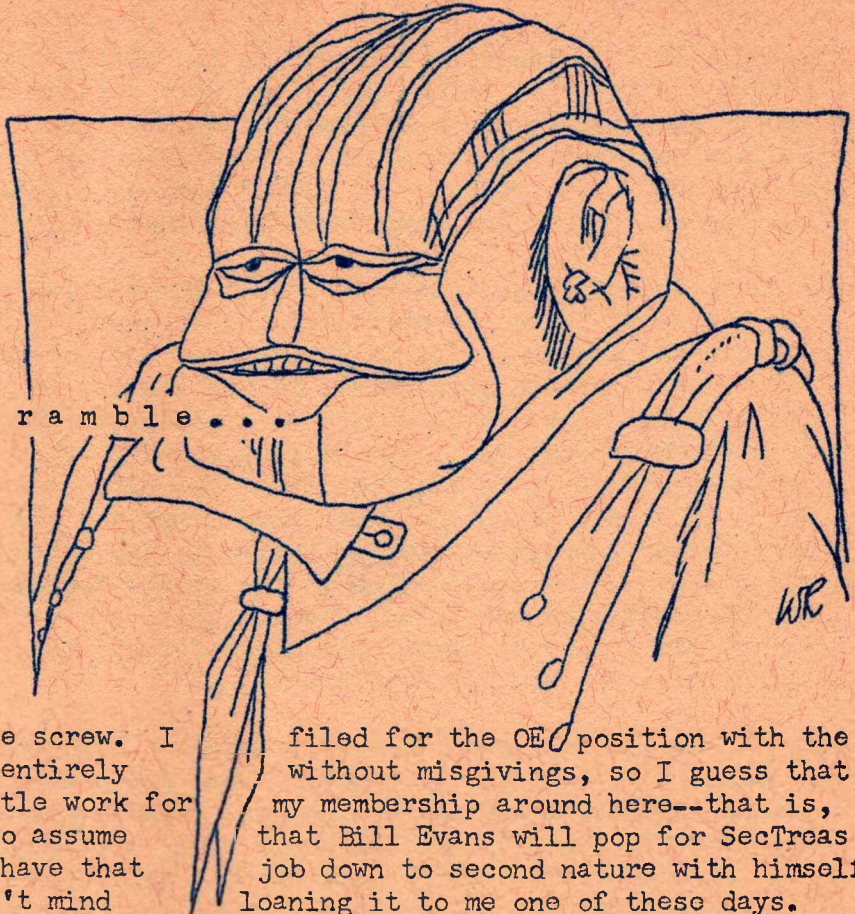


the
rambling
fap 50

fapa 132
august 1970

gregg
calkins

well, didn't he ramble....



Another quarterly turn of the screw. I filed for the OE position with the SecTreas the other day, not entirely without misgivings, so I guess that I'm committed to doing a little work for my membership around here--that is, assuming I'm elected. I also assume that Bill Evans will pop for SecTreas again--he should just about have that job down to second nature with himself by this time. I hope he won't mind loaning it to me one of these days. One of the things that still keeps me active in FAPA is working towards some long-term goals. One of the longest I've held is my ambition to produce 8 pages for each and every quarter of my membership. I'm currently 98 pages behind on that one and it will take at least a few more years to catch up even at my recently higher rate of productivity. A second goal is to hold all four FAPA offices, something accomplished in recent years only by Boggs and Pavlat. And only last week, as luck would have it, I stumbled onto still a third goal if and when the others were accomplished. Only 17 names appear on the current roster that were there that 59th mailing when I joined: Boggs, Bradley, Carr, Cox, Eney, Evans, Hoffman, Moskowitz, Pavlat, Perdue, Rotsler, Silverberg, Sneary, Speer, Warner, Wesson, and a guy who joined the same mailing I did, Bergeron. I plan to outlast all of them. Meanwhile, just to keep things a little more down-to-earth, this election finds me running for the office of OE. I'd appreciate your vote.

1985

I started scouting for a teaching job in the west just the other day. My favorite spot is still Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado, but realism forces me to admit that I have a couple of strikes against me as far as getting a job there is concerned. For one thing, they definitely prefer a PhD, and for another they do not have an opening other than a "maybe Fall 1971" and that's a bit nebulous. I hate to admit to a pessimistic streak, but I think time is running out too rapidly for me to allow myself the luxury of waiting for the long shots to come home.

One of the more chilling recent reminders was a special tv program titled "1985" which some of you may have seen. It was a dramatization of a tv news special set in the year 1985 which was precipitated by a nationwide pollution crisis. The program was carried without commercials and it was obvious that the producers had Orson Welles' "War of the Worlds" on their minds, because the program was fre-

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quently interrupted with messages to the effect that the program was a dramatization and that the things described were not actually happening. Welles, incorrectly gauging the depth of human credulity in his time, apparently did not realize how necessary the disclaimers were even for so uncommon an event as an invasion from space. The producers of "1985" took no chances, but even at that the program they presented was far more terrifying than a Martian invasion.

I don't intend to go into the program in detail--for one thing, if I think too much about it I have trouble sleeping at night, and for another, probably many of you saw the program. Basically it describes the troubles of the USA in the year 1985 when a massive smog crisis in Los Angeles is killing people by thousands. The rush to escape LA precipitates a panic, the President declares a crisis, the tv program expands into a grave plague and garbage problem caused by striking sanitation workers in other parts of the US, a massive power failure on the eastern seaboard caused by unusual heat conditions and air conditioner demands on inadequate power supplies, water pollution in the water sources of most of the nation's major cities, the destruction of the arable farmlands of the midwest by excessive use of pesticides and insecticides...well, you name it, just about all of the bad things man is perpetrating upon himself today were all reaching a climax at the same time. The end was predictable.

As far as I'm concerned, the program was a true story. It only intensified in me feelings I've held for some time. One--get out of the area around ground zero. I hate California anyhow, always have, always will. When the bomb goes off, LA is where it's going to be. It seems to me only prudent to get a little further away from the center of the explosion. But even if that weren't the case, this still isn't "my place"--a place where I feel comfortable and happy. To me that means Utah or Colorado or Arizona. Thirdly, and possibly most important if you allow a little optimism to seep in, I'd like to get into education and try to do some work towards reversing the current trends so that "1985" will not happen in the first place.

That's the long way around, but that is also why you find me looking for some kind of teaching job in the intermountain west at the present time. There are other reasons too, of course, the ability to keep my kids at home an extra four years while going to college not being the least of them, but I could go on for some time in this vein and it's not all that important. I guess the truth of the matter is that I feel I can see the end of the world coming in the not too distant future and I want to both make some sort of an attempt to divert it and otherwise finish out the last days in as much enjoyment as I can find.

AGELLANEOUS

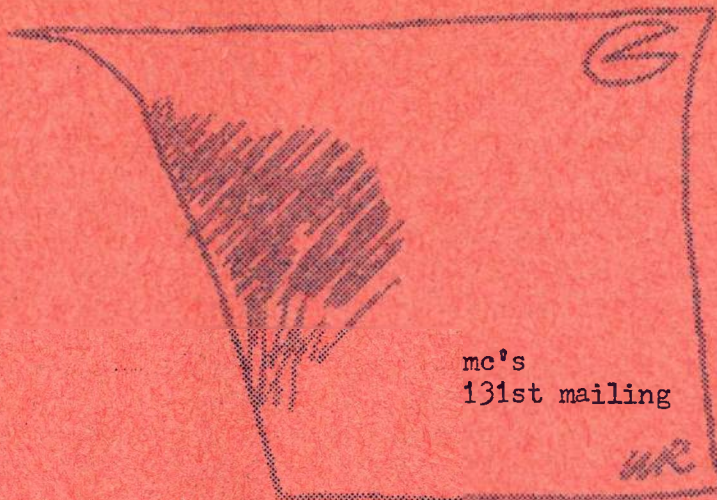
For Dean Grennell, who didn't make the 131st mailing or else this would be further on in the mc's section... I had a shock the other day, dag, when I was driving in an unfamiliar part of Bakersfield and passed by the Druid's Hall. Since I knew that you considered yourself one of the last of the Druids, I wondered what the hell was coming off. Less than a week later I came across the following clipping from the local newspaper:

ORDER OF DRUIDS TO INSTALL NEW OFFICERS The United Ancient Order of Druids will install their new class of officers Friday at their hall, 501 Sumner St. Included will be the Noble Arch, Vice Arch, Conductor, Noble Bard, Noble Ovate, Inside Guard, Outside Guard... Presiding will be the district supervisor for the Druids of California. The 85th annual Druids picnic is planned June 14...

What, Dean? Only the 85th annual picnic? Damned Junipers-come-lately...



VANDY
(Coulsons)



You can still support legalized prostitution on moral grounds, Bob, even if you do not plan to patronize the places yourself--with or without Juanita's approval. I'd certainly have to admit that I'm pretty much in the same position...and that's the whole point, isn't it? That whether or not you patronize a house of prostitution has less to do with the legal aspects than it does with the local sociological relationships. Under those circumstances the legality of the situation becomes specious. While I most likely would not patronize a legal house at the present time, I have to admit that I had the occasion to do a little illegal sociological research when I was a young Marine in Tijuana. I'll have to admit I was suitably impressed...so impressed, in fact, that I've never found occasion for a repeat performance. ++++ I have to admit, Juanita, that a move to Butte, Montana, from West Virginia does include a certain amount of cultural and environmental shock...in some ways I can't blame those people. I also have to admit that I sometimes wonder if those people aren't smarter than I am. I mean, here I am committed to moving all over the country at the demands of my job and somewhat disliking almost all of the places I am required to live. (When it comes to Houston, though, I think I'll have to quit!) I make fairly good money, true, and that's why I do it. But deep down am I happier or better off than those ignorant fools who chose their homes in favor of economic gain? I admit that I don't know the answer to that one... ++++ Basketball is not a popular tv sport--at least from my standpoint--because the fouls interrupt the action too often. I think basketball could be greatly improved by the inclusion of "automatic foul shots." If you are fouled in the act of shooting and you make the basket you get 3 points...if you miss the basket you get 2 points. They already have switched to turning the ball over for offensive fouls, which was a step in the right direction. As to hockey, yes--again, just as far as I'm concerned--the big difficulty is seeing the little puck on the big rink considering the speed with which it moves. Even in the slow motion "instant replays" I have a hard time seeing all of the shots. ++++ We get STAR TREK re-runs every day of the week from 6:30 to 7:30. I watch quite a few of them, and since I didn't catch many of the original shows most of them are new to me. I frankly admit that I enjoy the series, although some shows are much better than others. I still think the idea was damned good!

BETE NOIRE
(Boggs)

"About AD 2971...is the earliest we ought to trust ourselves to visit Texas of our own free will." Skip me for that first trip, please, will you Redd?

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MOONSHINE
(Moffatt)

Without research, I'd be hard pressed to put even a year to my "entry" into fandom, let alone a day or month. It was while I was a high school student and living near Bryce Canyon, Utah, I know that much. I remember the circumstances moderately well. I had been a Burroughs fan for a number of years by that time--since my mother gave me my first Tarzan book as a birthday present on the occasion of my 11th--but I couldn't say just now if I was aware of his Mars and Venus series at the time or not. Anyhow, I next became interested in westerns and this led inevitably to western pulp fiction. While searching for western pulps in a small southern Utah town one weekend I came across a coverless copy of FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES containing "The Adventure of Wyndham Smith" by S. Fowler Wright. (Yielding to temptation, I just did a minimum bit of research...FFM June 1950.) Not only did I like the fiction in FFM, but I shortly discovered listings of things called 'fan-zines' which--some of them--were all about my original hero, Burroughs, and ...well, one thing led to another, notably QUANDRY, and thus it went. At any rate, I guess this pinned down the year and season for my discovery of sf and fandom...summer 1950. I was 15 at the time, between my junior and senior years of high school. Why (gasp!) that was twenty (20--count 'em--20) years ago this summer. :::: Your mention of URANUS brings to mind a private funny that I told last night only to be surprised when somebody else caught the joke. We were playing poker last night, five of us from where I work, all geophysical types, and somehow during the gradually drunken course of the evening I quoted one of my favorite book titles from, I believe, an old issue of HYPHEN. "Or," I said cryptically, "as the rebels fighting for freedom on the 7th planet shoutod, 'Up Uranus!'" I believe I had just lost a close pot at the time, a not untypical move for me, and gave the solo digital victory sign to the winner along with the statement. To something of my surprise he thought it was the funniest thing he had heard all year (winning a close pot does remarkable things for one's sense of humor) and kept laughing about it the rest of the night. Shortly thereafter I went on a slight winning streak of my own and was even observed to smile along with him a time or two. :::: Early on I used to try to correct the spelling of Rick Sneary but that was before I realized one or two things. If you accept every person as a unique individual then all of the things they do are also uniquely part of them. Rick's spelling is very definitely part of his written personality, and to correct his spelling is to change his character to that of someone else entirely. I soon realized it shouldn't be done, and from that time on I presented Sneary as he was wrote. :::: Please, June --your slighting remark about "Daggett--which isn't even a wide spot in the freeway" hits me close to home. I spent eight years of my life living about five miles east of Daggett and I went to school there through the 8th grade. Amboy? When I went to the 9th grade in Barstow, our school bus used to come from Amboy. I think the entire journey was a two hour trip, each way. I used to feel sorry for those poor kids who rode it to the end of the line. :::: The Grand Canyon is a rare and wonderful spot. I highly recommend the North Rim over the South Rim if you ever get the chance. I expect to spend a highly enjoyable vacation there in just a couple of months...

ALTJIRA
(Foyster)

I think it might be fair to characterize all fans as "under-achievers in mundane." Of course, even if you become a solid commercial success as a pro writer that doesn't disqualify you from the title...

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DAMBALLA
(Hansen)

Not that it's a particularly appropriate comment for you, Chuck, but this has been a remarkably fine day for me. There are a number of reasons why, but if I got a choice I'd have to say intoxication. By music. Oh, and beer, to be sure, but since I usually drink beer on weekends that can't be the whole reason. No, several things combined all at once. First, it seems that last weekend I got drunk and disorderly and--though having a fine time, myself--seriously insulted both of my neighbors. Since they are pretty nice guys, really, this wore me down all week to some extent and this weekend I made a point to apologize very sincerely and it seems to have done wonders for my conscience. Next, my wife and I decided to move the kids' rooms around and in the process of moving two rooms full of furniture through one roomful of space, defying the well-known saw about two bodies not being able to occupy the same space at the same time, she decided she wanted to paint one room. I said no, no, nonono, definitely not, and we compromised by me paying for the paint if she didn't make me help. So I spent all afternoon playing my classical records at very high volume, drinking beer, conducting and singing at the top of my lungs while she worked in the back bedroom. It has been a ball. The music is still on, although muted--the rest of the household has gone to bed--and the beer is still flowing as I sit here enjoying my Saturday night. God, what gorgeous music! My wife and kids don't dig classical as much as I do and I rarely find the opportunity for a day such as this has been, uninterrupted and with nothing to do. :::: You unutterably lucky SOB, living in the Rockies while I sweat it out in California! That was a beautiful tribute to Denver. I hear you have quite a smog problem on your hands, though. I don't know if I have mentioned this to FAPA before, but the smog problem is an interesting phenomenon. Like when we moved to Bakersfield last summer and all of our new friends kept saying "gee, I bet you're glad to be out of the LA smog" and when I pointed out how you could hardly see the mountains here only a few miles away they looked askance at me and inevitably said "yes, but it's nothing like it is in LA." Well, they're right, of course, but smog's smog for a' that and I say to hell with it. :::: It's a bit premature for me to talk about retirement at the age of 35, but since you brought the subject up I feel free to comment on it. My own personal feeling (subject to change as the years go by) is that I'd like to retire as soon as humanly possible. My job is okay but nothing spectacular and my non-paying hobbies far outshadow it. I could never occupy all of my time ...no, that's backwards...I could never find enough time to occupy all of my interests even without a job. And, as the beer advertisement says, I am growing to accept the statement that you only go around once in life and it's a damned shame to waste any more of it than you have to at a regular job when life offers so damned much variety. Only the need for money enough to support four kids, a wife, and my present way-of-life keeps my nose at the grindstone. As soon as my pension/social security or whatever is enough to pay my rent and buy my groceries--assuming my kids are all out of the nest--that's when I hang it up. And become a beachcomber or something similar.

FUTURIAN COMMENTATOR
(Tackett)

I have to agree--I find, as a geologist, the idea of the astronauts picking up a few pounds of samples from one or two locations and then attempting to describe the entire history of the moon and possibly the solar system from them a bit unreal. I suspect this concept derives more from the newspapers than the scientists involved, however. As HaWaJr can vouch for, newspaper

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reporters tend to be somewhat unreliable purveyors of fact. :::: Yeah, I dig you on disaster preparations. I don't have any at the moment and it's all due to my all-or-none type of basic philosophy. If you can't do a job right, forget it, is what I seem to say. Really, what it boils down to is that there is no such thing as partial survival or temporary survival in the event of a major disaster. For instance, until I can guarantee myself a water supply there is little sense in laying in a year's supply of food. Or, in the case of nuclear attack, not much use in having either if I haven't a basement or fallout shelter worthy of the name that will shelter me adequately for several weeks when I really need it. And so it goes. MY version of the Great American Survival Dream begins with a home in the Rockies, away from major population concentrations, with my own water supply and a deep, dark basement with a filterable air supply as basic requirements before I go on from there. At the moment I am practicing resignation. :::: We, at least, call the same general area "home." I wonder how many more years I'll be forced to spend in exile?

THE NEBULA AWARDS

(DeVore)

Appreciated. You should be interested in my remarks at the end of the mc's (If I find time to make any...).

NULL-F

(White)

I loved that one line (by Rotsler?): "...(she) had gone there in the company of a fellow art student whose interest in women could be charitably described as minimal." :::: Brace yourself, Ted--one of these days even I fully intend to send you a science fiction story. My determination to write salable sf wavers between two extremes. One end of the spectrum is when I read some pile of crap and know definitely that I can do better than that and the other is when I read some fine bit of creation ("The Left Hand of Darkness" is a recent example) and know equally for certain that I could never approach it. :::: You have a point re Moskowitz. It is true that things should be run by rules, not by personalities, but while I agree with you in principle I have to also note for the record that nothing seems to work that way in Real Life.

HAND IN A WINDOW

(Boggs)

I don't intend to damn with faint praise, Redd, but I truly was caught by one line from your four poems. "Imagine/ I were dying/ in this unfamiliar room..." I like that.

THE NEHWON REVIEW

(Boggs)

A well-written, thoroughly researched, articulate bit of prose. I found it as easy to read as it was incomprehensible to me in terms of the emotions involved. Throughout, I felt the need to cry aloud The Truth As I See It, to defy the hypnotic web of language woven by what must surely be an alien practitioner of the written word. Geezus Cherist, as I said to myself with unbearable simplicity and childish candor, what chance have I to refute so worthy a wordsmith as Redd Boggs while I sit here intoxicated on beer and music? A wiser part of my mind insists that I have equally as poor a chance drunk as sober or sober as drunk, and what business would a sober man have

thrusting a beechwood lance at a windmill anyway, however noble the motive? Beechwood aged, as I am, is no substitute for beechwood lanced, yet still the challenger must be faced, however unworthy the hero. :::: I am not so much a critic as a questioner...for that matter, a pose far more suited to my talents. I take it upon myself to suppose that if I misconstrue the rhetoric of "A Clown on the Moon" the fault lies more within my inadequate understanding than the expression of the writer. Thus I am likely at fault when I interpret the general feeling of the text on pages 6 through 8 to imply that the exploration of space as exemplified by the Apollo program and its spellbound supporting public is somewhat less than pure because it incorporates the profit motive. Certainly the voyages of Columbus were made on a more lofty plane, as were the other adventures of mankind prior to the time immoral capitalistic governments came into being for the sole purpose of milking the working-man from his hard-earned dollar by obfuscatory means. That a project which thus incorporates a profit motive cannot have other motivating values is clearly pointed out on page 7 when astronaut Stafford's remarks regarding team effort and the contributions of 200 million Americans are neatly summarized by the words "Patriots all." Again it could be misunderstanding on my part, but it seems suspiciously like a put-down. As the next paragraph makes clear, once "a mere handful of swindlers and robber barons, who are not patriots but profiteers" become involved in the conquest of space the involvement of others becomes patently negligible. "Those few men who run the aerospace industry" clearly have put the tarbrush to a nation. While the "heretic, non-euclidean thinkers...wonder audibly how we, the taxpayers, are supposed to benefit from keeping ahead in space" the rest of us are supposed to accept blithely the fact that \$134 million squandered on building a national opera house in Washington would help transform this country and the world into a state closer to Utopia much more surely and rapidly than the Apollo project (page 8, paragraph 3). Again this only displays my ignorance, but I find it hard to distinguish between a group of overweight vocalists doing their thing for fun and profit (or am I to believe opera singers do it For Mankind?) and a similar group of hyperactive military and civilian testpilots doing likewise. Utopia, perhaps --but for whom? Since I sincerely doubt that the total number of opera-goers since the Year One can equal the number of televiewers of Moon Landing One, I must reluctantly conclude that the author of THE NEHWON REVIEW is speaking from his vast knowledge of what the people need rather than what the people want. Certainly his remarks anent the Roman circus (page 9, paragraph 2) draw a comparison not to be missed by the serious reader, somehow implying that these hideously expensive games that the masses immorally desire must be distracting public attention from an overlooked holy cause. The fact that holy causes are notoriously overlooked by the public, distraction or no, is apparently not worthy of mention. :::: In the next section, "Bogus Heroes," we are treated to the revelation that astronauts are not really chosen on a just scale for their knowledge and ability. As, for instance, we do Mayors, rock music stars, actors, Senators, FAPA Vice-Presidents, or other writers for amateur publications. And just about anyone else you might mention. Indeed, we are led to believe that they are not only all cleancut and virile but they all have very feminine, attractive wives and well-scrubbed, obedient offspring. I suppose that if beauty is in the eye of the beholder it must inevitably follow that ugliness finds the same place of residence. There is certainly a great deal to be said for the viewpoint that can regard Matulich as a more representative American name than Schweickart, or Mattonen rather than Schirra (pages 10 and 11). Since none of the four names are in my phone book I can only speculate on that other viewpoint. When the conventionality --or supposedly conventionality--of a given name can be interpreted as a sign of respectibility this must certainly make some sort of statement regarding

the eyelevel of the onlooker. Certainly Leroy Cooper and Edwin Aldrin are no more familiar names in the average neighborhood than are Redd Boggs or George (Washington) Carner, yet this would certainly appear shaky grounds to characterize the nameholders as lacking in knowledge and ability. Still, again to my admittedly untrained eye, this appears to be the impression intended by "Bogus Heroes." The ability to detect wrongness in the shaven features of astronauts recently returned from space might smack of paranoia if suggested by anyone less literate than the NEHWON author. :::: "Of the IQs of these heroes, the less said the better" (page 12, paragraph 1) and once said, such a statement is supported by the Live From Space transmissions of Our Heroes, otherwise scientifically determined as "evidence indicates that they are actually blockheads of the Stupid Adonis, or Flash Gordon, type." Scientifically determined, that is, by the NEHWON writer from evidence not readily discernible, certainly not directly by a man who admittedly does not have a television set and seldom listens to the radio (page 12, paragraph 3). One gets the impression that America's space heroes if not actually indistinguishable from the monkeys of earlier flights are at least definitely lesser creatures in the field of intelligent speech than, say, the average science fiction conventioneer or the publisher of amateur publications. The danger that a highly literate man is in when mistaking a lack of articulateness for a low IQ was never more apparent and we should be grateful to the NEHWON critic for highlighting the point. :::: "Cold Realities" is a section which deals in anything but. The cold reality statement that "like many men in science today they probably couldn't care less whether they are building spaceships or concocting super-nerve-poison" only serves to illustrate the author's remoteness from reality. Indeed, the whole section follows the pattern. The idea is advanced that Russian cosmonaut Yuri Gargarin never had to worry about economic security, presumably (although never stated) on the basis that he was always adequately provided for on the basis of need and not notoriety, even though he traveled extensively outside of the USSR at a time when the average Russian citizen --and I have no idea what the average name might be if taken from a Russian phone book opened at random--did not. Still, I suppose that in some respects economic security might be likened to sex in that one seldom worries about it if he has either an excess or absolutely none at all but rather only if one is in that nebulous area in between. But I miss a lot. The fact that "the dominance of the sword-brandishers in the realms of stardust was something we little imagined in the dawn age of science fiction" was one I missed, or at least misunderstood. There were a lot of sword-brandishers in my day, but most of them were put down by clean-cut anglo-saxon types (seldom named Kowalski, Nakagawa or Bonnazola, as I remember) operating under a profit motive directed either solely towards themselves (ah for the days of the independent asteroid miner defying the all-powerful military-industrial complex in the old PLANET STORIES we never read) or some other capitalistic corporation. :::: "To read a report on 'space' (made by a military clod) causes ice to form on the diaphragm of anyone enamored of plain English and uncluttered prose" (page 14, paragraph 6). This, written an author who follows it with "Perusing one of these communiques" in place of a more commonplace statement like "reading a bulletin" is irony indeed. :::: It is not, indeed, a matter of 'right' or 'wrong' as it is a matter of perspective. The writer who complains about "the captialists having nearly polluted this world to extinction" while drinking beer from throw-away bottles and then urinating the byproducts into a sewer leading directly to the ocean before driving a 3500 pound gasoline-burner down to the corner for another six-pack certainly has one point of view. If he holds the real human accomplishments to be Bach's "B Minor" mass and Mozart's string

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quartets, Bruegel's "Land of Cockaigne" and Goya's "Los Acprichos," Shakespeare's "King Lear" and Swift's "Gulliver's Travels," why that is certainly a valid point of view. Another valid point of view might disregard these for the act of the legendary Good Samaritan or the child who reputedly trudged into Boy's Town, Nebraska, one day carrying a smaller child on his back and, when asked, replied "he's not heavy, Father, he's my brother." And yet another point of view might see the importance in supremely troubled times, when man for the first time has the capability of utterly destroying life on his entire planet, of saying "we came in peace for all mankind" at a time and place where the whole world would be able to hear.

DOORWAY
(Benford)

A most enjoyable summary. You can't imagine how much I'd like to duplicate your trip some day, all the more because I know how impossible it would be in my present circumstances. Well, substitute unimagineable for impossible, then, if you insist. :::: It is less than respectable, I know, to take any form of pleasure from the discomfort of others, but the recent troubles in Northern Ireland have something of a pleasureable feeling of revenge for me. Walt Willis is a fan and friend I have long admired, but a long-ago article he wrote in Warhoon contained a put-down on violence and war which he implied could not happen in civilized countries such as his and put me very much on the defensive inasmuch as the US was patently going through a violent phase. (And still is. And for how long?) I always felt that he didn't have that air of superiority coming to him...a feeling not uncommon, I gather, among the other peoples the British have patronized over the years with equal injustice. :::: That reads harsher than I intended, perhaps. British fandom and especially Irish Fandom (capital F) has an unusually high place in my regard, no doubt due to the time at which I joined fandom as much as the high quality of the fans involved. A trip to Northern Ireland is still regarded in my mythology in the same light as the seeking of the holy grail. The inhabitants are, of course, the pantheon of my era of fandom.

BOBOLINGS
OF CABBAGES AND KINGS (AND BABY TURTLES)
(Pavlats)

This is a most unusual night...Boggs must have really stirred me up. I was up last night until almost 3 a.m. playing poker. Got up with the kids around 8 this morning. It is now 4 a.m. and I'm going strong. This despite the fact that I'm working on my third six-pack of beer since the evening bogan, which should make me sleepy. I'm doing better than the local radio station, though. When everybody else conked out I abeicated my right-to-hear-my-records in favor of their right-to-get-their-sleep and since then have had the fm stereo on at low volume. The last half hour it has been running at about 29 1/3 rpm from the sound of it. The engineer must be asleep in the back somewhere... :::: Would you believe it, lately I have not only read some books but I have been reading some--gasp!--science fiction books. This will all be discussed in a later section, though. I think. :::: Bob: do you have egoboo poll results prior to 1949?

SERCON'S BANE
(Francis M. Busby)

Hell with you, you old buzzard, go ahead and increase the activity requirements to twice a year. The way I plan it now, I'm going to have 12 pages a

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year from here to indefinitely, so I should care. Since Redd stirred me up this time I may even go a little over, this mailing. :::: Sympathize with you over the dying organization and Downer talk. We are having a lot of it around work these days. Despite what you may read in the funny papers, the oil industry is in some kind of trouble. These fat profits, supposedly, due to depletion allowances and import quotas are just plain a way of life and that's all... The oil industry makes a lesser rate of return on equity than many another manufacturing industry and that's with all things considered. We can live without depletion allowances and import quotas--Standard of California as an individual company would in fact do better in terms of net profits--but the end result would be higher prices. At any rate, as far as I'm concerned the oil business is not a very healthy one and I'm looking for a way out. I'm also looking for a way to heat my house and run my car on something other than petroleum energy a decade from now, too. The way the government and the public are going at the oil companies these days I would not like to bet on their ability to find enough new oil to furnish the necessary supplies ten years in the future. :::: You know, a con would be a real gasser if held at a resort area in the off season. Like the North Rim of Grand Canyon after the Labor Day weekend? Or, for that matter, even over the Labor Day weekend? :::: :::: (Whups--forgot myself.) You are absolutely correct that as one gets older it becomes less fun driving a car that is uncertain to get from Point A to Point B. Only two things keep me doing it...economic necessity and social pressure. The social pressure is my wife, who has Grown Used to two cars...the economic necessity is the fact that my battered '61 Hillman is paid for and anything else is not. So I live an uncertain life at an age when I am ill-suited for it. As soon as we move to the snow country, though, gives a change--the Hillman for a new Toyota jeep-type four-wheel drive. No ifsandsorbutts. (I could be a lot more certain-sounding if only my other car weren't a '64 Chev wagon with 70,000 miles on it and due for a replacement one of these days...) :::: Go ahead and make suicide illegal if you like. For punishment let me suggest the death penalty. :::: Pretty soon now I am going to go take a drive and watch the sun come up. Long time since the last time I did that. :::: Don't drop out of FAPA, you obnoxious sob! :::: Ditto. I am not a leg man, either--but the miniskirt has done more to make me appreciate legs than any other development in my lifetime. Now I hear the mini is going out. If so, to hell with them--I'm about ready for senescence anyhow and I might as well take early retirement if there's damn all to stay around for... :::: It marks me as one of the Older Generation, I know, but I've always belonged to the "Cops Are Just People In Uniform" school. They are no more stupid, prone to jump to conclusion, impatient or incompetent than any other bunch of people I run into every day, myself included. I always wanted to be one, as a younger man, but frankly, now I'm not sure I could hack it. :::: I am writing you a pc tonight re the pulps, you lazy no-good... :::: Hey, we did hit a couple of bad years as Pres/Veep 'way-back-when, didn't we? I wonder howcome I'm running for OE this time?

SNICKERSNEE
(Silverberg)

Who can worry about you and heffalumps? You have more interesting problems with fires and falling down flights of stairs and mysterious medical ailments that are believable than are likely to get me upset worrying about ridiculous things like Africa and wild critturs. :::: No, Bob, I admit that I have a hard time believing it has really been 16 years since you sold your first story. To me it seems like only last year we were boy fanzine editors together... And Any Day Now I am going to become a big-name author just like...

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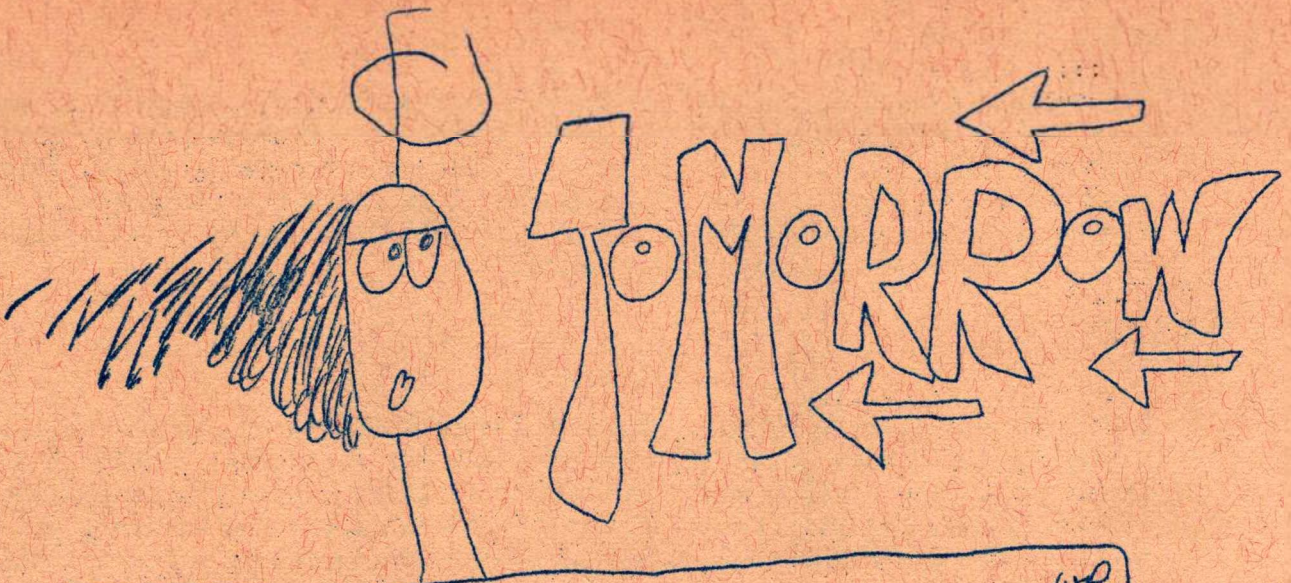
:::: I got a kick out of your comments about Harlan, all the more so because he is undoubtedly the fan I have met most often throughout my life. I have seen him, I believe, at all of my infrequent convention stops, brief though the last few have tended to be, and I remember him distinctly from my first convention, the 1952 Chicon II. Through all these years he strikes me as being the same as always if not More So.

HORIZONS
(Warner)

I guess I didn't make my point about the West Virginia miners who were imported to Butte and, from the point of the local residents, coddled into their jobs. The western ethic demanded that every person who is physically able must work for his living, however undesirable the job at hand, yet these people preferred to go home and sit around on relief while bitching about not having enough money or a good job. In the mining towns of the west --hell, it used to be everywhere not so many years ago--to be on relief was a shameful condition and something to be accepted only when in dire straits. People who chose relief over honest labor were considered pretty low types. :::: You would seriously consider that we should ship parcels via Greyhound Bus? Don't you remember the misadventures of one Walter A. Willis? :::: Harry, you are something of a nut to try to write all of those loc's, anyhow. A nice nut, perhaps, but just the same... Don't you know you are the only fan in the world, ever, who attempted to write a loc for every fanzine received? If you cut back to just 10% loc's, say, you'd be much more typical and have plenty of time for the fanhistory of the fifties.

KIM CHI
(Ellington)

The last item in the mailing. I haven't stayed up the entire night, as I had planned. About 5:30 a.m. my wife came out and asked what the hell I thought I was doing and I said I was going to take some pictures of the sunrise. So we got in the car and drove out to the west a ways and I took some telephoto shots of the sun coming up and a refinery and some power lines and a speeding streamliner from 12 feet away. Then we stopped in at a restaurant for ham and eggs and came back home to bed. I slept from 7 until 10. :::: I wonder what the pictures will look like. They are on either Ektachrome or Kodachrome and will be slides, of course. The sunrises could be dramatic if I exposed them properly. I blew the streamliner shot. I didn't realize how rapidly it was coming and really didn't get the focus and zoom length sharp before the darned train rushed by somewhat closer to me than I had anticipated and scared me half to death. But it's about time, I think, that I started putting some effort into a bit of serious photography. Mostly I'm a candid snapshot and scenic color slide photographer. :::: From the late Charles Lee Riddle? I well remember PEON from the old days and I hadn't heard that he had died. :::: Hey, wasn't that Reader's Service Book Club a good deal while it lasted? I remember that one fondly, too. :::: Once you get used to the idea, Bakersfield is a fairly nice place to live. It could well be just the tremendous improvement gained by moving out of the LA area, though. The heat isn't really all that bad, what with everything being air conditioned and my home is actually far more comfortable in summer here than it was in La Habra. :::: "By your definition, everybody except outright outlaws are part of the establishment." Hey, man, that's exactly what I mean. As long as you ride the busses and deposit your feces in the sewer and drink the community water you are a part of the establishment to some extent. Now the argument boils down to the matter of what extent.



...more ramblings by the fap

WR

This time it's Geis' fault. For one reason or another, I haven't been reading much science fiction these days. When at last ANALOG became too much for me to struggle through each month, that severed my last regular tie with magazine sf. From the glory days when I eagerly awaited each new issue of STARTLING, THRILLING WONDER STORIES, FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES, FANTASTIC NOVELS, ASTOUNDING, GALAXY, and, yes, even PLANET STORIES, it has eventually come to this. And, for some reason, paperback sf seems to have relatively poor distribution in Bakersfield. The one stand I know that segregates sf seems to lean heavily to the Tarzan and Mars and Hobbit books and the Ace doubles. And, to tell the truth, I haven't expended a great deal of effort searching for sf, either.

Recently, however, Geis and SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW (50¢ an issue, any length sub you like, PO Box 3116, Santa Monica, California 90403) have prodded my curiosity as to what has been happening in recent science fiction and all of a sudden last month I found myself ordering a bunch of pb's by mail from another old friend (Richard Witter, F&SF Book Company, PO Box 415, Staten Island, New York 10302). I tried to pick what I thought was the consensus of opinion determining the best sf of the last couple of years. My order:

THE YEAR OF THE QUIET SUN - Tucker
THE PALACE OF ETERNITY - Shaw
THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS - LeGuin
RITE OF PASSAGE - Panshin
THE HEAVEN MAKERS - Herbert
MACROSCOPE - Anthony
NIGHTWINGS - Silverberg
STAND ON ZANZIBAR - Brunner
UP THE LINE - Silverberg
LET THE FIRE FALL - Wilhelm
PHOENIX PRIME - White
ISLE OF THE DEAD - Zelazny
DUNE - Herbert
THE JAGGED ORBIT - Brunner
A WIZARD OF EARTHSEA - LeGuin
TO LIVE AGAIN - Silverberg
SLAUGHTERHOUSE-5 - Vonnegut
BLACK EASTER - Elish
CAMP CONCENTRATION - Disch

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A couple of things come immediately to my mind. One is the large number of titles written by people I tend to consider more fan than pro in my own mind. The other is the prominent role played by Ace, particularly the Ace Specials--and again that returns to another old fan friend of all of ours, Terry Carr. Not only am I suitably impressed, but it makes me feel lazy as hell to be sitting around here not writing science fiction for fun and profit. One of these days...

I haven't gotten too far into my reading yet. I've read the first three titles and I'm working on THE JAGGED ORBIT right now. I enjoyed the Tucker novel, but I thought it full of inconsistencies regarding time travel--I'd sure like to sit down with Bob and ask him some questions. I thought the ending particularly fine, though. THE PALACE OF ETERNITY was enjoyable, particularly the first two thirds, but in this case I thought the last third of the novel was weak. LeGuin's THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS was an excellent novel, by far the best of the three. I finished it with the sense of having read a very good and enjoyable book. It involved me emotionally, something the other books had done to a far lesser extent, although Tucker came closest. Presently, half-way through THE JAGGED ORBIT, I find it a somewhat contradictory book. The content is interesting but the style is distracting. Is this what the recent "new wave" discussion is all about? If so, I'll take content over style as my preference. Well, I suppose that depends on what you mean by style. I guess that to me the best writing style is the one that is least apparent...the best craftsmanship is that which doesn't show. TJO is not easy to read--if I weren't interested in the outcome I'd hurry on to another book on my undread shelf: SONS, by Evan Hunter. Non-sf.

MORE ON MIMEOS

Some of you may remember that I came close to buying a new ABDick mimeograph just last Christmas. The deal fell through simply because there was too much money involved for a machine that was not significantly superior to my present BDC. In fact, in some ways it was inferior to the battered old ABDicks I had in my early days as a fanpubber. Progress in reverse.

Largely because of correspondence with Metcalf and Geis and remarks in the last few mailings by Ellington and others, I'm getting serious about a Gestetner. I went so far as to write their NY office for a catalog the other day and got back a nice folder touting the Model 466. I take it that's their latest and greatest. They also promised to sick their local dealer onto me, something I hadn't requested but should have expected, but so far no phone call. I confess to a slight curiosity as to the price they expect for this mechanical marvel.

Truthfully, if the advertisements can be believed the 466 sounds like everything a fan could ever want. Sophisticated inking system, quick-dry inks. Automatic paper feed takes a whole ream at a time. Paper weights from 11 lb to 110 lb. Excellent registration. You name it. The only thing I don't really need is the electric motor. At least I don't think I need it--I've never had one up until now.

If I get a new machine, of course, I have to justify it somehow. I may take the Shelby Vick out. My wife has been grouching recently about going back to work so we could have some spending money for a change, the cost of living catching us in the good old squeeze pretty good these days, but we still have a two-year old at home. Scouting around Bakersfield a bit, I can't seem to find anyone doing low-cost mimeographing. I'm going to look a little bit harder. If I can find any sort of potential market, there's my new Gestetner.

SUN IN SCORPIO

Astrology is all the thing these days. I remember when I was a young boy first learning about astronomy. Science was all, astrology was a hoax with no basis in fact. I bought it all. Now, I admit, I'm not all that much older and wiser, but I have seen enough formerly unexplainable things come to make at least partial sense in my short time that I am no longer quite so dogmatic. In my own field, there was once a man who proposed a ridiculous theory to the effect that the patently solid continents had drifted somehow over the face of the earth. Naturally he was hoohawed practically out of business. Today the progress of science has been such that that the physics of drifting continents is at least thinkable if not fully understandable, and the theory is no longer so ridiculous. The original thinker is now an honored savant. Posthumously, of course...

Not that I'm about to award the banners of science to the field of astrology, but I have to admit that some things are damned amusing all the same. My birthday is the 4th of November, making me a Scorpio, and whatever else the astrologers have done they have pretty well caught my character. Even speaking in generalizations I'd have to admit they pin me down amazingly well. Let me describe some of the characteristics of a Scorpio with which I have to--sometimes reluctantly--agree. And disagree.

Born at 4:30 a.m., my ascendant is the same as my Sun-Sign...I'm a double Scorpio ruled by the dynamic planet Mars. Aha, John Carter, no wonder I loved you--we are brothers under the skin. I am supposedly extremely energetic (not so), sincere (I like to think so) and intuitive (insufficient evidence). I possess fine mental qualities with a scientific trend of thought. As a geophysicist, I have to agree with that. I am amiable (when not irritated)...yes. I'd have to say that my temper is just about as stable as that of anyone I know--but I can also get pretty hot when I finally am irritated.

I am secretive and keep to myself a great deal of the time (yes). (Let me switch persons, please--this isn't comfortable.) "There is a vast reservoir of dynamic power hidden behind your quiet exterior." I agree the exterior is quiet. "Others feel it but have difficulty even knowing what it is that they feel. A combination of Mars and Pluto rulership dominates your sign, and the mixture increases the uncertainty about personality traits. You can be very contradictory, very baffling. But one thing is sure--whatever you are doing or seem to be doing, something else is going on in your mind." I won't deny that--in fact, I'd have to call it a pretty astute analysis. "Sensitivity is very high in your personality, but it is difficult to know when sensitivity is at stake and when it is not, for you are very quiet usually and may not let others know at all when you have been affronted or injured in any way. You are secretive and keep to yourself a great deal of the time." I'll buy that all the way. "It might be said that you are happiest when mentally at work upon intricate matters, although happiness never seems to be a part of your nature." They're hitting awfully close to home.

"You have innate intelligence about money and its uses. Earning ability is high, as is your natural wisdom about investment." I like to play with figures, do accounting, and I earn a better-than-average salary, but they really blew that one about my natural wisdom about investment. I've lost my ass in the stock market the past few years. "You will never risk security by spending when you should be saving." I'm a financial conservative compared to some, but I often think I spend too much on impulse. Not that I'm irresponsible in my spending, but I could do better.

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"If you make up your mind you are right and decide upon a course of action in your immediate environment, you are very exacting in regard to forcing others to adhere." My wife would chortle with glee over that one, because she says I'm the most domineering person she knows. At least as far as our household is concerned. "One of your outstanding defects is a tendency to become moody or depressed." Well, naturally we often have blind spots when it comes to our own defects, but I'd have to say about myself that I'm seldom depressed and I wouldn't characterize myself as moody. But that's not really for me to say, is it?

"You may need to relax some traits, such as intolerance and a too finely prying mental mechanism for discovering weakness of others. You can frighten people away with these, and this is not truly your desire." Agreed. "You may be one of the really big leaders of the future." Bullshit!

"Your nature has an affinity for 'pattern' and you do not like interruption of your ways or habits. Someone can influence you, at least temporarily, because of love or an idealistic value; but you will not allow this to put you in a subordinate position and keep you there." I don't understand the last part of that, but I agree with the first part. I tend to be well ordered, organized, a-place-for-everything-and-everything-in-its-place type of guy, and I am easily influenced by good friends, even to the point of doing things I know better than to do.

My wife is a Cancer. "Difficulties would arise from Cancer's sensitivity to your tendency to be sharp and biting in voicing your criticism." Man, did they ever call that one right on the money in both cases! "Scorpio men may have a very strong attraction for women. Although they are usually very attentive and demonstrative, they may be very demanding and expect too much from their wives. Often proud and egotistical, they cannot bear to be criticized." Ouch! got me again. I plead guilty to all charges.

"Their families are usually very important to them" (nothing more important in my book) "and may be sincerely loved, but their domineering ways may make it difficult to achieve harmony in the household. They tend to be much too strict with their children, and expect the whole family to obey their wishes without any argument." Correct, but I get plenty of argument just the same. "Their protective attitude will always give their family a sense of security, although they may not be particularly happy living with such a demanding and possessive man." I can't deny any of it.

"Scorpios have a 'King Midas touch' yet have no eagerness to hoard, at least not after a reasonable security has been achieved. Prestige is the basic factor in their quest for gold and they are never satisfied until they can show the world they have arrived. They feel it is their cosmic duty to climb the ladder of success." I can't believe it, myself. I like to own things...guns, mimeographs, cameras, books...but seldom for prestige, I would say. I have a nice home in a nice neighborhood, true, but I don't take spectacular care of the yard--the neighbors might tell you I just barely miss being a disgrace to the neighborhood. My two cars are a 1964 Chevrolet wagon and a 1961 Hillman wagon...neither one what you might call a new prestige car. Our furniture is definitely still early miscellaneous, our clothes almost an apology. I'm seriously contemplating changing my job and my way of life in a direction that will probably cut my income by at least 25% and possibly more. I think they blew this one.

"They have a horror of debt which impels them to thrift." Strong language, but I admit to keeping my net liabilities less than my net assets. "They understand the importance of system, order and regularity. Responsibilities are accepted with

courage and fortitude. They cannot endure obstacles, and they resent restraint and close supervision." I'll go along with that. "Naturally responsive and sympathetic, they gladly share their possessions where they are genuinely needed." I agree very much with the first part, but I can't admit to the second. Sorry, but my sense of possessiveness tends to outweigh my sharing response. I'm not too proud admitting it, but I have to confess that I share reluctantly and not very well. "They have very few intimate friends." Agreed. "Punctuality is 'heaven's first law' with them." Yes, I try hard to be on time and in the main I succeed. Regardless of my rate of success, though, the point is that I consider punctuality to be relatively important and I put a good deal of effort into it.

"You want power; you can absorb others; you are the natural executive, going about righting wrongs, giving orders." They couldn't be more wrong. I think I'm a good leader except for one very unleaderlike trait--I have to be asked and I have to be given a mandate. Then, I think, I do a pretty good job. The natural leader, on the other hand, seeks leadership actively or is given it instinctively in reaction to his ability.

"It would be a shame to stifle your rich personality under layers of fatty substance. If you are the short, stocky type of Scorpio, full-chested and slightly top heavy, you had better heed the handwriting on the wall. You are going to be a dumpy dodo if you don't watch out. Don't dissipate in either food or drink. Moderation is your cue for a healthy, happy old age. Furthermore, there is no way of accounting for the effect cocktails may have on you. There are slumbering fires within you that should remain smothered." As a perpetual overweight, I well know what they mean. Moderation is not one of my long suits. I tend to have only two speeds--'all ahead full' and 'stop' with nothing in between. And, after my performance at a neighborhood cocktail party last weekend, I can only reluctantly agree with those last two sentences.

"Scorpio people always come straight to the point and are never prepared to compromise." I don't agree, in my case. "They are capable of long and extended efforts and once they have set their minds on achieving something, their ambition is undoubted." Well, it took me 10 years to finish my MS, but I finally graduated this June. "Apparently they thrive on trouble." Not I! "Scorpio people may eat and drink too much." Aha! "The working capacity of people born under this sign is astounding." Not so you'd notice it. "They can grasp any problem, and once they have made up their minds to follow a certain line they will never give up, and nothing will ever stop them from achieving what they have set out to do. On the other hand, their stubbornness often leads them into situations where other people would have given up a long time ago. Scorpio people go on to the bitter end, even if it means their own destruction." They've got me there, but I like to think I am getting better along these lines through the years. I hope so.

"They are extremely frank and outspoken with no fear of consequences." Sorry, I'm a tactful coward. "They are enormously independent." Admitted. "They have a tremendous capacity for work." What, that rot again? "They are not afraid of any problems in life and have great physical and mental courage." Sorry, I think you just twisted off, buddy. "Negative traits. Scorpio people do not care what others think of them and never consider another man's point of view." Not something I am proud of, but generally true nonetheless. "They resent any argument." Well, to a certain extent. "They are prone to excessive eating and drinking." What, that all-too-accurate hatchet again?

And so it goes. On the whole, I'd say the characterizations are amazingly very accurate. But you know where they blow it all? My lucky number. One book says 8, another says 9, a third says 4. Now how can you believe guys like that?

/ DIDN'T GO TO THE BALL , , ,

For the cheering throngs of you who missed me at the Westercon...I didn't go, after all. It got down to the short strokes, eventually, and there were one or two other irons in the fire and--well, if you must know the truth, inertia won out. I didn't hear from the friends in Santa Barbara from whom I was depending on bed and board for at least one night, then Buz and Elinor said they weren't going, I couldn't think of anyone I knew that would 'for sure' be there, and finally, when Saturday morning dawned and I couldn't think of a good reason for going, I stayed home instead. I guess I'm not really a convention fan after all. Buz, howcome you and Ellington decided not to come this year?

I presume the sf magazine trade is about negotiated? I haven't heard from you since my last letter. I'm still planning on Seattle over Thanksgiving, however, and the plans have definitely switched from 'tentative' to 'scheduled' so we should see you then. 'Twill save shipping through Uncle S's destruction service, at any rate. I haven't heard from Metcalf recently, either, but I hereby solemnly promise to pass on anything I don't need to Norm at the same prices you sell them to me. I'm a collector, not a dealer.

Speaking of Norm--Harry Warner, there's another name you can add to the list of fans who have offended water sprites. I suppose you know about Norm's flood, the loss of a large part of his collection, the loss of his completed FAPAazine ready for posting to the OE which in turn resulted in the loss of his FAPA membership--and he wouldn't petition because he felt it was his "own fault." I didn't know about it until recently, but I think it's a shame. I wrote and offered to support a petition, which I thought definitely in order, but he said he didn't feel that he deserved one and he was prepared to re-enter via the waiting-list.

I like basements, personally, but the next time I consign myself and my sf collection to one I will definitely have everything up on shelves in the upper half of the room. Even that is not perfect, however. I intend to return to the land of basements again one of these days, and I also intend to build myself a hobby room therein with room for my collection, mimeograph et al, guns, coins...you name it. I hope my past experiences will in some way protect me from future reprisals. One day, in my basement in Salt Lake City, we had such a hard rainstorm that the outside sewer drain couldn't handle it, the water backed up and over the curb and down the driveway into my basement and made a soggy mess of my little fannish den. The next time I got soaked out, the emergency drain faucet on the bottom of the water heater mysteriously came open all by itself one evening with none of us within 50 feet of it, and proceeded to fill up the fannish room once again. Fortunately I was upstairs at the time and heard the water running and eventually became curious enough to stumble downstairs and shut the thing off after a bare foot or two of water had filled the room. Having learned from experience, I immediately built my collection up two feet off of the floor. Well, at that time we had our washing machine in our kitchen, upstairs, with the drainage hose hooked into the sink when the machine was running. One day when I was away, my wife hooked up the washer to run a load and while she was otherwise occupied the hose pumped itself out of the kitchen sink and proceeded to empty itself onto the kitchen floor. From which vantage point it went through the floor, down the walls, and damned if it didn't attack my collection from above this time! So I'd have to admit from Norm's experience as well as my own, basements are not the safest place for one's science fiction collection. On the other hand, they would seem to be an ideal place for staking out one's wife or noisy and obnoxious children...

WATER ON TROUBLED OILS

While I appreciated your comments on the stock market, Dick Schultz, there are some remarks I cannot let go unchallenged. I can't say that my heart is strongly in the oil industry, even though they currently pay my wages, and as a pollution-conscious individual God knows I have to put the blame where it is deserved. Still and all, I don't think erroneous or misleading pronouncements should go entirely without comment on my part.

You said: "Last year the Congress did something they should have done a long time ago...they cut the depreciation allowances for the oil companies. This was a beautiful dodge for the oil outfits which meant that the more oil them pumped out of the ground the more they could write off as a loss in their tax reports."

Well, in the first place it is not a depreciation allowance but a depletion allowance. Words, perhaps. In the second place, though, the depletion allowance is not as it is often mistakenly called the oil depletion allowance but rather the minerals depletion allowance. At last count, over 100 minerals were included in the depletion allowance code, including iron ore, coal, and phosphate rock. Every state in the nation has at least one mineral that is covered by mineral depletion allowances. Rates on individual minerals vary, but many of them are similar to the former oil depletion allowance rate. It is remarkable, don't you think, that while the hue and cry was out to cut the oil depletion allowance rate, something "Congress should have done long ago," nothing is said about the other minerals? Is something immoral or wrong when done by an oil company but something else again when done by a coal or iron ore producer? Or do you prefer to claim refuge from this question in the name of ignorance?

A beautiful dodge resulting in a loss in their tax reports? The intent of Congress when it set up the minerals depletion allowance in 1918 was to provide tax equity with the 1913 tax laws for producers of depleting assets. Depreciation rules had already been set up for capital assets which were designed to return the cost of the assets, tax free, over their useful life so that they could be replaced when worn out. While these worked fine for capital assets which could be replaced as needed for relatively fixed costs, the rules didn't work at all for depletable assets which required costly and uncertain exploration techniques for replacement. In 1918 and 1927 Congress wrote the minerals depletion act in an effort to make the original tax rules of 1913 more equitable for all concerned.

Did they succeed? Well, the oil industry's tax bill--which any capable analyst will be able to substantiate for you--is about 5 cents in tax for every dollar of revenue. The rate for other business is almost exactly the same. Profits? From 1925--the first year's income to come under the percentage depletion law--through 1966, oil industry after-tax earnings have averaged less than 10% of invested capital. The figure for all manufacturing companies in the same period? 10.7%!

The more oil you pump out, the bigger the tax loss? That's similar to the type of fuzzy thinking that decides that an individual can lose money in taxes by earning just a few extra dollars which will put him in a higher "tax bracket." In other words, you haven't really thought the thing through. Your statement implies that if an oil company could pump enough oil in a year it would wind up paying no taxes at all. If this isn't fuzzy thinking on your part then it is at best unfair and misleading reporting. That oil companies pay their proportional share of taxes has been reflected in their securities prices over many years. They have

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historically indicated that the international oils were good, safe long-term investments but no place to get rich quick. This would hardly be the case if, when compared with other industries, they had tax dodges and unfair advantages which would place them at an unfair advantage.

You said: "There is at present a movement afoot in the halls of Congress to lift the present ridiculous oil-import quotas. These quotas in effect mean that we here in America must live on our own domestic oil production or else."

Where do you get all of this misinformation? The oil import quota, established in 1959 by Presidential Proclamation in the interests of national security, was designed to maintain a strong and healthy domestic oil industry in the face of cheaper foreign competition so that eventually we could not let domestic exploration wither to the point where we were dependent upon potentially hostile foreign sources for petroleum. This situation is hardly unique with the oil industry--the protected status of a great number of "we here in America" industries is historically well defined. Furthermore, a vast majority of these industries--for instance, textiles--are hardly what you might call critical to national security. (If you think a ready petroleum source doesn't affect your internal and external politics, why don't you read the front pages instead of the funny papers?)

Now, what is this quota system which insists that we live on our own domestic production or else? Under the terms of the existing program, oil imports into the US east of the Rockies are restricted to 12.2 percent of domestic demand. West of the Rockies the level of imports is determined by the difference between domestic requirements of the area and available domestic production. If you'd care to study that law and look into the facts of life, you'll find that eastern producers are, in fact, restricted from producing all of the oil they are capable of producing in favor of foreign imports. Look into what the terms Texas and Louisiana "allowables" means.

Is foreign oil cheaper? With US labor costs being what they are, hell yes! Just like Japanese tool and die costs are cheaper than the US. Tell us about those import quotas, while we're waiting, will you Dick? If you close down domestic production and become dependent upon foreign oil, will it always stay cheaper? Hell, that one's up for grabs--but, again, if you've been reading the paper and watching what Libya (among other major world oil producers) is trying to do, you might catch some sort of hint.

Back to the big oil ~~elaborates~~ companies...are they the ones fighting to keep the import quotas so they can milk undue profits from you, the consumer? Well, I can't speak for all of them, but I can tell you that the world-wide integrated major oil companies, of which Standard of California is one, would be suited just fine to go along with that sort of silliness. All of the majors have beaucoup foreign production which costs 'em far less to find and produce than domestic oil and therefore produces a greater profit in the process. Only the import quota prevents them from bringing it all in. SoCal could shut off domestic exploration in an instant --and would if they could!--and vastly increase their profit margin in the process. Result? Cheaper oil for the consumer as domestic production ceased--until foreign prices rose under the inexorable laws of supply and demand. They play the part of supply and we play the part of demand--and surely you don't need to be quoted figures on the US's percentage of world energy consumption vs production? Going to show those smart-ass foreigners a lesson and re-start your domestic production up again--an expensive, risky, talent-requiring industry necessitating vast amounts of capital--on short notice? Not bloody likely...just like Rome in the building. So...an interesting stock market analysis but I can't help but hope that you aren't as woefully ignorant or emotionally swayed in other fields as you were in this.

