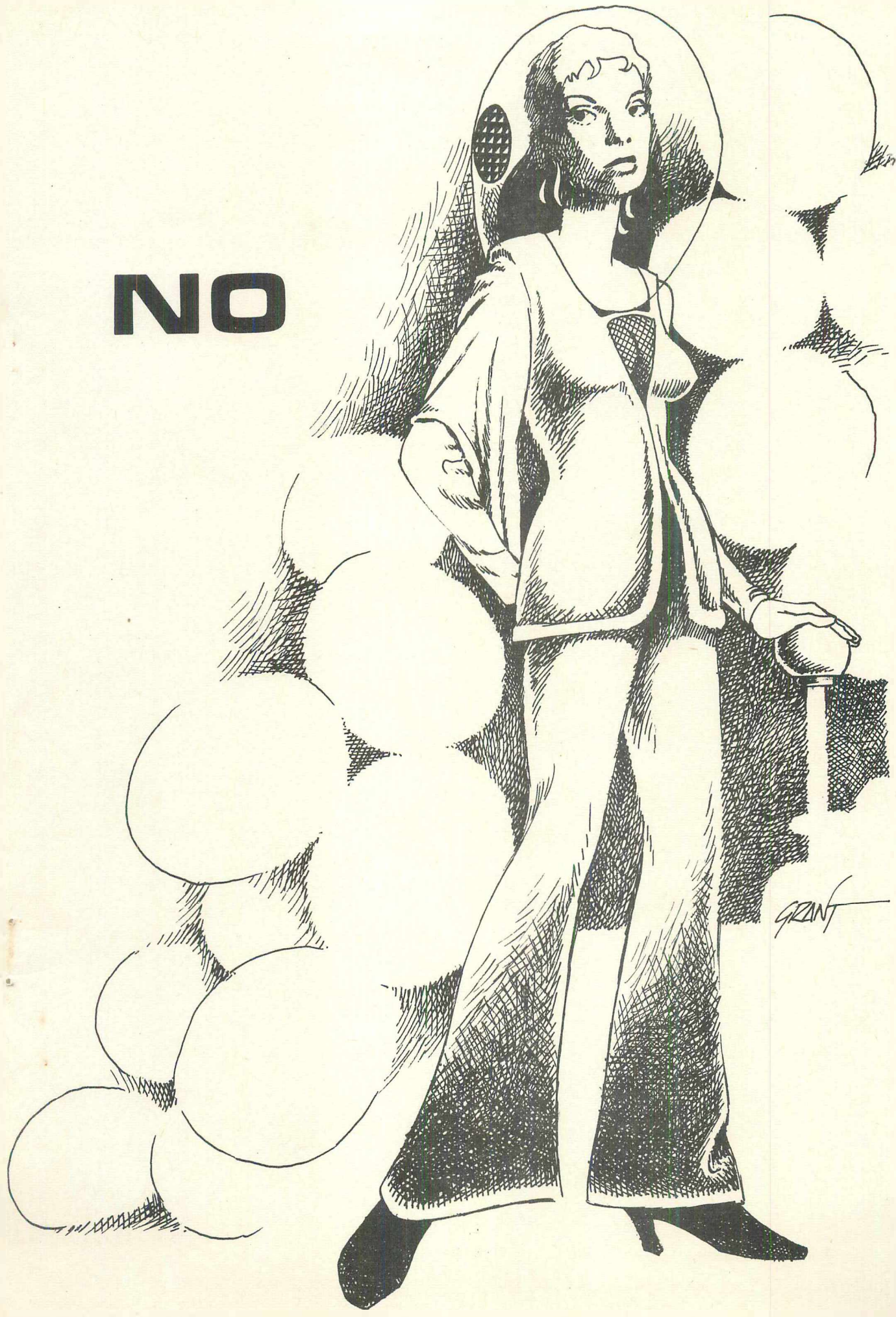
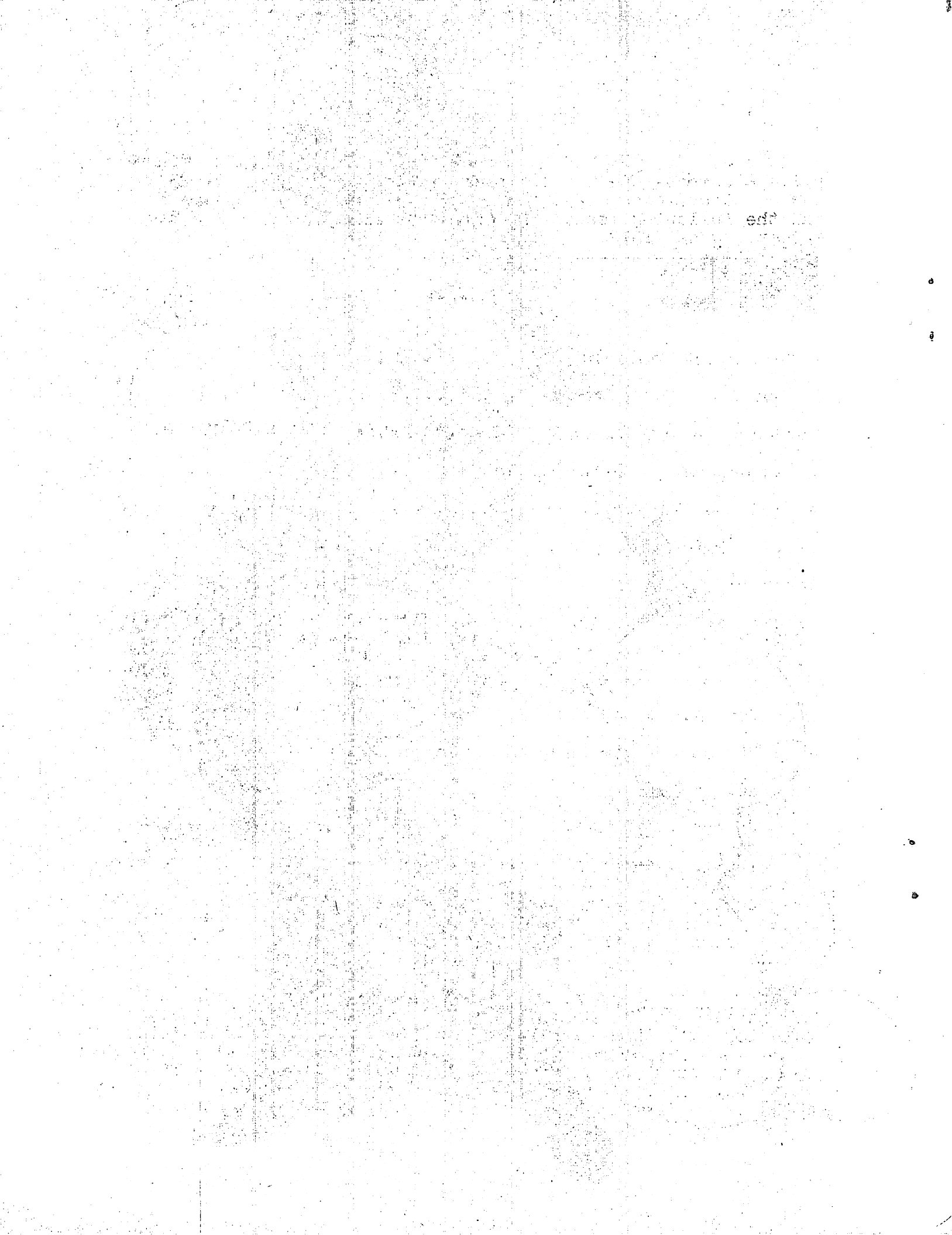


NO





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Brag Dept.: The July issue of F&SF has a story of mine, "3-OK."
Belated Brag: The Portland Oregonian had a poem of mine, "Sea-going House," in the "Oregonian Verse" column, Nov. 19, 1967.

The SHsf Fanthology #3 is now available. 50¢/copy. It is 37 pp. of material on Sherlock Holmes from fan publications (including Dick Lupoff's "The Adventure of the Second Anonymous Narrator," a double-barreled Holmes/Tarzan pastiche; comments on a Holmesian deduction from Apa-L, Priscilla Pollner's "Holmes was a Vulcan," Mary Ellen Rabogliatti's limerick on the same subject, and my "Sherlock Holmes in Oz." Copies of #2 are still available. Likewise 50¢/copy.

KOSHER SF
by Ruth Berman

The June F&SF has an unusual cover story, one which I think may be good enough to consider for Best Novella (or however the categories go) in next year's Hugo balloting. "Son of the Morning" by Phyllis Gotlieb is, as we say, a story of Jewish interest. Which in itself is unusual.

Religious science fiction of any kind, of course, is comparatively rare (like an armadillo on Salisbury plain). Scientists and people interested in science tend not to be theists, and vice versa. The emphasis in science on the examination of this world necessarily keeps scientists from having much time to spend worrying about Higher Realities, even if they believe in the existence of such Realities. And, in fact, belief in a Higher Reality necessarily makes this one look trivial, and a religious scientist's science is bound to be secondary in his thinking, unless he is of the type who compartmentalizes his thinking and is 6/7 scientific/to 1/7 religious. But otherwise there is bound to be a conflict between finding time for religious duties (which by the definitions of any religion are more important than worldly knowledge) and for a mundane job. Most scientists avoid such a conflict by avoiding religion in the first place -- there was a Latin proverb, "ubi tres medici, duo athei," and the proportion of two atheists in every three physicians is probably still accurate.

Most science fiction readers fall into the group of "those interested in science." And yet it's possible to be interested in science fiction without being interested in science; it's probably a good thing that it's so, both for the individual reader, who accidentally picks up some understanding of science along the way, and for the field, which is forced to cover a wider set of topics and emotions than the sort of purely educational sf Gernsback wanted could have handled. Isaac Asimov prides himself on writing "hard science" sf, and he gave a speech at this year's Nebula program praising sf for educating readers in -- not science directly -- but in what it may feel like to live in and to try to keep in balance a science-dominated world. Yet he is one of the most widely popular sf writers. No doubt part of his popularity is a carry-over from his science-fact books, but most of it is a response to his science fiction stories on their own account. His images of the rise and fall of a Galactic Empire, the retreat to artificial wombs, the humanity of his gentle robots, all have meaning even to a reader who starts out without any interest in science at all.

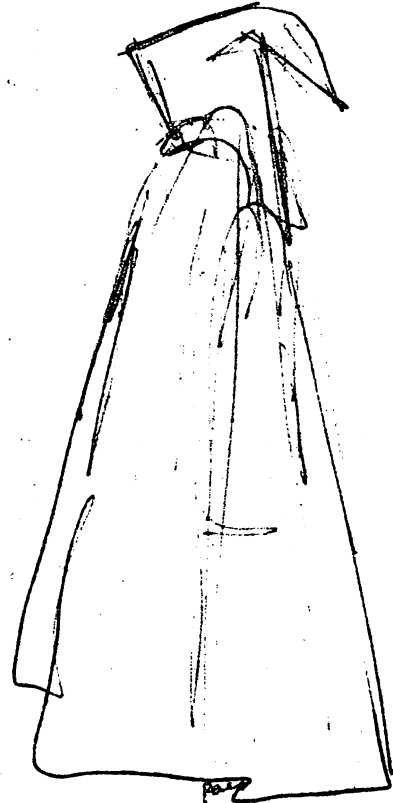
C.S. Lewis is probably the best known example of a reader and writer of science fiction who had no interest in science in itself, but was rather fascinated by stfnal imagery and used it to write fiction which was a kind of jubilatio to God. He thought he was thereby turning sf to its proper use:

Why should I leave this green-
floored cell,
Roofed with blue air, in
which we dwell,
Unless, outside its guarded
gates,
Long, long desired, the
Unearthly waits?

("An Expostulation/ Against too many writers of science fiction). For Lewis the Unearthly was a Person, not a mood or a thing. I'd be more inclined to think that he was ingeniously warping the nature of sf so as to use it to serve meanings other than those which are native to the field.

Of course, it works both ways. A humanist can find in religious symbols the best symbols he needs to portray human concerns. James Blish wrote A Case of Conscience and Doctor Mirabilis from such a point of view -- although I only know that from outside sources, and can't tell it from the stories themselves. Even the most God-centered writer must express himself in human terms, and the literary results of a believer's and a non-believer's use of religious symbols are frequently much the same -- to the confusion of those readers (probably all of us, at one time or another) who want to know if what they're reading is a confirmation or a subversion of their own beliefs.

What religious sf there is (including both the humanistic and devout types of religious sf) has mostly been Christian, because in most of the countries where sf is written Christianity is the religious background of most of the inhabitants. For that matter, nearly all the religious sf has been Catholic (counting Lewis as an Anglo-Catholic), a fact which is surprising, seeing that most of the writers are not Catholics. I suppose



there are two main reasons for the dominance of Catholic symbolism. One is that Catholicism is a more extreme variety of religious belief than most of the Protestant sects. It is easier for one who is brought up as a Protestant to have an imagination chiefly dominated by secular images. Contrariwise, if the writer is a humanist (of whatever religious background) making use of religious symbols, an intenser, more noticeable set of religious symbols will serve his purpose better than, say, Unitarian ritual will.

Similarly, most Jews who are interested in writing fiction come from the kind of background which is similar to Protestantism and allows the development of a secular imagination. The strictly orthodox Jew, unlike the Catholic, comes from a tradition which views attention to the Holy Books and almost no other activity as a proper way of worshipping God. The Jewish equivalent of "The Juggler of Our Lady" is a story of an illiterate man, unable to read the prayers -- who recited the Hebrew alphabet instead.

Chaim Potok, that rarity among writers -- a devout Orthodox Jew (even ordained a rabbi) who is also a fine writer -- gave a talk in Minneapolis recently, in which he discussed the conflict between the orthodoxy of religion and the speculative nature of fiction (all fiction -- he was not thinking particularly of what we would call Speculative Fiction). He said that in any such conflict it was hopeless to try to stifle the artistic impulse. He did not go on to what seemed to me the inevitable other half of the question -- whether it is then necessary/possible/desireable to stifle the religious belief in such cases. During the question period, someone asked him if it were possible to reconcile the two impulses, if it were possible for a creative and believing Jew to be at peace with himself. Potok answered simply, "No." Which makes it difficult to understand how such an animal as a religious artist can exist at all, except, I suppose, that it's no more paradoxical than a lot of the other conflicting impulses in human beings.

"Son of the Morning" has it a little easier. The question of the truth of Reb Elya's religious beliefs is irrelevant, and there is no chance for any of the cultures involved to offer each other's adherents the temptation to apostasy. What is important is the goodness of the main characters -- Prandra and Khreng, Espinoza, Reb Elya -- and the fact that, despite their different backgrounds, they can, to a certain extent, come to understand and even love each other.

An irony for the reader is the fact that the cat-people, Prandra and Khreng, are the point-of-view characters. The story opens with the reader seeing through their eyes, and most

of the story is told that way. Espinoza, the human-brain-in-a-bottle, is part of their world, and, theoretically, he could have been used as the POV character (although it would have been difficult to use him that way, because he knows too much -- it's handy to have POV characters who need things explained to them which the reader will need explained). But the choice of the characters who are literally aliens as the reader's eyes emphasizes the seeming-alien quality of Reb Elya's world of the nineteenth century shtetl. The story gives us an insight into our own history by way of reminding us just how much we normally lack in understanding humans who are only a little way removed from us in space, and time, and thought.

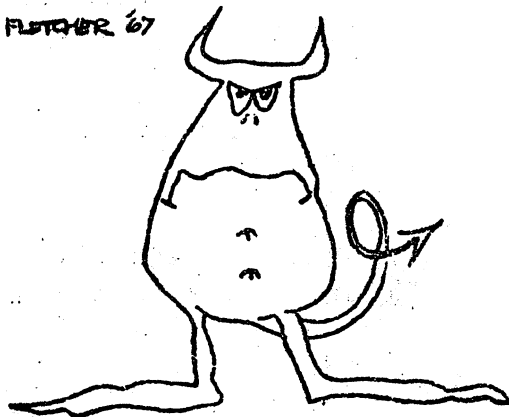
The clash of the two ways of thinking is pointed up by what I suspect is a deliberate parody of Isaac Bashevis Singer's stories. It's a pity, in a way, because most readers of F&SF probably don't know Singer's books, and will be unaware of the parody. On the other hand, anyone who is seriously interested in fantasy ought to be told about Singer, and if any readers try to follow up Gotlieb's literary tradition and discover Singer, that's all to the good.

"Son of the Morning," seen from Reb Elya's viewpoint, has precisely the plot of a typical Singer story: the shtetl in Poland, not far from Lublin (c.f. Singer's The Magician of Lublin), invaded by demons who masquerade in holy shapes and tempt the villagers to unholy acts, the power of simple goodness to resist temptation partly, but only partly.... Even Espinoza's name recalls the characters in Singer stories (e.g., "The Spinoza of Market Street") who are fascinated by the great philosopher who was an apostate Jew.

In a Singer story, such a plot would most often be an investigation of the evil that lies in every human soul. "Son of the Morning" does not go so deeply into human psychology, being a discussion of the growth of understanding rather than of the nature of evil.

It's curious that most of the few sf stories which involved Jews have been written by Christians from a Christian viewpoint (e.g., Tony Boucher's "Balaam" and "The Quest for Saint Aquin," or Walter Miller's

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Canticle for Leibowitz. Even Bob Silverberg adopted the trick of using a Jew as contrasting commentator in a story where the main characters are (of course) Catholic, in "Good News From the Vatican." Avram Davidson's first story printed was "The Golem," but most of his stories since then have been set in Otherworlds, where religions are more or less irrelevant. The hero of Asimov's Pebble in the Sky is Jewish, but the fact is never made explicit, and it plays no direct part in the story (although critics who go in for detecting typically Jewish themes might argue that what he brings to that future is menschlichkeit, the responsibility of people to and for one another). But the tailor's Jewishness is so understated that I never even noticed it when I was in high school and reading it for the first time. (For that matter, I didn't notice the Christianity in C.S. Lewis's The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe, which I read at about the same time. But I think my failure to see a Jewish background in Pebble was about as much Asimov's understatement as it was my ignorance.)

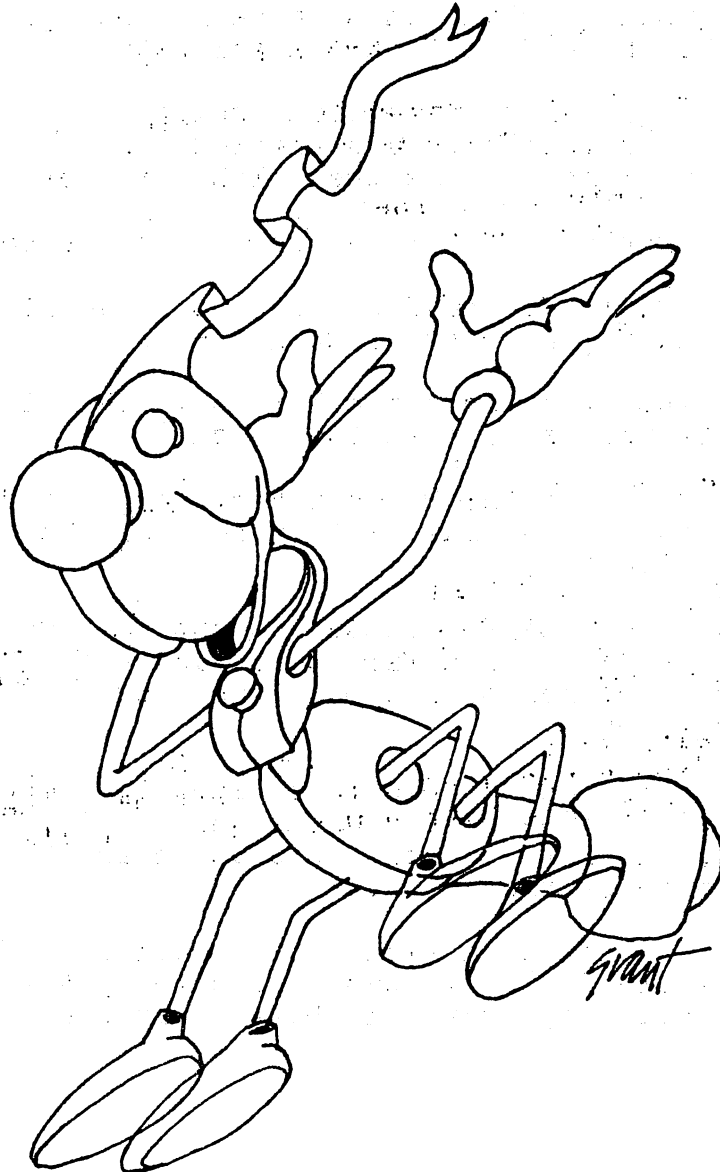
The love of science fiction probably starts out for most of us, partly, as a desire to get away from our own backgrounds, our own worlds. But any art, practised seriously, leads the artist into his own world, his own background. For the audience, there is a kind of wonder in discovering that someone else's background is relevant to theirs, where the two backgrounds differ, as they mostly do. But where the backgrounds are partly the same, there is also a kind of wonder in finding out that that background has meaning to others.

Afterthoughts

I ought to mention last year's The Tsaddik of the Seven Wonders by Isidore Haiblum (Ballantine Books 02495). It's not a story with any kind of depth to it -- in fact, it's not much more than a long vaudeville turn with a plot attached -- but it's a very good vaudeville turn, and hilarious. I was particularly fond of the stone: "'Being a stone,' the stone said, 'isn't as bad as some objects might expect. Being a stone, in fact, has its many rewards, its advantages. While a stone's existence is, in truth, somewhat circumscribed, there is surely the deep, permanent satisfaction of stoniness to consider'."

And, incidentally, Prandra and Khreng add yet another to the list of memorable cats in sf -- Boucher's Bast ("Conquest"), Heinlein's Petronius the Arbiter, otherwise known as Pete (Door Into Summer), Leiber's Gummitch ("Space-Time for Springers"), the Anderson felinoid in the trader stories (just because I can't remember her name doesn't mean she isn't

memorable), etc. Even Clifford Simak, the one sf writer whose name is really associated with dogs, came up with his own version of the Hungry Tiger of Oz, a bio-mech sabertooth named Sylvester, in The Goblin Reservation. Strange, how sf writers are drawn to cats. Perhaps it's a hold-over from the field's origins in fantasy and the obvious uncanniness of cats. They are perhaps even more common in fantasy than they are in sf -- Oz has Toto, a dog, but also has the Cowardly Lion, the Hungry Tiger, Eureka the pink cat, and Bungle the glass cat; Alice has Dinah, etc.



THE SAGA OF OLAF LOUDSNORE

Chapter CXLIX
by John Boardman

In the spring of the year Sigfus Sigfusson outfitted a ship and sailed to England. When he reached Kent, he learned that the brothers Hengist and Horsa planned to campaign against the Welsh. In expectation of rich spoils, Sigfus enlisted himself and his men under Horsa's command.

When the fleet of Horsa landed at Thanet, the Welsh would not give them battle, but retreated inland. Horsa was unwilling to campaign inland on strange ground against the horsemen of the Welsh, and he took counsel with his captains.

"Our Saxons understand ships, and can fight on foot, but against horsemen we are untried," said Horsa. "How then can we travel as fast as the Welsh, or meet them when they charge?"

"Why can we not get horses for ourselves?" asked Sigfus.

"Would you have us cease our campaign and sail to Saxland for horses?" returned Horsa.

"No, for there are horses in this land. We can steal them, and travel as fast as the Welsh."

"So have the Welsh taken thought," replied Horsa angrily, "for they have taken with them every horse, leaving none for your plan."

"Aye," Sigfus replied, "but near Cantvarborg my men have found an abandoned farmstead, and with it a hundred asses. Mount your men on ass-back, and you may meet the Welsh on even terms."

Horsa did as Sigfus advised, and mounted the Saxons upon ass-back. The next day the Welsh gave battle. The fight was even, until the Saxons rode up on ass-back and scattered the horsemen of the Welsh.

As the Welsh fled, Horsa called to Sigfus on the battlefield, "Yours was a good rede, Northman. Henceforth men shall say that this battle was won by Horsa's asses."

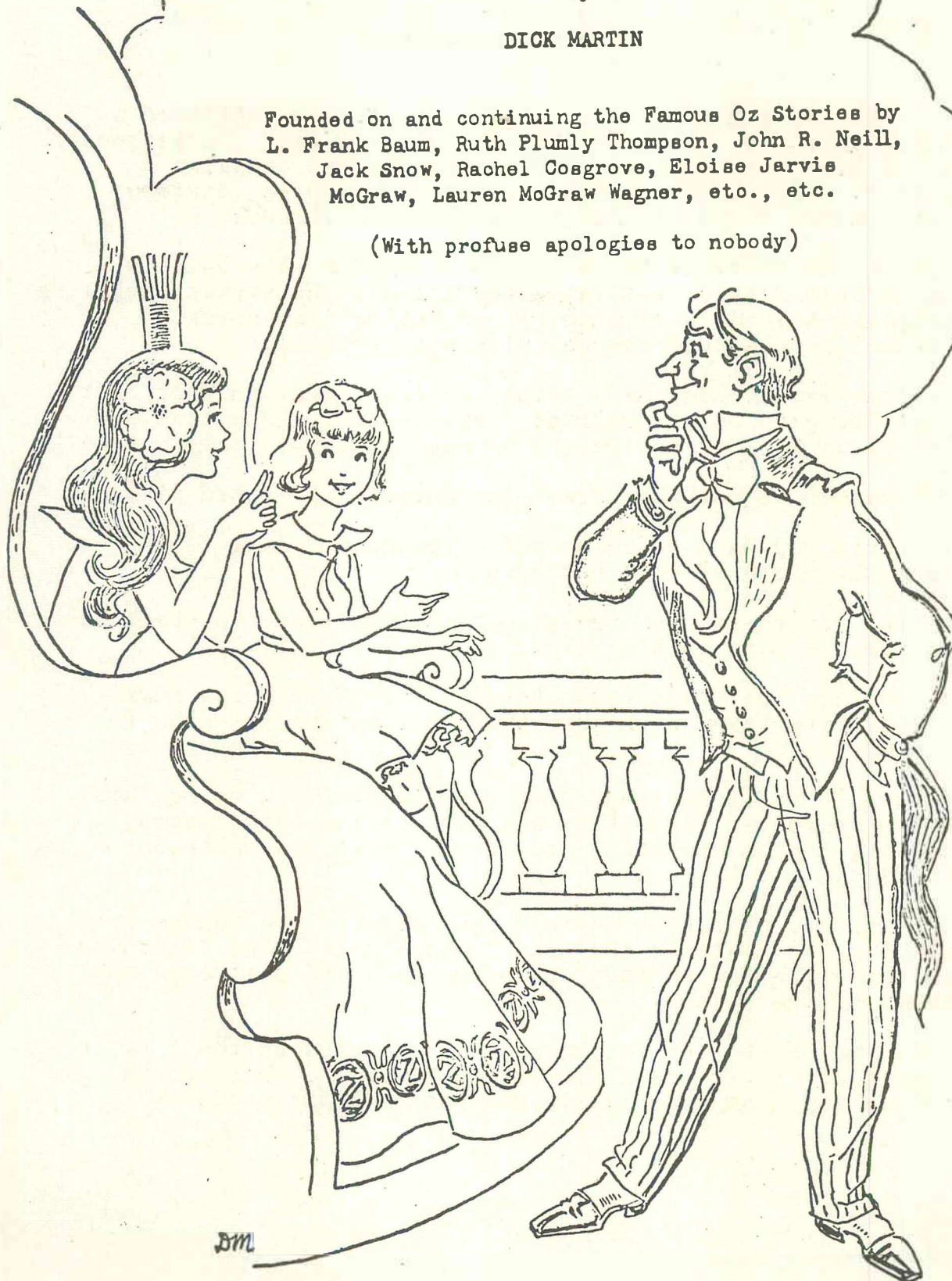
Oz ad Nauseam

By

DICK MARTIN

Founded on and continuing the Famous Oz Stories by
L. Frank Baum, Ruth Plumly Thompson, John R. Neill,
Jack Snow, Rachel Cosgrove, Eloise Jarvis
McGraw, Lauren McGraw Wagner, etc., etc.

(With profuse apologies to nobody)



"Oh, Hell!" said Dorothy, viciously stubbing out her cigarette in an emerald ash-tray.

"That is no way for a Princess of Oz to talk, dear," Ozma rebuked gently.

The two girls were enjoying a heart-to-heart talk, as girls will, in the privacy of Ozma's lovely patio garden in the Royal Palace of Oz.

"You must remember," Ozma went on, "we all have positions to maintain, irksome as they may be."

"I b'lieve p'raps that's just what's so aggr'vating," Dorothy sighed. "How can we poss'ibly be 'spected to keep it up all the time?"

Ozma smiled: "Here you are, a great big grown-up girl of seventy-three, still affecting that 'cute' diction. Apparently Professor Wogglebug's Elocution Pills haven't been doing you much good."

"Well, they make me kinda dizzy. I don't like to take them," complained the little Kansas girl.

"They wouldn't make you so dizzy, if you would swallow them with water instead of martinis," Ozma returned, with some tartness. "And that's another thing I've wanted to talk to you about, dear. Your Aunt Em and Uncle Henry are just as concerned as I am, about your drinking."

Tears appeared in the little girl's blue eyes, and Ozma kissed her cheek.

"I'm sorry, darling," she said. "I don't mean to be an old crosspatch. Forgive me."

Dorothy smiled and wiped her tears away with a gossamer handkerchief of spun emeralds. She lit another cigarette, and Ozma continued:

"You see, dear, we've become Images. We're terribly important to Thousands of American Children. And we can't just say 'To Hell with Thousands of American Children,' because they're important to us, too! We owe it to them to continue being the simple, good, unaffected people we really are." Ozma took another sip of her martini and frowned. "Jellia Jamb is certainly getting careless -- there's much too much vermouth in this."

"I think it's the Wizard's Oz-gin," declared Dorothy. "Unlike the 'ported stuff -- " ("Imported, dear," Ozma interpolated.) " -- it hasn't much kick. That's why the vermouth comes through so strong. Honestly! Wizzy and his Oz-gin experiments -- he's got every bathtub in the Palace full of them!"

The garden echoed with the girls' silvery, tinkling laughter.

"Well, well! What's all this?" boomed a jovial voice. The merry, kindly, twinkling-eyed face of the wonderful Wizard of Oz appeared in the bower, framed in dangling sprays of roses. Jellia Jamb's face appeared alongside it.

"Jellia, my girl," he said, "I'm afraid we've been maligned!" He gave her a wink and a friendly slap, and the little maid ran off, giggling delightedly.

The trio became serious.

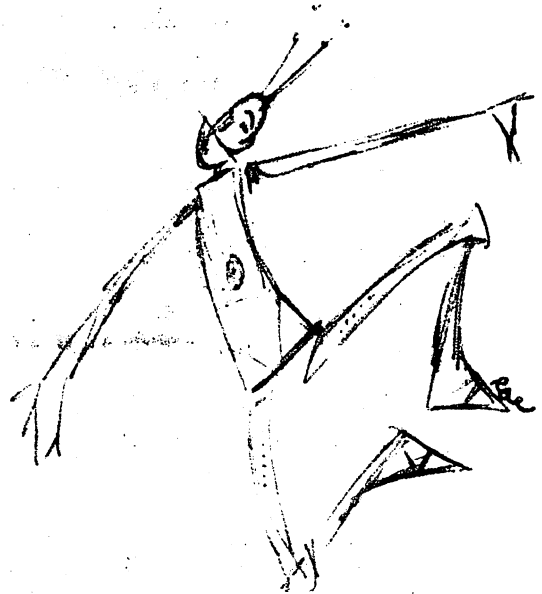
"I guess Ozma's right," Dorothy sighed. "If all those Thousands of American Children want to 'den'fy with us -- " ("Identify, dear," said Ozma.) " -- we've got to live up to it. Still, it would be nice if we could quit being 'quaint.' I mean, have tel'phones, and auto'biles, and such, like they do."

"Be sensible, darling," said Ozma. "Can you picture yourself in a Mercedes-Benz or a Jaguar, on our bumpy old Yellow Brick Roads? Of course not! The old Sawhorse-powered Red Wagon is what they want, anyway!"

"And don't forget, my dear," put in the Wizard, "my famous Wishing Pills can take you anywhere you want to go, or get you anything you want to have!"

"Pills, pills, pills," sighed Dorothy.

"Of course!" exclaimed Ozma triumphantly. "Pills, pills, pills! Pills for everything -- just like America!"



"But we don't need pills for everything!" Dorothy objected.

"Certainly not!" smiled Ozma. "I've seen you making eyes at that nice young Munchkin boy in Professor Wogglebug's geozify class. That's Nature's Magic."

"But I'm a mortal, and he's a fairy," said Dorothy, blushing prettily. "But not that kind of fairy, I mean!" she added anxiously.

Ozma's silvery laughter tinkled. (Or, if you prefer, her tinkling laughter silvered.)

"Of course not!" Ozma said. "And so, I have invited him to dine with us this evening. I've placed him next to you at the table. Make the most of it -- but be discreet, Dorothy dear."

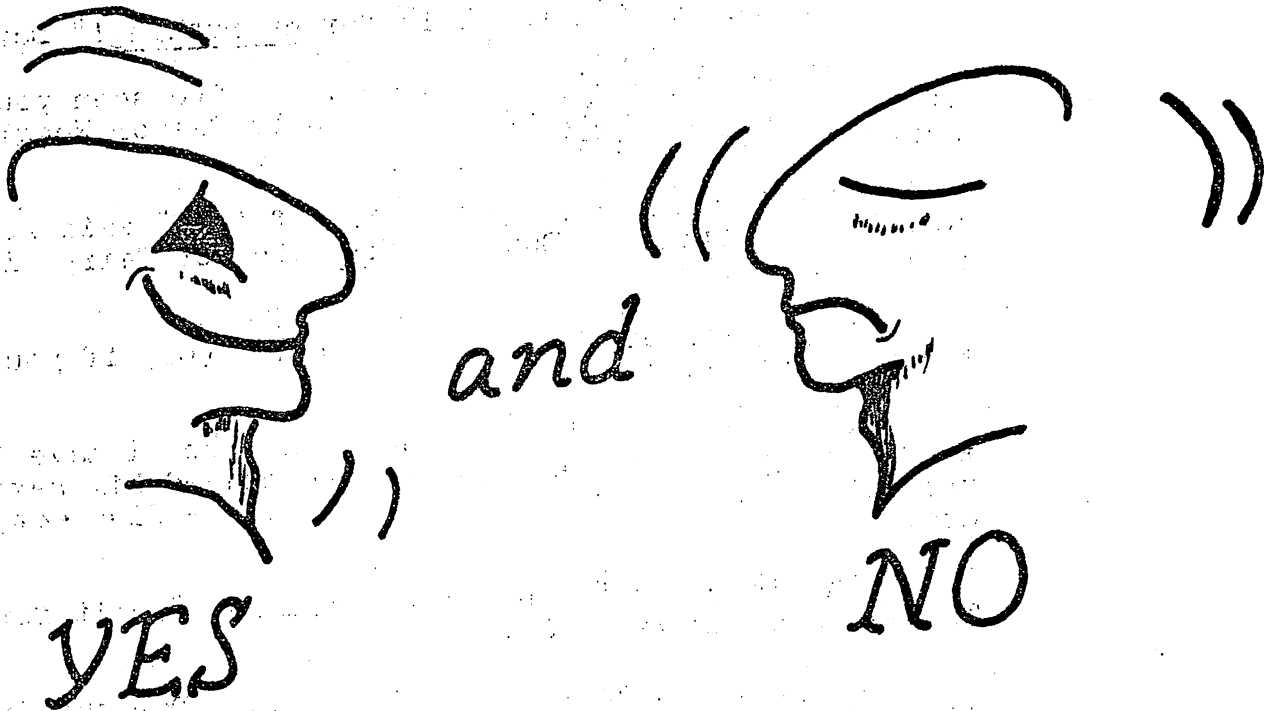
"That's right," laughed the Wizard, "don't forget those Thousands of American Children!"

They all joined in a hearty laugh. Dorothy finished off her martini, and threw the olive to her little dog, Toto (whose silvery, tinkling bark added to the general merriment).

The two girls rose -- a trifle unsteadily -- and linked arms.

"And now," said Ozma, "if the Wizard will excuse us, we must retire and dress for dinner. Glinda the Good, the Scarecrow, the Tin Woodman, and all the rest of our dear, tired old friends will be here this evening."





Letters

from Harry Warner, 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown Maryland, 21740

I'm sorry I didn't see much of you at Boston. I believe I caught a distant glimpse or two, but I don't remember any exchange of words. But every time someone writes an article about the Noreascon, I discover that someone else attended whom I wanted to see and didn't. I also wish that I could have done some sightseeing before or after the con, as you did. As things turned out, all I got to see outside the hotel with any real significance was Fenway Park, where I snuck away one afternoon to see a baseball game, and the Fens, which reminded me of my back yard. I was determined to take time to visit the scene of the Great Molasses Catastrophe, but I left at home my data on that disaster and couldn't find the address listed in any of the tourist information that was handy around the hotel.

But one thing disturbed me greatly. I ate most meals outside the hotel, and usually at least one family of tourists was near me. I would hear them talking about visits to northern Massachusetts and Providence, and I would start to wonder if I'd patronized a secret den of cultists whose

activities Lovecraft had described in fictional guise. It had never occurred to me that people go to those parts of New England for reasons other than those in the Lovecraft stories.

Maybe Louisa May Alcott didn't really have such a cluttered house. The 1740ish home of Hagerstown's founder is a tourist attraction here that has been jam-packed in just the same way by well-meaning history fans. Old Jonathan Hager couldn't possibly have owned some of the items they'd put in his house, which he occupied before civilization had invaded the western frontier around here to any great extent, and he couldn't have picked up any object without knocking over three others if he'd kept the house filled up like that. Sponsors of historic houses seem to feel that the public should get their money's worth in the form of old things to look at.

Last night I saw a movie that I'd assumed would never come within my reach, the D.W. Griffith/W.C. Fields Sally of the Sawdust, and tonight I'm writing comments on a new John Berry article, so there's no telling what further prodigies the new year may overwhelm me with. It's interesting to see how touches of the old John Berry emerge fleetingly, at points like the description of his first effort to lift his haversack, amid the generally more serious and objective narration he now creates. Ten years ago, I would have gone leafing through some reference books, attempting to discover if any of Hadrian's Wall really does exist, but I've grown old enough to trust the older John Berry and believe that most of the events described really did happen.

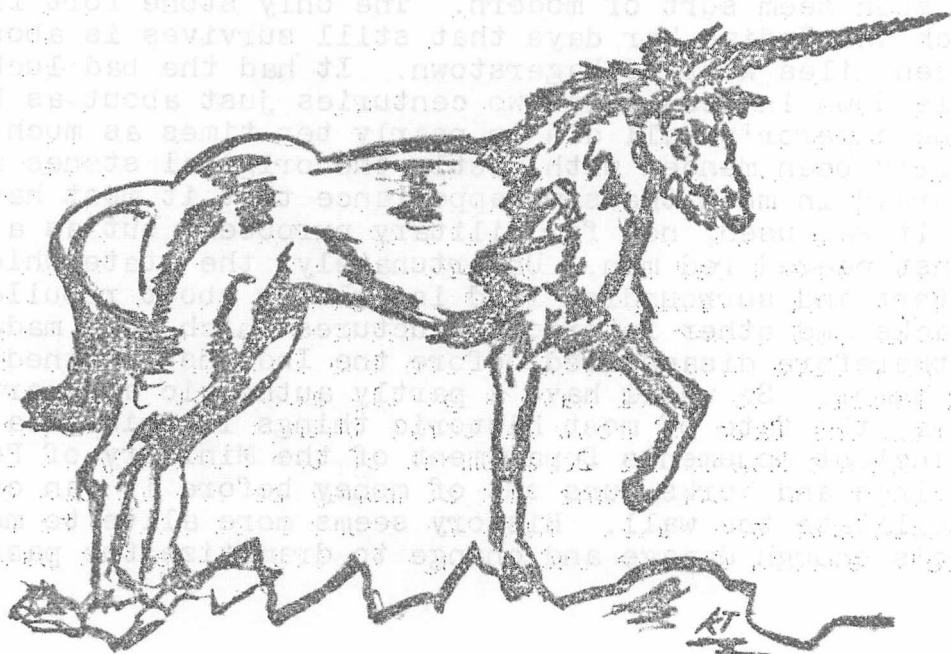
Of course, the thought of an antiquity just being unearthed after seventeen centuries or so makes the only comparable thing I've seen seem sort of modern. The only stone fort from the French and Indian War days that still survives is about fifteen miles west of Hagerstown. It had the bad luck to tumble down in less than two centuries just about as badly as the emperor's wall did in nearly ten times as much time. But it's been mended with mostly the original stones and preserved in much the same appearance that it must have had when it was used, not for military purposes, but as a refuge against peeved red men. Unfortunately, the state which owns the fort and surrounding land is talking about rebuilding the barracks and other interior structures which were made of wood and therefore disappeared before the Indians regained their good humor. So we'll have a partly authentic and partly fake shrine, the fate of most historic things in this area. I hope the Ancient Monuments Department of the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works runs out of money before it can completely rehabilitate the wall. History seems more alive to me if there's enough damage and change to dramatize the passage of time.

But I feel guilty when I look at many historic things. A thousand years from now, will the world regard whatever may be left of the Berlin Wall as we do Hadrian's Wall? Maybe those wild Scots suffered centuries of barbarism and privation because the wall kept them from whatever benefits of civilization the Romans brought to the south of the structure, or maybe the British Isles would have had a happier history if the Scots had conquered the whole island, for the Scots might not have been as terrible and as uncivilized as reputed. Maybe the French and Indian War fort is an ominous symbol of how inhumane the white men were to the Indians rather than a comforting reminder of how white men and women escaped with their scalps. I've never been very fond of the Romans who have the same reputation in history today that Nazi Germany tried to attain in the 20th century.

Anyway, John reminded me that I own a Roman coin. A pre-fandom correspondent in England sent it to me. All of a sudden I want to see it again, and I haven't the faintest idea where it may be. Maybe this article will inspire me to go hunting for it, and the hunt will force me to go through four decades' clutter, and the clutter will get straightened out in the process. If such a wonderful thing happens, I'll send the coin to John, out of gratitude.

from Redd Boggs, PO Box 1111, Berkeley California 94701

"Roman in the Gloaming" was pleasant, if not very exciting, and it's certainly good to see something by the Irish John Berry



again. I confess that I was momentarily nonplussed by the mention in the prefatory remarks of John Berry's 21-year-old son, since -- as my mind insisted at first -- John Berry himself must be not much older than 21.

You say you went to see Alcott House instead of Emerson's House or Walden Pond because you "like Alcott's books." Since you are -- as you point out -- a graduate student in English, I take it you mean Bronson Alcott?

((Possibly yes, if I were in philosophy, education, or maybe even American Studies. But in English, no. Even from the American Studies standpoint, LMA may be more important than her father. I realized recently, talking about women's liberation with E.A. Arnason, that LMA had considerable influence on me in childhood, setting the pattern of my thoughts to the idea that women deaden a large part of themselves by aiming at marriage alone and that, while the combination of marriage and a career is probably preferable to either alone, a career alone is likely to be more satisfying than marriage alone. As an adult, I'm not so sure about that last -- the two alone may be equally unsatisfying.))

Mention in the letter column of Nan Braude's "Marjorie Daw" item last issue reminds me to mention that it seemed to skirt libel a bit dangerously in the matter of Clark Kerr, whose reality Harry Warner doubts here. I trust Kerr didn't see a copy of it. However, I was impressed by the fact that, *mirabile dictu*, somebody in this day and age actually knows about Aldrich's short story (though I think the name was slightly misspelled by Braude).

from Mary Schaub, c/o C.S. Schaub, Box 218, Apex North Carolina 27502

No 9 came the last day of the year, and I did want to tell you how much I enjoyed John Berry's excellent narrative of his trip along Hadrian's Wall. Rosemary Sutcliff has set several novels at or near the wall, and I've seen many contemporary photos of it, so I was glad to see a walking description of it -- well written, too. The latest installment of the gripping Saga of Olaf Loudsnore was another highlight of the issue -- I can sympathize with Sigfus for his intemperate action; them sagas do go on and on.

from Norman Hochberg, 76-44 167 Street, Flushing New York 11366

Picking up No 9 (for some odd reason I always read it as No. 9, and spend a few wasted seconds searching for the fanzine name), I noticed that you've gone mimeo. Okay, I said to myself, No should be a lot easier to read; let's see if Ruth has changed the style of the zine.

Luckily, you haven't.

No 9 is, like all past No's that I've seen, relaxed.

As a neo (Noreascon was worldcon #1 for me) I still find it difficult to understand why many fans prefer to spend more time outside of the con hotel than in it. Ignoring the program I can see; ignoring the con I cannot.

Your mimeo machine did not do justice to Rae Ladore's fine illo. The illo I dug the most was Bonnie Bergstrom's thing. If it had been a little bigger or better integrated into the page it would have been superb.

Boardman's thing comes as close to being a feghoot as a non-feghoot can be. I kept on expecting a punchline. An interesting, if not particularly useful piece. It reminds me of some of the horror stories I keep on getting in regard to one particular story in Xrymph 2 (my own zine) where the first two hundred words were a condensed (but somewhat lively) genealogical table. I don't think I'll ever hear the end of this one.

from Tom Collins, Arctic Village, Alaska 99722

Your con report was different from the kind of trip I had, in that you not only went sightseeing (I only visited some friends and went to Harvard Square briefly) but even seem to have attended some of the program. All I attended was the costume ball and the Heyer tea. No, I did attend the Dum Dum of the Burroughs Bibliophiles, with J. Weismuller as GoH. The rest was parties and gallons of Cuba libres with Meade Frierson and Penny, Rafe Lafferty, Don Markstein, and some others.

John Berry's piece did make me long for another visit to England. Last time, about five years ago, I hit London a few



weeks, and one quick trip to Cambridge. Perhaps if I go again I'll motor all over. There is a book about taking a boat down the Thames from the source, and I always rather wanted to follow in their...wake...but perhaps that is simply one dream that will have to be unfulfilled. I don't know much about boats, and can't say they interest me greatly. The closest I ever got to being enthusiastic about one might be after reading Kenneth Grahame's description of mucking about in boats, a mere cluster of lines early in Wind in the Willows.

And having managed (albeit by accident) to mention Grahame, I must ask if you have ever read Golden Age and Dream Days? Those two books are childhood stories for adults, and quite the most charming and delightful examples of writing about youth in the entire English language. They are both available in a single Signet edition, and overwhelmingly pleasant, full of little charms tucked away where they will be come upon where least expected.

I haven't been to Louisa Alcott's house, but I have visited the one Kate Douglas Wiggin lived in, in Maine. Of course it's not open to the public, but it surely is a fine, large house, white with green roof and all in the style popular in that area, and at least two stories. It's the kind of place you would almost expect for someone who wrote Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm. They don't seem to make children's books the way they used to. Now they're all simple minded fluff. Although I confess to liking Eager and Brooks and Lofting and DeBois and Lawson, all of whom (except Lofting) are contemporary. I think I'd like to run a series of articles on children's authors, if I could do the research, which I obviously can't up here.

Everything out here in the bush is screwed up, from fuel to mail to foodstamps, welfare, unemployment. You name it, it's screwed. Only life itself, which is oddly idyllic, but then I don't have to do much physical labor myself, which is a blessing.

from Donn Brazier, 1455 Fawnvalley, St. Louis Missouri 63131

Sounds like you've had experience with drama. I especially liked the lighting man who was hired away by Mattell. I guess, because I think it would be really fun to apply some of my science know-how to making toys. Just a kid at heart. Or is it that, following the Principle of Peter, I no longer have much to do with science, having been forced into administration.

The Death Does Not Release You Dept. & an Apology

My father is now the editor of a medical journal, Minnesota Medicine, and I wrote him a letter-to-the-editor on the subject of an article on Osmolality (of which I know nothing):

Dear Editor:

I was pleased to find in the February, 1972, Minnesota Medicine a reference to a charming fantasy. Dr. Charles Jarvis introduces his article "Osmolality" by saying, "Some years ago H.L. Gold wrote a little story about a man who got into trouble with the elves of a certain lake. As punishment the elves decreed that water would actively stay away from him. Since he was at the lake primarily to fish, but wanted also to bathe and drink, the results of the decree proved frustrating to the hero and amusing to the reader."

The story is "Trouble With Water" by L.E. Gold (Dr. Jarvis' memory misled him slightly -- H.L. Gold is a younger writer). It appeared in the late John W. Campbell's magazine, Unknown Worlds, and was reprinted in the anthology From Unknown Worlds (New York, 1948).

As the slogan of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society puts it, "Death does not release you" (from membership). Dr. Jarvis has long since ceased to be active as a fan of fantasy-literature, but he was once well known in the field and clearly remains fond of it. Redd Boggs, in his article on the growth of Minnesota science fiction fandom ("Giants in Those Days," Part I, which I printed in Neolithic 19, October 1961) described the young Charles W. Jarvis, "who had become one of the most prolific and talked-about letterhacks in 'Brass Tacks' ((the letter column of Astounding Science Fiction, Unknown World's older and more successful sister magazine)). Jarvis dabbled briefly in fandom -- he mentioned receiving news about Grey Lensman from the fan magazines in a letter published October 1939 -- and in the thirties attended a number of meetings of the Minneapolis Fantasy Society. One of the few old-time fans residing in this area, Jarvis told me in March 1961 that he gave up reading Science Fiction years ago, but he mentioned some of the old sf classics with great nostalgia."

Sincerely,
Ruth Berman

The letter appeared in the March issue, and Dr. Jarvis soon after sent in a note with a xerox of the title-page of his copy of From Unknown Worlds, proving that his memory had not misled him, and the author was indeed H.L. Gold. So I'm taking the opportunity now to apologize to him. What had misled me was that my copy of the anthology did list the author as L.E. Gold -- so far as I know, the English edition (which I have) and the American edition are the same in all other respects, so I can't figure out why they made the change in the author's byline. Possibly to avoid confusion with Horace Gold (thereby confusing me and leading to the reference to a younger writer in my letter)?

Ad-Note

Walt Lee requests that fanzines print copies of this announcement:

Reference Guide to Fantastic Films. The first work in what will be a comprehensive, multi-volume study of fantastic films has been completed and is now being typed for publication. The REFERENCE GUIDE will cover every fantastic film any mention of which has been discovered in 20 years of intensive research with the assistance of major libraries across the continent and experts around the world.

Approximately 20,000 film listings from some 50 countries over 75 years are included. Typically, the listings give alternate titles (cross-referenced), production and release data, length, production credits, cast, fantasy-content, references to source material, origin of story, sequels, etc. The complete work runs some 1900 pages in rough draft, but will be considerably more compact in published form.

Though fantastic films make up only a very small fraction of total film production, their importance to film history, technique, economics, and art is impressive. Besides devotees to the fantastic film genre, the Reference Guide will be of interest to those who collect films, write about them, or are seriously interested in film history.

Orders for the Reference Guide are now being taken. The prepublication price is \$22.50; after publication, the price will be \$28. California residents add 5% sales tax.

Walt Lee
PO Box 66273, LA CA 90066.

I don't know what the publication date is to be, however. Speaking of fantasy in films, Bjo and John Trimble (as secretary and chairman) announce that there will be a Fantasy Film Fans International first annual Science Fiction and Fantasy Film Convention, PO Box 74866, LA CA 90004. November 24-26, 1972. The registration fee was \$5 until June 3, but I don't know what it is now. Checks are payable to Richard M. Sneary (treasurer). Usual convention events, plus a lot of exhibits and showings of large numbers of fantasy and sf movies and tv shows.

And Some Miniconcomments

The Mnstfs held another Minicon April 7-9, at the reliable Andrews hotel. I came late to it that Friday, as I stayed home long enough to watch a program of "short subjects" on tv which included "The Running Jumping and Standing Still Film," one of two films which are more or less visual Goon Shows. (The other

is "The Case of the Mukkinese Battle Horn," a charming spoof of Scotland Yard stories, with Peter Sellers fouling up in somewhat the way he did later in "The Pink Panther," except that the humor of the earlier film kept shading off into the surreal, as when the gentleman from a silent movie steps into the film.) I was disappointed to find that "The Running etc" did not seem particularly funny to me. There were some moments that had the typical Goon Show style of free-associating incongruity, as when they started playing a tree-stump as you would a phonograph record, except that, the stump not being made to rotate, they revolved around it instead. But for the most part, if there was humor there, it was all going over my head.

At the convention talked with people, at the same time making notes for a speech to give the next day. (The speech was basically a set of truisms, but they were truisms which haven't pointed out much recently, so I thought it was in order to remind people of them: to the effect that, although sf fans and writers sometimes feel hostile towards or suspicious of each other, their common interest in sf makes them natural allies; also that the hostility in sf fandom toward fan fiction is understandable, because fandom exists primarily as a means of expression for fans -- and, for that matter, for pros who find themselves wanting to say things that can't easily be shaped to fit into saleable material -- and not primarily as a running writer's workshop, but that the writer's workshop is an inevitable secondary part of fandom, so that I've come to feel that fan fiction should be greeted with tolerant sorrow instead of with angry sneers, recommending faaan fiction as a way of writing fiction that will have some interest to its readers instead of being simply a request for help.)

On Saturday they showed James Gunn's film of Harlan Ellison talking about writing; afterwards, Gordon Dickson, Clifford Simak and I talked about various topics brought up in that film. Simak attacked Ellison's remarks about littering and ecology as an example of the overly simplified thinking which treats ecology as a problem to be solved by greater personal neatness; I argued that such "cosmetic ecology" was a useful introduction to the wider problem (and I think Dickson took a middle position, pointing out areas of agreement). I took exception to Ellison's praise of Ursula K. LeGuin and other female sf writers for their "alien" viewpoint -- saying that if women and men were truly alien to each other, the process ought to work in reverse, with men seeming alien to women, too. But men don't seem alien, at least not to me, and I doubt that the novels of (say) the Brontës, Jane Austen, and George Eliot would strike a man as having any alien quality. I suspect that the "alien" qualities Ellison finds in women's sf are those inherent in sf by its nature. After the banquet, I gave my speech -- and after that was too tired to stay for the rest of the evening's program, so returned home, staying only long enough to see "The Day the Earth Stood Still," a film I'd often been told (correctly, it turns out) was one of the best sf films ever made.



FLETCHER '67