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THE ESCHATOLOGY OF CORDWAINER SMITH

Part Two

(Part one of this article, mainly biographical, described the early life of Dr. Paul M.A. Linebarger and the genesis of his literary career, leading up to the publication of his first "Cordwainer Smith" story, "Scanners Live in Vain.")

The Discovery

Although "Scanners Live in Vain" had appeared in a marginal publication with hardly any circulation, the story had not gone entirely unnoticed before Dr. Linebarger's departure for Malaya and Korea.

Two who immediately recognized the talents of Cordwainer Smith, although having no idea who he was, were Sam Moskowitz and Frederik Pohl.

Moskowitz, ironically, never cared for the S.F. Dr. Linebarger wrote after 1950. But as soon as he had read "Scanners" in Fantasy Book, he wrote to editor William Crawford praising the story, then tried to interest T.E. Dikty in including the piece in his annual "Best Science Fiction" anthology. Dikty wasn't interested.

The next year, however, Pohl, who had also been bowled over by "Scanners," was assembling the Permabook anthology, "Beyond the End of Time," and also contacted Crawford -- for reprint rights. Crawford then referred him to Dr. Linebarger's agent -- none other than Forrest J. Ackerman!

The relationship between Dr. Linebarger and Crawford and Ackerman apparently developed as a result of his interest in Fantasy Press. He had been ordering Fantasy Press books by mail since it was founded -- and his widow, Mrs. Genevieve Linebarger, says she understands her husband was even a stockholder in the firm.

Pohl bought the story, and his anthology appeared in 1952 -- it was the first time "Scanners Live in Vain" appeared before a wide readership. And it was in "Beyond the End of Time" that the error about the story having first appeared in 1948 got its start.

Crawford himself included "Scanners" in his own anthology -- but that one, "Science and Sorcery," did not appear until 1953, one year after Pohl's. Dr. Linebarger, at this time, was finishing up his tour of duty as consultant to the U.S. Eighth Army in Korea -- but he "got some feedback" somehow from the anthology appearances of "Scanners," Pohl relates.

Moskowitz, meanwhile, had been tapped by Hugo Gernsback to edit Science Fiction Plus, and was pressuring Crawford for more stories by "Smith." "Let's get some action on this Cordwainer Smith fellow," he was pleading towards the end of 1952.

Crawford replied he hadn't been able to get in touch with the man. "As I recall it, he is sort of an expert on Far Eastern countries and he may be over there." Early in 1953, however, he was able to inform Moskowitz:

"I finally heard from Cordwainer Smith. The reason he was so slow in answering was because he was on a trip around the world, and I guess it took a while for the letter to catch up, or for him to get a chance to answer it -- or something. Anyway, at the moment, he hasn't any other material ready for submission, but I'm trying to build a fire under him, and I think I'll have something for you to look at before long."

Before long wasn't soon enough for Moskowitz, however -- Science

Fiction Plus folded at the end of 1953, after only seven issues.

Dr. Linebarger didn't have anything to "look at" until 1954, in any case -- and then, it was H.L. Gold who got to do the looking. No doubt Gold's close relationship with Pohl was a factor -- for Galaxy's editor had been one of those who rejected "Scanners Live in Vain," and he recently indicated that he had not solicited any Cordwainer Smith stories at the time the manuscript of "The Game of Rat and Dragon" was submitted to him in 1954. Dr. Linebarger, however, had written to Pohl as a result of the appearance of "Scanners" in "Beyond the End of Time," and it was thus that Pohl learned his identity and began an association that lasted until the death of Dr. Linebarger.

Having arrived back home in Washington following the Korean War, Dr. Linebarger first turned his attention to an updated edition of his "Psychological Warfare," based in part on the knowledge he gained in Korea and on the insights from the psychoanalysis that had been part of his refresher training course for his Eighth Army assignment. Much has been made of the impact of his continuing psychoanalytic sessions on his writing by Arthur Burns in the Australian Science Fiction Review. Yet the type of imagination found in the stories Dr. Linebarger wrote in the 1950's actually seems little different from that in "Scanners."

Cat Melanie, the first of a family of felines, made her appearance in the Linebarger household in 1954, and was quickly followed by Lady May and Captain Wow. Cat Melanie, as everyone knows, was later to be immortalized when transmogrified into C'Mell, the heroine of the Underpeople. She and Lady May have both died -- but Captain Wow lives yet in the same row house in northwest Washington.

"The Game of Rat and Dragon" was written in a single afternoon, sent to Gold, and accepted immediately. Once again, Dr. Linebarger was able to brilliantly portray the emotional impact of a bizarre situation -- the intimate, almost symbiotic relationship of the pinlighters and their cat partners battling the terrors of the Up and Out. It was one of his most extravagant concepts -- and yet, pure science fiction. The author might have been amused by a piece in the Aug. 24, 1970 Time magazine, describing how "Russian scientists....are studying the feasibility of training a cat to pilot air-to-air missiles." But he would have been appalled, no doubt, at the callous attitude the Soviets were taking towards their "partners" -- whose missions, it seems, will all be strictly one-way.

Although "Game" was the first science fiction he had written in eight years, Dr. Linebarger was by no means out of touch with the field. "He read every science fiction magazine and book he could lay his hands on," Mrs. Linebarger relates. Among his favorite stories from his non-writing period were Robert A. Heinlein's "The Green Hills of Earth," Arthur C. Clarke's "Childhood's End," Philip Jose Farmer's "The Lovers," Ray Bradbury's "Mars is Heaven" and Bernard Wolfe's "Limbo." He talked about Fritz Leiber a lot, Mrs. Linebarger remembers, and Burns said in the ASFR that he felt himself akin to Leiber -- but less "Nietzschean." A cryptic comment indeed!

A glance in Dr. Linebarger's basement closet of science fiction might exasperate many a critic who believes he was an avant gardist -- uncorrupted by any of that crazy Buck Rogers stuff. Sharing space with the classics of Heinlein, Cyril M. Kornbluth and James Blish are huge stacks of old Startling Stories and Famous Fantastic Mysteries, space operas by John W. Campbell, the complete "Lensman" series of E.E. "Doc" Smith, Stanley G. Weinbaum's "A Martian Odyssey" and "The Red Peri" and 1930's epics by John Taine. There are plenty of Astoundings/Analogs with the set of Galaxy, and the usual Science Fiction Book Club editions (Mrs. Linebarger is still a member.). Scattered here and there are more obscure titles, such as Alfred Doblin's "Giganten,"* Helen Simpson's "Woman on the Beast" and Dostojewski's "Der Doppelganger."* Also prominently displayed is L. Sprague deCamp's "Science Fiction Handbook."

* In our last issue, we attributed both "Giganten" and "Der Doppelganger," under slightly different spellings, to Antonio Eberhardt -- based on look-ups at the New York public library, with Mrs. Linebarger saying the name sounded right. It turned out, however, that the Eberhardt books are a coincidence, not the ones Dr. Linebarger read in his childhood in Germany.

Mrs. Linebarger notes that her husband also made it a point to keep up with the latest scientific developments. Thus, even though he had hardly any direct contact with writers in the field, he was a man who knew science fiction -- who understood both its traditions and its possibilities -- as thoroughly as most of those who have spent years in personal contact through fan and professional groups. At the same time, however, he was free of the auctorial politics -- the pressures of trend-hounds, critics and factions that have been so prominent in the S.F. world.

With the publication of "The Game of Rat and Dragon," Cordwainer Smith was recognized -- belatedly -- as a major new author. Dikty, who had passed up "Scanners," was not about to make the same mistake twice, and included "Game" in his "Best Science Fiction of 1955." Yet, oddly, it was to be several years before Smith's name appeared frequently as a contributor to the magazines.

Pinlighters and Go-Captains

If one relied on the publication dates for the Cordwainer Smith stories following "Game," he would conclude that Dr. Linebarger began writing science fiction again only gradually, and did not really hit his stride until after 1957. Actually, this is far from the case.

Dates on manuscripts in a volume containing those for most of Dr. Linebarger's short fiction from 1936 through 1956 show that "No, No, Not Rogov," "The Burning of the Brain," "Mark Elf" and "Western Science is So Wonderful" were all written in 1955 -- within a year of "Game." Dr. Linebarger also rewrote "The Fife of Bodhidharma" that year -- but there must have been a further revision, as the 1955 manuscript ends with the fife being destroyed at the end of World War II. Furthermore, two unpublished science fiction manuscripts are also dated 1955.

Of the unpublished manuscripts, one* is an earlier version of "Drunkboat," with a plot concerning the first man to planiform. It is primarily of historical interest now, in shedding light on the genesis of the latter story. Although similar in plot to "Drunkboat," even to using some of the same names for characters, the 1955 story is written in plainer style, with no reference whatever to the poetry of Rimbaud. Since Dr. Linebarger later credited Rimbaud's work with having been the inspiration for "Drunkboat," this suggests that he did not always "tell all" about the motives of his work -- even under a pseudonym.

The other unpublished manuscript* consists of two chapters of a projected longer work, of which "Mark Elf" was originally intended to be another chapter. Telling of the arrival of one of the two sisters of Carlotta vomAcht, heroine of "Mark Elf," among the unauthorized men of the Wild, the unpublished fragment is richly evocative of the Dark Age of post-atomic war Earth. Since the manuscript of "Scanners" makes reference to Lady Vomact and her "illegitimate and inexplicable" passage through the centuries, it is quite likely that Dr. Linebarger had the background of the "Mark Elf" sequence worked out before 1945. The missing manuscripts he submitted to Amazing during World War II may, in fact, be earlier versions of the 1955 stories.

Together with "Scanners" the 1955 stories -- those that are part of the Instrumentality canon, at least -- fall into a group. All focus on "outsiders" in their own element, with little attention being paid to "social issues." The Lords of the Instrumentality appear briefly, if at all, and the sociological background of their universe tends to be implied rather than stated (though often implied very evocatively). Holding center stage are "outsider" heroes -- atypical and adventurous individuals who are transfigured by strange and frightening experience on the frontiers of science and exploration. The Scanners who are dead though they live, the pinlighters fighting for survival in the Up and Out, the Go-Captain who must make the supreme sacrifice in a new and startling manner, the dancer driven to superhuman efforts by the confrontation with alien art, and even the vomAcht sisters facing a new world alien to their experience -- all share something in common.

* Mrs. Linebarger contends that mentioning both the titles and the plot elements of the unpublished stories may jeopardize the copyrights. While editors we have consulted offer no support to this view, we are willing to accede to Mrs. Linebarger's wishes in this matter, rather than risk compromising her rights in any way.

What they share is a sense of vocation -- an almost religious religious devotion to duty or to creed, akin to that of the pioneering aviators in the works of Antoine de Saint Exupery. The heroes of early Cordwainer Smith stories seem to find their true selves only in driving themselves to the limits of experience in pursuit of some high calling. Saint Exupery expressed this sort of quasi-religious feeling in "Flight to Arras," where his own feelings as a fighter pilot are an example of a type of self-realization in extremis: "Your true significance becomes dazzlingly evident. Your true name is duty, hatred, love, child, theorem. There is no other you than this."

There is another parallel with Saint-Exupery in the emphasis on the altered states of consciousness experienced by Cordwainer Smith's "outsider" heroes as the result of the synergistic relationship between man and mechanism or the near-symbiosis between man and not-man in his stories. "All that tangle of tubes and wiring has become a circulatory system," writes Saint Exupery. "I am an organism integrated into the plane." Compare this with the summary in the publisher's blurb for the Regency edition of "You Will Never be the Same:" "They were the machines they guided; they were the ultra-fast brains that steered humanity's course through terrors and glories too great for ordinary flesh to bear."

It is important to note that in most of the early stories, this interweaving of man and machine is not a "dehumanizing one," in that the man part remains in command, with the machine part an extension of his consciousness. Even in "Scanners Live in Vain," the "evil" seems to be that the scanners are denied the emotional rewards of their vocation -- not merely that they have been made part-machine.

Dr. Linebarger sent the manuscript about the first man to plano-form to H.L. Gold at Galaxy, but Gold sent it back for re-writing -- he may not have liked the religious implications in the story. "Mark Elf" was sent in for publication in response to requests for more material. But Harry Altshuler, Dr. Linebarger's new agent, wasn't very energetic about selling Cordwainer Smith stories. He had a policy of never submitting more than one story by the same author to the same magazine at the same time. This explains the delayed appearance of stories written in 1955. It may have been just as well, however, for Dr. Linebarger was in a slump -- he completed only five stories during the late 1950's as compared to seven in 1955 alone.

He was busy, of course. He was not only teaching full-time again at Johns Hopkins, but giving lectures on psychological warfare before military groups and talks on American foreign policy to visitors from abroad. He also served as acting dean of the School of Advanced International Studies in 1959. But more decisive in his literary career was the trip he and his wife took to Australia in 1957 to work on a history of politics in Southeast Asia as visiting fellows at the Australian National University in Canberra.

Against the Pleasure Revolution

Dr. Linebarger created a minor sensation in Australia, with his vocal support of Chiang-kai-Shek that scandalized left-wing academics. His generally outspoken and aggressive manner -- which Arthur Burns was to attribute to his sessions under psychoanalysis -- was hard for many to take. But there was also an extreme, ritualistic formality of manner that, combined with his gaunt appearance and severe dress, seemed to parallel that of the Lords of the Instrumentality he would later write about. "Perhaps he patterned the lords after himself, but I don't think it was conscious," Mrs. Linebarger remarks.

What struck Dr. Linebarger most about Australia, however, was its relative escape from the hedonism he believed was afflicting most of the Western World. He talked a great deal about the "Pleasure Revolution" and its consequences. "He felt that this did inevitably produce a certain slackening of the human drive and dynamism," Burns noted. He became obsessed with the idea of a decadent and aimless society he saw as the logical end product of the Pleasure Revolution.

So important was this new thematic concern that Dr. Linebarger began in 1957 the compiling of an entire new notebook of story ideas and future history. Virtually all his new stories from 1957 on were to be based on material in this notebook, as opposed to that in the books dating from the 1930's that had served for both science fiction and non-science fiction story ideas up to that time.

Unfortunately, this last notebook of Dr. Linebarger was lost to posterity when he carelessly left it on a dockside restaurant table in Rhodes while on a world tour with his wife in 1965. James H. Bready of the Baltimore Sun described the incident later that year in the only Cordwainer Smith interview ever published -- but he somehow gained the impression that the notebook covered only the 3,000 years from 6000 to 15000 AD.

Dr. Linebarger, in a letter to Pohl Nov. 9, 1965 -- he had heard that the MIT Science Fiction Society was interested in his future history scheme -- indicated otherwise:

"I think the people at MIT had a fine idea about an Instrumentality chronology, but I lost my Cordwainer Smith notebook in the Aegean and I'm having to re-do 9,000 years of history from memory or published notes. I have my pre-1957 notebooks, but the last book contained a tremendous amount of material, only about 2/3 used."

He had only just begun the task of reproducing the notebook when he died a year later (the pre-1957 notebooks are still squirreled away in the Linebarger attic, according to Mrs. Linebarger, who currently is going through his accumulation of material there in connection with a commission to do another updated edition of "Psychological Warfare"). That it existed, however, is proof (were any needed) that he did have a broad conceptual scheme in mind for his later Instrumentality S.F., one not touched upon in his published explanations (in the collection, "Space Lords," of 1965) of how he borrowed plots from the classics.

Actually, the change in the orientation of Dr. Linebarger's work that began in Australia was in two stages -- the first sociological, the second explicitly religious.

The first stage lasted only three years, during which "Golden the Shop Was, Oh, Oh, Oh," "When the People Fell," "Angerhelm," "The Nancy Routine" and "The Lady Who Sailed the Soul" were written.

One of these, Mrs. Linebarger remembers, was dictated to her in Australia -- but she isn't sure which. It cannot have been, however, either "Golden" or "Lady" -- for these were the first two stories on which she herself collaborated. In each case, Dr. Linebarger had hit a writing block, and she carried on the story until he was able to pick it up again. When they were done, neither could tell who had written what -- just as in the case of Henry and Catherine Kuttner.

The extent of Mrs. Linebarger's contribution, however, can be judged by the fact that, on the title page of the manuscript of "The Lady Who Sailed the Soul," her husband insisted on crediting the tale: "By Genevieve Linebarger and P.M.A." A few years later, she helped him write "Drunkboat."

The "outsider" types who were the heroes of previous Cordwainer Smith stories still figure in the 1957-9 stories -- but in a different context. One gets a clearer view of the larger society they inhabit -- one becoming increasingly decadent through the ultimate impact of the Pleasure Revolution.

In "When the People Fell," the mass media want none of the story Dobyns Bennett has to tell of the Chinesian conquest of Venus -- "It wasn't the right kind of story for entertainment, and the public would not appreciate it any more." The Lords of the Instrumentality appear in an active role for the first time in "Golden the Ship Was, Oh, Oh, Oh" -- a portrait of human society become decadent indeed, but still able to rise to a challenge when necessary. The Go Captain Tedesco, a current addict at the start of the story, forsakes his wire after he learns there is more pleasure in real accomplishment.

But without question the best of the stories of this period is "The Lady Who Sailed the Soul." At once a compelling love story and a story of a vocation, it brilliantly develops the contrast between the romantic age of the sailors as personified in Helen America and the cynical decadence of a later age represented in the girl who comes to scorn her mother's stories and her worn-out spiertier with the same contempt.

Those who read the story in the April 1960 Galaxy may have wondered about the religious references and epilog that were in the version later reprinted in "You Will Never be the Same," but missing in the Galaxy version. These parts were in the original manuscript -- but

Gold cut them out. Even in the uncut version, however, "Lady" did not show quite the same sort of preoccupation with religion that was to mark Dr. Linebarger's later work. Faith was a very personal matter to Helen America and the "religious fanatics" she carried to New Earth. It was not something of "social significance" -- or even specifically Christian, for all one could derive from the text.

Although a strong believer in Christianity, Dr. Linebarger had never, up to this time, used his science fiction to carry a religious "message" -- not explicitly in any case. He experimented with mysticism in two of his manuscripts, in 1946 and 1955. But he himself wasn't satisfied with the first and Gold didn't like the second. "Angerhelm," a story that took a seemingly jaundiced view of the Hereafter, was not intended as part of the Instrumentality canon, and Dr. Linebarger regarded "The Fife of Bodhidharma" as fantasy more than S.F.

Science fiction writers traditionally have tended to keep their religious convictions -- if any -- out of their science fiction. For example, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to derive Murray Leinster's Catholicism or Stanley G. Weinbaum's Judaism from anything they wrote. Some, however -- in particular, Walter A. Miller -- have preached their faith quite explicitly.

Dr. Linebarger's transition from one mode of writing to the other came in a specific year -- 1960 -- and for a very specific reason.

The Old Strong Religion

For years, Dr. Linebarger's physical condition had been poor -- he was always having trouble with his digestive system, and was in and out of hospitals for operations. Since his childhood accident, he had had only one eye. In fact, the only way he got into the U.S. Army in World War II was to use his position as Far Eastern specialist on the Operation Planning and Intelligence Board to write up specifications for an operative in China that he himself was the only man able to qualify under. He once astounded guests at a dinner party by taking time out to drink a glass of hydrochloric acid to make his stomach function properly.

The time he spent with doctors and hospitals no doubt had something to do with the medical background in several of his stories -- from the Haberman operations in "Scanners Live in Vain" to the sailors wired into their ships in "The Lady Who Sailed the Soul."

But in 1960, Dr. Linebarger's condition took a turn for the worse. He suffered a whole series of major illnesses -- one after another. "He almost died several times," according to Mrs. Linebarger. "It was awful.

"That was the year he wrote 'Old North Australia!....'"

"Old North Australia" was the first novel he had written in ten years, and his first attempt at a science fiction novel (though some might count "Atomsk"). It is important to understand that this story of the Norstrilian boy, Rod McBan, and his encounter with the Lords of the Instrumentality and the underpeople on Old Earth, preceded all the other stories published after 1960 -- even "Alpha Ralpa Boulevard," and "Mother Hitton's Littul Kittons."

In its first draft, the novel ran to at least 120,000 words -- Pohl, who was to publish the extracts "The Boy Who Bought Old Earth" and "The Store of Heart's Desire" in *Galaxy* and *If* four years later, never saw this version. And Donald Bensen, who was editor of Pyramid Books when the novel was published in two books as "The Planet Buyer" and "The Underpeople," indicates that some material was left out even then.

Mrs. Linebarger indicates that the delay in publication of "Old North Australia" was due to her husband's being dissatisfied in some way with the work and wanting to polish it up. It is not certain what, if any, serious revisions were made, however.

"Old North Australia" represented a abrupt departure from the type of science fiction Dr. Linebarger had written in the past. Where the decadent society of the Instrumentality had been the background in previous stories, it now held center stage. Gone were the "outsider" heroes who had found themselves in strange vocations. Protagonists now were the Lords of the Instrumentality themselves and those who opposed them in a world of politics and intrigue.

It goes almost without saying that Dr. Linebarger's experiences with psychological warfare and foreign intrigues served him in creating the background for the epic struggle involving the Instrumentality, Old North Australia and the Holy Insurgency of the underpeople.

The Lords of the Instrumentality are very much "insiders" -- but they have one trait in common with the "outsider" heroes of before: a sense of vocation. Their vocation, however, is not for any particular profession or creed, but for mankind itself. At once noble and corrupt, ruthless and benevolent, their self-assigned mission down through the ages has been to guide mankind toward their goal of perfection.

But their ideal of evolution is not shared by the rigid, ascetic society of Old North Australia. Nor by the Holy Insurgency.

Here the religious message comes in: the coming of Rod McBan is supposedly in fulfillment of a prophecy. And the E'Telekeli, leader of the "Aitch Eye," is, if not a Christ figure, at least the primate of a very orthodox Christian church. His daughter, E'lamelanie, pursues the "devotional" life. And there are to be other heroes and heroines, from Casher O'Neill and T'Ruth to D'Joan and the Hunter, who either have or acquire a religious calling.

There are other changes. McBan's characterization shows obvious influence of psychoanalytic theories, absent in previous Cordwainer Smith stories -- even though most of those had been written after Dr. Linebarger began undergoing analysis. There are more failed heroes -- men like Murray Madigan and John Joy Tree who have lost touch with old vocations, or are unable to find new ones, and have been maddened, not fulfilled, by extreme experiences. Dr. Linebarger never returned to the spirit of his earlier ages -- "Think Blue, Count Two," although set in the age of the sailors, becomes a morality play, not an adventure.

Of the 15 stories Dr. Linebarger wrote during the 1960's, seven are directly related to "Old North Australia" -- "The Dead Lady of Clown Town," "Under Old Earth," "Drunkboat," "Alpha Ralpha Boulevard," "The Ballad of Lost C'Mell," "Mother Hitton's Littul Kittons," and "A Planet Named Shayol." All are based on events referred to, or implied by, the central novel they illuminate, and form a literary mosaic with it. An eighth story in this series, "The Robot, the Rat and the Copt," would have been the most explicitly religious, telling of the visions those three saw in Space₃. It was never written.

It was probably these stories, more than any of his others, that Dr. Linebarger was referring to when he characterized his fiction as "pre-Cervantean" -- that is, in the form of a cycle of legends, rather than the straight-forward narrative he dated from Cervantes. "Old North Australia" and its attendant shorter works clearly form such a cycle, although the "legendary" techniques in Dr. Linebarger's science fiction were evident as early as "The Burning of the Brain."

Frederik Pohl was largely responsible for the increased output of Dr. Linebarger during the 1960's. When he took over Galaxy and If from Gold on Jan. 1, 1961, "I started going after him," Pohl relates. When Pohl learned that Altshuler had two Cordwainer Smith stories -- "Alpha Ralpha Boulevard" and "Mother Hitton's Littul Kittons" -- up for sale, but had offered only one of them to Galaxy, he insisted on a change in policy: a "first look" at every story Dr. Linebarger wrote. "From then on, I got them all," Pohl reports. And he rejected only three.

The appearance of the first Smith collection, "You Will Never be the Same," under the Regency label in 1963, further added to the rising literary stock of Dr. Linebarger. It was Robert Silverberg who planted the idea for the collection in the head of Algis Budrys.

Budrys was complaining of the lack of suitable material coming in at Regency. "We can't get any good science fiction," he said.

"Why don't you get some Cordwainer Smith?" Silverberg offered.

Budrys was "struck by wonder" at the idea, and Silverberg got in touch with Altshuler to make the arrangements -- for which he received due credit on the title page. Dr. Linebarger himself appended a brief note about his theory of art as a means to evoke wonder, and even the blurb was relevant -- unlike most blurbs.

There was one unfortunate side effect -- to Dr. Linebarger, at least, from the publication of "You Will Never be the Same." It blew his "cover." For the 1964 edition of "Contemporary Authors," in

its entry for "Linebarger, Paul Myron Anthony," listed "You Will Never be the Same" as one of his published works. This was unavoidable: the collection was published prior to a change in the copyright law that allowed copyrights to be registered under a pseudonym. In fact, Mrs. Linebarger said, anyone could have found out who "Cordwainer Smith" was from the start by a little research at the Library of Congress.

Nobody, apparently, ever did check the Library of Congress. But the mention in "Contemporary Authors" was too obvious to miss. Thus it was that people like Alva Rogers got in on the "secret." In 1966, Rogers was asking Pohl to accept the Invisible Little Men award on Dr. Linebarger's behalf -- but he never got it in time. Fans wanted to invite Dr. Linebarger to conventions -- but he refused. One such turn-down involved the 1965 Eastern Science Fiction Association banquet -- Pohl promised Dr. Linebarger he wouldn't be asked any questions, but the terms still didn't suit the author. He had always been extremely self-conscious about his work, and wanted no contact with the fans. In part, Mrs. Linebarger believes, this was because he felt seriously about his work -- even while treating it as an intellectual game -- and feared those readers who would either fail to understand, or fail to respect his serious intentions.

His health had its ups and downs during the 1960's. Especially when he was ill and in bed, he would dictate his stories to his wife. Surprisingly, those he dictated were the most straightforward in style, whereas those told in a seemingly "oral" style, like "The Dead Lady of Clown Town," were those he typed himself. When he was up and around, Dr. Linebarger maintained a busy schedule, both at Johns Hopkins and, as a member of the Foreign Policy Association, giving lectures on U.S. policy to foreign visitors (he was the only one who could talk slowly enough for them!) and working on non-fiction projects.

When Benson bought "Old North Australia" for Pyramid, Pohl had to run the two extracts from it as novellas instead of as chapters in a serial in order to get them on the stands before the Pyramid edition of "The Planet Buyer." The Pyramid book reached a wider market than the previous year's Regency collection, of course, and it was followed in 1965 by "Space Lords," the only one of Dr. Linebarger's books for which he wrote extensive commentaries. "Space Lords," significantly, contained all the shorter works directly related to "Old North Australia" but "Alpha Ralpa Boulevard" -- which had already appeared in "You Will Never be the Same." Evidently Dr. Linebarger considered these his best short works -- and they were.

The dedication of "Space Lords" to Eleanor Jackson, the Negro servant who had been in the Linebarger household since shortly after World War II, underscored the parallels between the situation of the underpeople and the contemporary racial situation. Dr. Linebarger, in spite of this, had little interest in social causes -- in particular, he didn't like clergymen getting involved in political issues which he thought they didn't know anything about. "There was sort of a personal feeling in the Negro parallel," Mrs. Linebarger explains. "She (Eleanor) really was like one of the family. Paul would get involved in a social issue only if it were first a personal issue. It was not out of idealism -- there had to be something to trigger it."

Notwithstanding the racial parallel, it was startling how well Dr. Linebarger, in the cycle of stories dealing with the too perfect society of the Instrumentality, the revolt of the underpeople, the Old Strong Religion and the Rediscovery of Man, was able to create worlds that had a reality of their own. Viewing Earthport and Alpha Ralpa Boulevard through the eyes of Jestocost or Paul and Virginia, one can almost feel the weight of millenia of history -- and view our own era as some dim legend lost in antiquity. Shayol, for all of being taken from Dante emotionally, fits into a science fiction scheme with its treatment of the effects of strange drugs and brain stimulation on the pleasure-pain principle. The trial of D'joan/Joan becomes more than a retelling of the Joan of Arc story, because of its daring treatment of a psychosocial theme -- the deliberate engineering of a martyrdom in order to create a legend that will change the course of history.

All this was undoubtedly because Dr. Linebarger was a careful planner. The notebook he kept on the history of the Instrumentality gave his stories a coherence often lacking among his imitators. And the styles and methods he used were not something he thought up on the

spur of the moment, but reworkings of traditional Chinese and other techniques of storytelling with which he had been familiar since his childhood and used before in some of his manuscripts from the 1930's. Even this fitted into a science fiction context, however: the human culture of the future would logically be the result of many existing cultural traditions coming together, and indeed the society in which Lord Jestocost, C'Mell, Lady Alice More and Rod McBan play crucial roles is a blend of Oriental and Occidental influences that is quite convincing. The intrigues may be inspired by the "Romance of Three Kingdoms" -- but the stakes are the government secrets maintained in a computer bank.

Some of the stories outside the main cycle do not show the same care and attention. In the Casher O'Neill stories, for example, the mixture of a religious message with a situation too obviously based on Middle East politics fails to create a reality of its own; in fact, Pohl rejected "On the Sand Planet," which may be the worst story Dr. Linebarger ever wrote. Pohl also turned down "Drunkboat" and "The Crime and Glory of Commander Suzdal," but he still was more tolerant than Gold had been. Gold would probably have rejected nearly all the later stories because of the religious messages. Pohl did, however, change several of Dr. Linebarger's idiosyncratic story titles. "Think Blue, Count Two," for example, had come in as "Three People in a Cube, All Alone Together," and "Under Old Earth" was originally titled "The Sum is Null."

"Under Old Earth" was the last story he wrote, and one of the strangest. Part of the main cycle of post-1960 stories, it differs in style from the rest. Whereas the other stories in the cycle take the form of "explanations" of legends told elsewhere, the tale of the old Lord Sto Odin and Sunboy seems to be a legend in the "original" form. It certainly shows that Dr. Linebarger had lost none of his inventive powers, and could have continued to write stories of the first rank, even under the pressure for greater production that had led to some mediocre ones, and even trifles like "From Gustible's Planet."

He was, in fact, talking about a whole new series of stories, "The Lords of the Afternoon," which would have been set in the period following the Rediscovery of Man. Even his friend Arthur Burns could not quite grasp what Dr. Linebarger intended. And Mrs. Linebarger admits, "I wasn't quite sure what he had in mind.... maybe something mystical. The idea of the mystic, inexplicable experience, somehow tied in with science fiction and the plan of things." Dr. Linebarger also talked of writing a mainstream adventure novel.

But neither was ever written -- except in his brain. In 1965, after finishing "Under Old Earth," he and his wife went on a series of world travels again -- Greece, Egypt, Taiwan and Australia again. There was more research to be done on Southeast Asian politics -- and there was a history of "small wars" Dr. Linebarger had in mind. Once in Australia, he even took a side trip to New Guinea to do a survey on problems of security and social development there. He announced that he hoped to retire to Australia one day.

But when he returned to the United States in 1966, his health failed him. Hospitalized once more at the Johns Hopkins medical center, he suffered a fatal heart attack there Aug. 6, at the age of 53. Most of his readers -- those outside organized Fandom -- would learn through obituaries in science fiction magazines that he had been the creative genius known to them as Cordwainer Smith.

-- j.j.p.

End of Part Two. Part Three will be devoted to an overview of Dr. Linebarger's science fiction, and an examination of important connecting ideas and themes that run through the Instrumentality canon as an expression of his underlying philosophy.

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Our deep appreciation again to Mrs. Genevieve Linebarger, Sam Moskowitz, Frederik Pohl and James H. Bready; also to Mrs H.L. Gold, Robert Silverberg and Anthony Lewis. We still seek information as to the place of publication, in 1928, of "War No. 81-Q," which, under the pseudonym of Anthony Bearden, was Dr. Linebarger's first story.

RINGWORLD

by Larry Niven
Ballantine 02046.4 * 95¢

"Louis Wu, I found your challenge verbose. In challenging a kzin, a simple scream of rage is sufficient. You scream and you leap."

"You scream and you leap," said Louis. "Great."

Picture a million-mile wide barrel hoop 180 million miles in diameter. Hang it around a K9 star and spin it at 770 miles per second to provide artificial gravity on the inner surface. Build a range of thousand-mile high mountains along each edge to keep the air and water from spilling off into space. Now take that inner surface, equal to three million Earths, and cover it with oceans and mountains and rivers and mystery. That's what Larry Niven has done -- and gone on from there.

Niven brings four characters to the Ringworld: Louis Wu, a jaded survivor type; Nessus the puppeteer, who knows most of the secrets of Known Space; Speaker-to-Animals, the just-barely reasonable kzin; and Teela Brown, a sweet young thing whose talent -- and tragedy -- is being lucky. They are all so good that sometimes the Ringworld just gets in their way.

Well, you also get to attend another great Niven party where all the girls get to scratch the kzin behind the ears, join the puppeteer migration, make the inevitable trek/quest after the mandatory crash landing and, in a scene that will blow the fuses in your sense of wonder, fall into a crater full of stars.

But this is just the action. Niven has used much of the book to explore the consequences and implications of some of the themes he has touched upon before. He considers longevity, which seems to fascinate him as much as personal immortality obsesses Heinlein. The hero begins the book fed up with life at 200. And one of the characters is a 1,000-year old whore who is so good at her trade by now that she sounds too dangerous to have around. Niven also considers psi, and what the ultimate psi-gifted person might be like, and why puppeteers are cowards -- or seem to be.

I wish people would stop saying Niven is the new Arthur C. Clarke. His worlds feel as solid as Heinlein's, and in the compression of his style and the zappiness of his concepts he is like the early James Blish. In philosophy, he and Clarke are poles apart. Clarke pictures the Overlords of "Childhood's End" as tragic figures for being immune to the evolutionary influences of the Overmind. In "Ringworld," Niven implies that a superior race is going to be justly punished for having had the gall to dare to tinker. And he shows the result of that tinkering first-hand, and there is nothing poetic about it. Evolution may be sublime -- but it hurts.

All in all, I would say this is the book you spent 1970 waiting for. When you see it, just scream and leap!

-- Sand Meschkow

Amen! -- j.j.p.

THE ELEVENTH COMMANDMENT

by Lester del Rey
Ballantine 02068.5 * 95¢

Lester del Rey is known more as a short story writer than as a novelist. Most of his novel-length works have been either juveniles or pot-boilers; "Nerves" was expanded from a novella and "Police Your Planet" seems to have vanished from public view.

"The Eleventh Commandment" was originally published in 1962. But that was by Regency, which means hardly anyone saw it. Anyway, this is a revised edition -- and a lot of new fans have come along in the last eight years. So a lot of readers are about to discover that del Rey can write a damn good novel when he really sets his mind to it.

It's one that apparently confused some readers the first time it appeared. "The Eleventh Commandment" takes place on a future Earth ruled

by a Church Militant which has ordained the faithful to "be fruitful and multiply" to replenish the Earth following an atomic war -- but seems bent on pursuing that policy to the bitter end even though it now means unprecedented overpopulation and all the human squalor and misery that inevitably go with it.

Because the Church is proved "right" in the novel, some readers have concluded that del Rey "really" endorses the present-day Catholic position on birth control. Or else they call the climax of the book a cheap trick -- a rabbit pulled out of a hat. This may be because they don't really understand the author's frame of reference.

If del Rey has any god at all, it is Darwin. "Good," in most of his science fiction, tends to be whatever advances evolution; "evil" whatever retards it. And he insists his conclusions be logical -- even (or especially) when grim. All else is circumstantial.

This is the hard-line del Rey, unsentimental in his handling of the conflicts of Martian exile Boyd Jensen with Church authorities and the Earth woman Ellen as he strives to understand, and at last come to terms with, what seems to be Hell on Earth. Yet this is a very human story too. The characterizations are well drawn, including those of Pope Bonaforte and Blind Stephen, the leader of a crusade which turns out to be justified -- although not for theological reasons (this new edition contains added material shedding more light on his motives).

"The Eleventh Commandment" builds up with remorseless logic -- it won't please those who think "human values" are derived from Never Never Land instead of the facts of existence. But the genetics should be clear enough to anyone with even a high school education, and the clues all point to del Rey's resolution of what human values must be in the grim future he projects. Yet the novel still conveys del Rey's underlying belief in the dignity and worth of man and his struggles. It's a grim sort of optimism in the last analysis -- but logical.

-- j.j.p

ONE MILLION TOMORROWS

by Bob Shaw
Ace 62938 * 75¢

One of these days, Bob Shaw is going to write a Hugo-winning novel. But "One Million Tomorrows" isn't it.

The new Shaw novel is disappointing in a different way from his previous effort, "The Palace of Eternity." There, he began with a very well-developed situation -- then cast it aside for what (despite all his subsequent disclaimers) was a muddled spiritual message presented as a "solution" to a realistic problem. But whereas "Palace" was never finished, "One Million Tomorrows" never properly gets started.

Will Carewe, the protagonist, lives in a society in which immortality carries a stiff price: it makes males eunuchs. Nature, we are told, provides a natural check on immortals reproducing their kind. Then Carewe's employers at a pharmaceutical firm tell him they have a new drug that confers eternal life without this drawback, and he agrees to be the guinea pig. His wife doesn't believe this, and leaves him -- allegedly because she can't get along without sex (they were already estranged). And someone else gets her pregnant.

Interesting situation. But nothing is ever made of it -- and it turns out to be a red herring anyway. Carewe runs away to Africa, to join a team forcing immortality on rebellious natives. While there, he discovers someone is trying to kill him. He escapes, returns home, and eventually uncovers the plot -- which involves his employers.

Along the way, there is much discussion of immortals having a succession of personalities instead of a single identity. But nothing is really made of this idea, either. Instead, Shaw treats us to a very silly climax (silly because it is pointless, not because it is "melodramatic"), in which Carewe's employers reveal cliché motivations and assorted villains are dispatched gorily.

It's effective as a thriller. And yet, you come away with the feeling Shaw hasn't really settled anything -- whether the question of Nature putting a check on immortality, or living with a succession of personalities, or even Carewe's relationship with his wife.

-- j.j.p.

LET THE FIRE FALL

by Kate Wilhelm
 Doubleday * \$4.95
 Lancer 74-586 * 75¢

I haven't ever read anything by Kate Wilhelm before, so some of the statements made on the basis of this single volume may seem strange to some. If they do, then you can know that "Let the Fire Fall" is not a typical Wilhelm novel. It does seem unlikely to me that someone who appears so often in Orbit could be turning out traditional S.F. like this novel.

For many years, S.F. authors have written about theocracies; so much so that they've almost developed a sub-genre. You might think that after such classics as "If This Goes On" and "Gather, Darkness!" there isn't much room in this area for anything but imitations. There have been a lot of thpse, I'll admit, but there is room for a fresh new approach. Kate Wilhelm has proved it.

Imagine what could have happened if Adolf Hitler was a fundamentalist preacher. Imagine what power a religious demagogue could have over the people of any country (including this one) if he produced a few miracles here and there to prove himself. "Let the Fire Fall" is one of the most detailed studies of this idea ever done, and also one of the best and most convincing stories on the effects of alien contact in the history of S.F.

In the first chapter, an alien spaceship lands in the U.S., and all its crew members die before any real contact can be made. The only survivor is an infant who was born outside the ship (and switched with another child by the doctor who did the delivery). The result is national paranoia. Rumors of an alien plague start. Obie Cox, a general good-for-nothing who claims to have been the first one at the ship, sees a chance to make a buck and starts a religion, claiming to have received a vision from God about the nature of the aliens (they are evil). He catches on at an incredible rate; he tells the people just what they want to hear. The aliens are evil and God is battling their kind all over the universe. This is a test for mankind, which must convert the one survivor to "the truth." (Unknown to Cox, the child the U.N. is keeping as the alien is really his own bastard son, while the real alien was living with him for a while and performing miracles before he ran off.) He condones immorality, claiming that people can do anything as long as they are loyal to the church. The next stage, of course, is "Destroy the Infidel!" The contry is pushed to the verge of civil war, but the thing gets completely out of Cox's hands and he is finally destroyed by the very forces he set in motion. ## Well, in one ending, at least -- j.j.p. ##

I'd like to warn the readers about one thing: the first chapter, for some inexplicable reason, is ghastly. It's subliterate and often hard to follow. Miss Wilhelm makes the mistake of introducing all the characters very quickly, so at first they are nothing but names. By about page 15, you find yourself looking back to see who's who. The rest of the book is written with a competent style and, more important, the characters are very well developed. After the first chapter, the book progresses from readable to un-putdownable. Miss Wilhelm seems to be a writer who needs time to get going, but I suspect she'll get over this someday and really knock us for a loop.

-- Darrell Schweitzer

You're right. "Let the Fire Fall" is atypical, compared to the sort of thing Kate Wilhelm does for Orbit. It has a very tight, even melodramatic plot. And the alien, Blake, emerges as really a very "traditionalist" hero; alternate ending one is more in keeping with his character (the alternate ending idea itself is an inspiration, but of the kind that can be used only once without becoming banal). Maybe what is not permissible for human protagonists is all right for alien ones in Miss Wilhelm's book! I was struck by the parallels with that novel Robert Heinlein never wrote, "The Sound of His Wings." Also by the conglomeration of influences in the Wilhelm version: The Sinclair Lewis of "Elmer Gantry," the Edgar Pangborn of "A Mirror for Observers," the Heinlein of "If This Goes On...." and "Stranger in a Strange Land," the Daniel Keyes of "Flowers for Algernon" and even the E.E. Smith of "Gray Lensman." The whole novel runs so counter to Miss Wilhelm's New Wavish literary theories that its genesis baffles me. -- j.j.p.

I WILL FEAR NO EVIL

by Robert A. Heinlein
G.P. Putnam * \$6.95

Every now and then some author, often of great talent, writes a work that is completely and utterly worthless. Arthur Miller's "Death of a Salesman" is one example; "I will Fear No Evil" is another

Every now and then, some author writes a work that is morally depraved. Tolstoy's "Anna Karenina" is one; "I Will Fear No Evil" is another.

Robert A. Heinlein's new novel is worthless because it has no thematic unity, no plot, no action, no interesting commentary, no subtlety of characterization, no psychological observation, no style, no detailed extrapolation, no erotic stimulation. Any one of these could make a book worth reading. For a writer with intelligence, talent and technical experience, to sink to the level of "Death of a Salesman" is unforgivable..

"Anna Karenina" is depraved because it advocates the sacrifice of life to conformity. "I Will Fear No Evil" presents a trivial, limited existence as an ideal -- an idea just as revolting as Tolstoy's. Who, in this novel, is supposed to evoke our admiration? The illiterate Joe Branca, who is able to think and communicate only in a crude pidgin language, who lives aimlessly from day to day, who is distinguished only by some artistic impulses that he is incapable of understanding? The principal characters, the financier Johann Sebastian Bach Smith, his secretary Eunice Branca and his lawyer, Jake Solomon, do nothing but spew forth an endless flood of repetitive, unimaginative dialogue (more than 90 per cent of the book is dialogue). The story gimmick is the cohabitation in one body of the spirits of Eunice, Johann, and eventually of Jake. Yet this descent into the realm of the ghost story accomplishes nothing -- for we are provided with no new insight. The characters merely resume the conversation.

"I Will Fear No Evil" is not erotic (whatever the blurb may say). The dozen or so principal characters are bedded down in almost every possible combination. Heinlein presents a rather unconvincing view of homosexuality, and uses it as a sort of sub-theme. But nothing is described, except in the vaguest generalities. What shocks me is that the book manages to associate sex with boredom.

"I Will Fear No Evil" isn't satirical. The range of action and discussion is too small to encompass satire.

Sadly, Heinlein seems to have lost the effective tricks of style that he picked up from Sinclair Lewis. Even that Heinlein calling card, the clever, well-turned phrase, has vanished.

Not only are the characters dull, they are identically dull. No character's speech, behavior, psychology or opinions can be distinguished from those of any other character. Everyone is NICE, with the exception of some of Johann's relatives, who are never seen. "I Will Fear No Evil" lacks the life-blood of fiction -- conflict.

Heinlein's work in the last decade has been wildly erratic. Like the early work of a prodigy, it has swung from brilliant to inane, often in a single work. Incompatible ideas were juxtaposed: Could "Starship Troopers" have become a campus craze?

Heinlein's earlier work was essentially non-intellectual. Yet, it was well-researched, economically written and thoroughly professional. Later, he began to move into the realm of ideas. Somehow, however, he operated under the assumption that the function of philosophy is to produce rambling, disorganized discussions of theological questions. He doesn't seem to understand that a writer must be as conscientiously exact and solidly structured in the handling of ideas as in the handling of science.

Once he began dealing with abstract ideas, and once he had established the wrong method of doing so, Heinlein set about selecting the questions he would deal with. Here, his religious orientation took over. He still, ten years later, labors under the impression that the existence of God and life after death are the only important questions in higher

thought. They have bothered him ever since his abortive attempt at philosophizing in "Beyond This Horizon." Apparently, by the mid-sixties, he had come up with an answer; the primary goal of human life is reproduction; there is life after death, which consists of some sort of soul or ghost independent of the brain; God is the sum of these ghosts; individual ghosts can die, but their death has some sort of meaning because there are always babies being born. This rather confused bit of theology is by no means presented clearly in "I Will Fear No Evil." One must follow its threads through book after book, and finally through the verbal morass of this new novel. It is most clearly expressed in the "Poddy story" of "Podkayne of Mars," some of the lines of which are repeated in "I Will Fear No Evil." Heinlein must think little of his readers to imagine they would find it worthwhile to wade through a jungle of boring material, only to uncover a snatch of theology of dubious importance.

One can't maintain an unintegrated view of science, philosophy and art. If Heinlein was willing to sacrifice scientific validity (in writing a ghost story) for the sake of maintaining a chaotic view of philosophical thought, then it was inevitable that he would eventually sacrifice his artistic integrity as well. The result is "I Will Fear No Evil," a hopeless disaster in all three respects.

-- A. Philippe Boyer

##A worthless novel? Yes, alas. But depraved? I find it hard to imagine anyone being corrupted by a work so devoid of any real passion, intellectual or emotional. "I Will Fear No Evil" is, in the words used by Cordwainer Smith to describe the music of his Earth Government and Instrumentality, "bland as honey, and sickening in the end." It lacks even the partial vitality of "Stranger in a Strange Land." In passing, I would question your contention that Heinlein's early science fiction was "non-intellectual." Science is, after all, an intellectual discipline involving a great deal of abstract thought. And what, indeed, is philosophy but the science of all things? "Methusaleh's Children," "The Roads Must Roll" and even the better juveniles like "Farmer in the Sky" were more "intellectual" than "I Will Fear No Evil." These are bitter words from one who, like many, grew up on Heinlein and who still has only the highest respect for his great works of the past. But this latest was one I could not bring myself to review for Renaissance. I simply did not have the heart to. -- j.j.p.##

BEASTCHILD

by Dean R. Koontz
Lancer 74719-075 * 75¢

Would you believe that Dean R. Koontz is the new Zelazny-Delany, and that "Beastchild" is sure to win a Hugo this year? Well, would you at least believe that he is a capable science fiction writer of, say, the second or third rank? Still no?

How about as 1970's answer to Jerry Sohl; a so-so writer of so-so books. Ah, there you have it! But would you believe that there are, out there among your fellow fans and pros, people who actually believe one of the first two propositions? How has he achieved this miracle?

Well, for one thing he is With It. He writes non-fiction pieces like "The Pig Society." For another, his S.F. novels are full of moral concern -- a fabulous innovation which, as every neofan knows, did not exist in the genre until Harlan Ellison began making speeches.

Take "Beastchild," for example. It is all about that shocking and never-before-touched subject of racial hatred. The Naoli have conquered Earth and virtually exterminated mankind (this is called irony). One, however, suffers a guilt complex when he comes across a human boy in the ruins of a city and helps him escape. But escape isn't easy -- for the pursuit is led by a Hunter who is uncompromisingly vicious. This is because, we eventually learn, a Hunter has no soul. Neither do Terran astronauts (Hah! Another argument against the space program, which we know is a fascist plot because Barry Malzberg tells us so.). In fact, the human-Naoli war got started because our astronauts were so nasty.

All this develops in the course of a fairly standard chase-plot, studded with Star Trekkish terminology ("phasersystem") and would-be poetical-philosophical interludes. Neither brilliant nor horrible, to sum up -- just a nebbish of a novel.

-- j.j.p.

1. EH?

Quick quiz -- name the eminent science fiction critic who made each of the following statements:

1. "Kurt Vonnegut's 'The Sirens of Titan' (was) not only the best science fiction novel of its year, but one of the best ever written."

2. "There has been quite a bit of absolute value-judgment in SF, for which I can only refer the reader to C.S. Lewis' 'An Essay in Criticism,' in which he disposes for all time, it seems to me, of the whole question of value-judgment of literature.

3. "People who read nothing but science fiction and fantasy -- the Moskowitz syndrome -- are fundamentally non-readers."

4. "The 1968 novella award to Philip Jose Farmer is a plain case of the bowling over of non-readers by daring innovations taken lock, stock and barrel out of the 'Cave of the Winds' chapter of James Joyce's 'Ulysses.'"

The answers? 1. James Blish; 2. James Blish; 3. James Blish; and 4. James Blish (all from Speculation 27).

Isn't it nice to learn that "The Sirens of Titan" was absolutely the best science fiction novel of its time, but that absolute judgments are absolutely impossible? That Sam Moskowitz typifies the pernicious group of "non-readers" which dominates the Hugo awards -- and that this same group of non-readers propelled "Riders of the Purple Wage" to its Hugo? And to learn all these things from the same man?

By the way, Mr. Blish, the correct title of that C.S. Lewis book is "An Experiment in Criticism."

2. NEW LEFT NOTES

Richard Hodgens informs us (the book itself not having arrived yet in the vicinity of Darkest Berkeley Heights) that the latest Nebula Awards book issued by the Science Fiction Writers of America contains a scholarly article by a Prof. Suvin explaining that the only worthwhile science fiction nowadays is produced by the New Left.

Can this be the beginning of a political test for eligibility in the Nebula competition?

Perhaps not, for we are told that Prof. Suvin had to stretch his point by explaining that last year's award to Ursula LeGuin's "The Left Hand of Darkness" was a "triumph for the New Left." Now without going into Mrs. LeGuin's politics -- we don't even know what they are -- we find it odd indeed that a victory for her rather apolitical novel over the explicitly New Leftish "Bug Jack Barron" and "Slaughterhouse Five" could possibly be interpreted as a "triumph" for a political group.

Still, we are bothered by this report. Is the leadership of the S.F.W.A., in sponsoring the Suvin article, proposing that Nebulas ought to be awarded on a political basis in future? We certainly hope that this is not the intent of James Blish, editor of this year's volume, or of Damon Knight, the power behind the throne in the S.F.W.A. -- or of anyone else in a responsible position.

3. SLIM PICKINGS

Others have already noted that 1970 has been a lean year, as far as science fiction works worthy of consideration for Hugo awards go.

Certainly there haven't been any novels in the past year to match "The Left Hand of Darkness." We have had some good examples, true, but no great ones. Perhaps Larry Niven's "Ringworld," Greg Benford's "Deeper than the Darkness," Joanna Russ' "And Chaos Died," Wilson Tucker's "The Year of the Quiet Sun" and Gordon Dickson's "The Tactics of Mistake" are possible contenders. Certainly Robert Heinlein's "I Will Fear No Evil" and Hal Clement's "Star Light" were bitter disappointments.

And have there been any short stories or novellas in 1970 -- any at all that seem to rate as classics? Oh, to be sure, something will be nominated, and there may even be some partisan passions aroused. But will there be any winners that S.F. fans will look back upon 10 years from now with pride? Yes -- a lean year.

-- j.j.p

We must be doing something right when we can get a card like the following from Robert Silverberg:

"Your Cordwainer Smith piece was the most interesting & important item I've seen in a fanzine in years. Congratulations -- and thanks for having taken the trouble to ferret all this information out. I look forward eagerly to part 2 and beyond. It was Fred Pohl who got the 1948 copyright date going for SCANNERS in a Permabook anthology he edited many years ago. Somehow in doing the credit lines for the Hall of Fame I checked the anthology instead of the original mag, which I have; hence the goof. Wish I hadn't."

The Smith article has generated a greater response than anything else ever printed in Renaissance -- and 100 per cent favorable, for a change! A. Philippe Boyer, editor of Titan, was, however, so awed as to have slightly mixed feelings:

"I enjoyed The Eschatology of Cordwainer Smith tremendously. His early life leaves me feeling that I've frittered away all my life up till now -- imagine, I'm eighteen, and I haven't negotiated a single silver loan."

And we even heard from Jeffrey D. Smith of Baltimore, whom we apparently made a Big Name Fan several issues back by labeling him a "Baltimore New Wavicle:"

"The Cordwainer Smith material is excellent. If you used your energies this constructively all the time, I'd have no quarrel with you," he states.

Smith (Jeffrey, that is) argues that Vic, the protagonist of "A Boy and His Dog," would so have fed the girl to his dog even if she'd been a member of his subculture: "When it became a matter of survival for the dog, Vic decided she was just a girl, period." And here Harlan has just adopted the Women's Lib movement, too!

Our Baltimore New Wavicle closes: "Why don't you turn (our zine) into a real live fanzine, with a lettercolumn and a subscription list and all those other goodies that come along? If you devote it to material like the Cordwainer Smith stuff and your good book reviews and get rid of Darrell Schweitzer's hideous satires (and I use the word loosely), you could expand, hopefully switch to 8½ x 11, add artwork, charge 25¢, and pick up a Hugo nomination or something. I know the idea of publishing a free fanzine was to spread the Gospel as far as possible, but now that it's pretty much spread and 90 % of the people who are interested are on your mailing list, why not settle down?"

We'll no doubt be moving somewhat in the direction you indicate, but not entirely. Whether "90 per cent" of the interested people are on our mailing list is open to question, but apparently there is still a need to spread the Gospel -- or at least to counter another gospel, as witness this from Dwight R. Decker of Bowling Green (Ohio) State:

"I'm taking a course in Kreative Writing at the moment, and the instructor is assigning readings in avant-garde stuff. Seems to me that New Wave SF got started by frustrated SF writers who noticed the 'little magazine' writers getting praise in all the Right Magazines for experimental nothings that nobody could read, or wanted to, and decided that by jumping on the bandwagon of nihilism and incomprehensibility they could get some critical acclaim too, and not have to put up with the jeers of 'Buck Rogers trash!' any longer. If you think New Wave is bad, Mainstream Avant-Garde is worse. I've been reading selections in an anthology called The Single Voice, which is supposed to represent 'the best fiction of today.' Every last story describes repulsive characters obsessed with insane desires and compulsions. One, "The Guest," tells how a drug addict is hired to watch over an apartment for two weeks, and the story is about how he wrecks the place. Most of the protagonists in the stories aren't even human, certainly nothing like 'the folks next door.' The editor explains in his introduction how modern fiction fearlessly exposes life for being nothing and meaningless.... so I picked up my copy of Modern Library's Famous Science Fiction Stories and re-read 'The Roads Must Roll.'"

Bowling Green State University, so far as we know, isn't famous as a hotbed of literary radicalism -- rather, the so-called "radical Avant-Garde" has now become the Establishment. As we have said before, the New Wavicles in science fiction aren't revolting against any kind

of "Establishment" in science fiction -- only seeking an accomodation with the mainstream Establishment. If the mainstream were preaching, say, Dianetics instead of "existential" nihilism, that would be what the New Wavicles would imitate.

"True," continues Decker, "My own writing isn't as good as I would like it to be, but I'm trying to develop a technique of story telling that satisfies me and the reader. It's disturbing that my instructor is trying to pressure me into avant-garde stuff. John Campbell wrote something to the effect that technological schools turn out better writers than liberal arts colleges, and I'm inclined to agree with him. This course seems designed to stomp out any talent a student has. Or could it be some sort of scheme to bring to the surface the hardest and the best on the theory only they could survive such an onslaught, as in that old Asimov story?" ("Profession")

Many fans who hear First Speaker Lester del Rey complain about the influence of Academe are skeptical -- but Decker offers clear confirmation of what del Rey has been saying.

As for Schweitzer's satires.....well, Jeffrey D. Smith, they are really no more "hideous" than the things they satirize. Less literary, perhaps -- but then fans in general aren't as talented as pros; when they become so, they become pros.

Apropos all this, Philip Jose Farmer informs us:

"According to your definition, I must be an Old Waver; hence, even such an experimental story as RIDERS OF THE PURPLE WAVE is Old Wave, because it ends on an optimistic and positive note....."

Hmmm.....Better not tell Harlan that! After all the trouble he went to to get that story a Hugo as a New Wave example!

From Greg Benford, an appreciative letter:

"Your review of 'Deeper than the Darkness' was far more laudatory than I'd expected for my first novel. Thanks very much. You summed the book up well, probably better than I could now, though I would have emphasized more than you the personal nature of Ling's conflict with the two societies I presented. There is one level of the novel which is autobiographical, though of course I did not intend or expect most people to read it that way.

"Your comments on my lack of emotional coloring I take very much to heart, for that seems to be the prime complaint I have heard thus far. (Yours is the first full-blown review. However, Hank Stine was writing a long review which I saw in part.....He liked the book a lot too, which shows there is some bridge between you two.)"

Lest anyone think we never print hostile comments, however, we offer the following from David Hulvey of Harrisonburg, Va.:

"Dug your Cordwainer Smith thingy. However, the rest of the SCATOLOGICAL INFATUATION sickens me to grope for obscenities adequate to describe your moral dilemma. Pierce, have your eyes ever really perused these books so savagely attacked in your shitazine? I mean, it's like Smearo AX KNEW cutting down the Campus Unrest report before even looking at it. C'mon fellow, HOLY WARS are for fanatics -- you for instance, not the mainstay (sic) of fandom which could care less for such narrowmindedness; the majority of fans want to read, not bleed on a battleground of little significance, like your fuggheaded violence against experimental literature."

Same to you, brother! On second thought, Franz Rottensteiner is starting a fanzine. Maybe you could work for him. By the way, we DO read all books we review -- if any of the authors are really bleeding, we'll be happy to supply band aids.

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE: People must think the editor is obsessed by "A Boy and His Dog." This is not the case. In fact, we are, by this time, sick and tired of hearing about it, and even more sick and tired of commentaries about it. It wasn't a story we wanted to especially to make an issue of -- it just kept cropping up, in Nebula and Hugo nominations and an anthology. Now that those are past, we prefer to consider it a dead issue. But Darrell Schweitzer now -- he doesn't know when to quit. He sent us this satire, and he confidently thinks it is the best he has ever written. At the Phillycon, we told him we had some qualms. "Why don't you send it to England? Somebody has just started a company there called Aardvark House," we told him. But Mr. Schweitzer would not be denied. "Disclaim it if you want to," he said. "But print it. Otherwise, I'll tell Procrastination readers that you are chicken!" This would not have been an effective threat only a few months ago. But since Procrastination is now LEGIBLE, we now indeed have cause to be worried. So, with considerable reluctance, we now present --

A BOY AND HIS AARDVARK

by Harlequin Elephant
Condensed to its essentials
by Darrell Schweitzer

"Well, here we are in the movie house, A. Wonder what everybody's doing without a single girl in sight?"

//Something that isn't fit for 14-year olds or their mummies.//

"You're right. I'm glad I have a telepathic aardvark in this story. He holds the reader's interest by being more believable than any of the people."

//I sense a broad. Let's follow her!//

"Look there! In the gymnasium. She's -- she's taking her clothes off!!!

//Shades of Earle Bergey! What're you gonna do?//

"I don't know. This is a hard decision!"

Boinnngggggg!!!!

"Hey broad! Come here!"

Screwscrewscrewfuckfuckfuckfuckfuck ("Whew!")fuckfuckfuck ("Hoo-boy! Sex!")fuckfuckfuckfuck (This is very profound) screwfuckfuck (There's deep phallic symbolism in it) fuckfuckfuck (heh heh...) fuckfuck (pant, pant).....

//They're coming for her! The bad guys!//

"Who?"

//The other people like you.//

"Guess us two'll have to stand off all three hundred of them. Should be fun. I haven't killed anybody in three whole days!"

//Oh you poor thing!//

"Here they come!"

Bang! Bang! Shoot, stab, blood, *G*O*R*E* death, mutilated bodies, lots of fun, ain't this shocking?

"The prose got too sizzling! The whole building is burning down!"

"We'll have to hide here in the pot boiler where we'll be safe."

"Tell me, hero, what'll we do to pass the time?"

"I can't imagine."

Fuckfuckfuckfuck *S*C*R*E*W* fuckfuckfuck etc.

Knock knock.

"Who's there?" (This could be the beginning of a very lame joke, but since this story is already an invalid, there is no need for it.)

"Mr. Hero, I represent GORY GALACTIC SHOCKERS Inc., a firm that specializes in SF comics. We'd like to do a story on you."

"What? A comic book on me! But this is such a deeply emotional and warmly human story! A comic book! The kids would never understand such profundities as this story contains."

"Did anyone ever tell you what Batman and Robin have been doing all this time?"

"Out! Out!"

"I guess you're right. This story would insult our readers' intelligence."

Bang, Bang!

"It's always more fun to shoot people in the back. Helps make me a sympathetic character because the reader realizes that he too would like to do it and everyone is a monster so even tho I'm a real shit I'm a sympathetic character and....."

"Let's meditate on that, Hero."

"Sure, Babe --"

Fuckfuckfuckfuck (well, you know by now)

"Ooops!"

"What, Babe?"

"I forgot my morning after pill! We'll have to go down to Squaresville and get it."

"Squaresville? Where's that?"

"Oh, just down the street, third sewer on your right."

"Was there anything of political significance in that last line?"

"In this story?"

* * * * *

"Gad, it's boring down here! No death or gore or gunfights or anything else worthwhile. We can't even fuck every five minutes."

"You must have an incredible store of ammunition."

"Six inches in diameter, both of them."

"Let's get out of here."

* * * * *

//I've been waiting a damned long time for you because I'm faithful and devoted and haven't had a good ---- --- (there's some things we do have to censor!) in quite a while and I'm jealous because you're always fucking her rather than living up to the dirty expectations the reader gets when he sees the title and author of this story and besides that I'm hungry --//

"Here, you can have her. She's got V.D. anyhow."

Munch munch munch

"I sure do like you, A. I don't know what I'd do without you."

//And I just love you. I'm still hungry and....//

Munch munch munch

Burp!

//What do I do when I get syphilis in my stomach? Maybe there'll be a sequel and we'll find out.//

-- Darrell Schweitzer

Please address poison pen letters to:

Darrell Schweitzer
113 Deepdale Drive
Strafford, Pa., 19087

* * * * *

NOTICE -- Harper & Row will publish, in February, a treatise on science fiction by Donald A. Wollheim, editor of Ace Books. Entitled, "The Universe Makers," it will survey both major authors and crucial ideas in the genre, and should be of particular interest to our readers. At leading bookstores, \$4.95.

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This is the largest issue of Renaissance yet. More reading for you, more red ink for us! For those who have not seen Renaissance before, we must explain that it is last year's winner of the "Most Pretentious Fanzine" poll. Maybe we'll do better this year. In the meantime, a word from one of our New Wave opponents:



A MESSAGE TO OUR READERS

HELLO -- I'm Felix, the New Wave dog. As you can see, I am not limited by narrow, worn-out concepts of what a dog should be. The most avant garde of the breeders agree that I have extended the frontiers of canine vision. In fact, some of them have gone so far as to declare that I am a creative carnivore! Of course, some narrow-minded, prejudiced persons (no doubt the same ones that are always complaining of Communist fluoridation plots) have questioned the validity of my A.K.A. registration. In particular, there is a canary who is always saying, "I tawt I taw a puddy tat," whenever he sees me. Obviously, he is paranoid -- a raving psychotic. Who ever heard of a dog harming a canary?