

TYNDALLITE  
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from Norm Metcalf, P.O. Box 1368,  
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The New Port News #161 May 1995 - Ned Brooks

p. 6 You say you hope that the cartoon spaceman remembers to remove his helmet before trying to drink. When Raymond A. Palmer tried to "science-fictionalize" John C. Burroughs' "John Carter And the Giant Of Mars" he added a space-helmet to one of the characters but forgot to delete the character having his ear sliced off by a sword.

p. 10 You seem to have overlooked the civilizing of the U.S. copyright laws. Copyright is now life plus. Even in earlier U.S. benighted laws it remained in effect regardless of the copyright holder's death.

The Night Land - William Hope Hodgson "as condensed and mapped by Dave Hall", The Purple Mouth Press, Newport News, Virginia 1995

Thanks for putting this through. If ever I reread THE NIGHT LAND the maps in this version might be useful.

The Golden Age of Comic Fandom - Bill Schelly [flyer therefore put through SFPA by Gary Brown]

Gary, thanks for putting this in the mailing. There are a number of interties between comics and science-fiction and between comics fandom and science-fiction fandom. From the ad and the the list of contributors this seems to be a well-done project.

The Jewel of the Senile May 1995 - Harry Warner, Jr.

p. 1 Your anecdote about Lafayette R. Hubbard's supposed power to coalesce clouds might mean that he studied in the shadow of Walter B. Gibson and thus learned how to cloud men's minds (though his avowed objective was to make them clear).

p. 5 Your comment about the near-future when complete and unedited versions of all of Stephen King's stories appear means that instead of six-foot shelves someone will have to sell six-light-year shelving 'to hold your complete works of Stephen King'.

TYNDALLITE May, 1995 - me

p. 569 My sentence "So what Ned Brooks was remembering I'm not sue." should have its last word changed to "sure".

THE AFAB GAZETTE NO. 95-5 - Meade Frierson III

p. [2] You ask about the correct spelling of the agent's name. It's Kirby McCauley (unless I've goofed it).

pp. [4-5] As for pre-1947 science-fiction about the upper atmosphere I refer you to Arthur C. Doyle's "The Horror Of the Heights" and Robert A. Heinlein's "Goldfish Bowl" and possibly to Eric F. Russell's "Sinister Barrier".

Twygdrasil And Treehouse Gazette #33 May 1995 - Richard Dengrove

pp. 4-6 Your commentary upon the life, legends and works of Isaac Newton make me wonder if the reason that man's spaceships have yet to reach the vicinity of another star is that they've been worked upon by Newtonian mechanics but not their relatives.

pp. 6-8 Thanks for using your ostensible review of John Crowley's AEGYPT to discourse upon larger issues in the history and methodology of renaissance and medieval magic.

p. 12 You're right about Sam Moskowitz having so much knowledge of science-fiction that he's able to establish parallelisms between numerous stories.

p. 13 You say that the lie detector "was invented by the same person who created Wonder Woman, William Moulton Marston.". While I'm no expert on Wonder Woman the earliest I recall her was during WWII, the lie detector was in use by the Berkeley, California police department shortly after the turn of the century. It was mentioned in William MacHarg and Edwin Balmer's THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF LUTHER TRANT which appeared in magazine form shortly before being in hardcovers during 1910. Some fan(s) who didn't know any better classified the book as science-fiction because it mentioned actual inventions of which they were ignorant and because Hugo Gernsback reprinted some of the stories in non-science-fictional detective magazines. So I'd be interested in having you elaborate upon your remark.

p. 14 You say that "Most medieval authors lacked the resources to write factual history." I think you're right. One exception was Snorri Sturluson. He explicated his methodology of judging his source material in HEIMSKRINGLA and though he made a few errors (such as Harald Hardrada's relationship with the Roman empress) he's often amazingly right, especially compared with other medieval authors. Of course, this judgment is made with our current beliefs and prejudices.

By the way, an interesting trivia question is to name

the last Roman general to lead an invasion of England and the year of occurrence. It was Harald Hardrada in the year 1066. Harold Godwinson exhausted his army defeating Hardrada and thus was in turn defeated by William the Conqueror.

p. 16 While it's true that the book version of Jules Verne's TWENTY THOUSAND LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA keeps the reader in suspense as to which nation's vessels Nemo is sinking (other than the opening sinking of the U.S.S. ABRAHAM LINCOLN, otherwise Aronnax, Conseil and Land are locked in a cell on the NAUTILUS) near the end of THE MYSTERIOUS ISLAND Nemo reveals that he is Prince Dakkar, a leader of the 1857 Indian revolt and that he's been sinking British ships. In the magazine version he was a Polish nobleman in the 1863 revolt against Russia and had been sinking Russian vessels. But since France and Russia were allied Hetzel (Verne's publisher) had him change Nemo to Indian.

I don't recall how much THE AMERICAN WEEKLY printed about the occult. I only read it from May through August of 1947 and Abraham Merritt ceased editing it upon his death in 1943. The earliest THIS WEEK I can recall reading was about 1943 when they had a photo of the Mexican volcano Paricutin (spelling?) forming in a cornfield. But the main items I recall from THIS WEEK were "Sax Rohmer" stories.

You're right that Nathaniel Schachner's SPACE LAWYER was about space law and that the book SUBWAYS ARE FOR SLEEPING was about New York City bums. The parallel I was making was that in both cases the authors had run low on inspiration and padded the books with sequels.

SPIRITUS MUNDI #147 Apr-May 1995 - Guy H. Lillian III

p. [9? + 22?] Thanks for listing the 1994 Nebula winners and the 1995 Hugo nominees. I have a lot of catching-up reading to do.

pp. [13-14?] Yes, Robert A. Heinlein wrote a sequel to THE MOON IS A HARSH MISTRESS. It's titled something like THE CAT WHO WALKS THROUGH WALLS. It's readable and doesn't grind to a halt for preachment but he did much better.

p. [14?] Associating the O. J. Simpson conspiracy theories with the John F. Kennedy conspiracy theories is only the beginning for the Grand Unified Conspiracy Buffs. Abraham Lincoln was felled not by John Wilkes Booth but by a time-travelling bullet fired by Lee Harvey Oswald while Booth's bullet maintained Temporal Balance by hitting Kennedy. We can easily make pyrites of Occam's Razor.

Unnecessary Intimate Redundancies #4 [nd] - Sue Phillips

pp. [1-2] You say that a BABYLON 5 convention was supposed to be held in Chicago and that you planned on attending. In honor of Stephen V. Benet you might title

your conreport "By the Waters Of Babylon".

p. 3 You're right that the concept of parallel universes isn't original with George R. R. Martin. It goes back at least to Gertrude Barrows' "The Heads Of Cerberus", THRILL BOOK 15 Aug-15 Oct 1919; John C. Squire's IF, or HISTORY REWRITTEN, Viking Press, 1931; William F. Jenkins' "Sidewise In Time" ASTOUNDING STORIES Jun 1934; John S. Williamson's "The Legion Of Time" ASTOUNDING SCIENCE-FICTION May-Jul 1938; William Sell's "Other Tracks", ASTOUNDING SCIENCE-FICTION Oct 1938; Lyon S. de Camp's "The Wheels Of If" UNKNOWN Oct 1940; and multitudinous stories since then.

pp. [6-7] Thanks for supplying the title of THE X-FILES version of John W. Campbell, Jr.'s "Who Goes There?" as being "Ice".

And please don't apologize for going on so long about THE X-FILES. I'd rather you went on even further. I'd like to know more about the show from someone such as yourself who's both seen and enjoyed the episodes. Thanks for correcting my impression of the show based upon my seeing only a few poor and one good episode. I'll have to make more of an effort to see it.

SUGAR MAGNOLIA (Full Metal Minac Issue) - JoAnn Montalbano

p. 3 You say that you fell asleep during the French Revolution. I presume you're still ahead of time.

This is Not a Minacine #64 - Richard Lynch

p. 1 Here's hoping you find a new home to replace your fire-gutted shell.

p. 5 You say "The High Tatra section...has peaks that extend up to about 2,600 meters, higher than any mountain in North America east of the Mississippi." That's 8,530 feet. If you'd change your statement to the United States east of the Mississippi you'd be correct. The highest peak I can find in eastern Canada is Barbeau Peak, 8,544 feet in the United States Range on the approximate longitude of Washington, D.C.. The highest peak I can find in Greenland is 12,139 foot Gunnbjorn's Fjeld at about 30 degrees west. On the approximate longitudes of the Mississippi in Guatemala try Volcan Tajumulco at 13,845 feet, along with numerous other peaks in excess of 8,530 feet. Well east of the Mississippi's longitudes there's Honduras' Las Minas at 9,347 feet; Costa Rica's Chirripo at 12,530 feet; Panama's Volcan de Chiriqui at 11,400 feet; a peak in Haiti north of Belle Anse at 8,773 feet; the Dominican Republic's Pico Duarte at 10,417 feet along with numerous other peaks of eastern North America in excess of 8,530 feet.

not much'a nothin' #117 - Cliff Biggers

p. [1] You ask for information about a time-travel experiment called the Montauk Project. While it may be

coincidence you might wish to read Samuel H. Adams' novel THE FLYING DEATH which takes place at Montauk, Long Island, New York. It's a science-fictional murder mystery whose plot and resolution I don't wish to spoil for you.

p. [5] Thanks for letting us know that Earl Derr Biggers' THE AGONY COLUMN

"was a perfectly adequate book, but not as inspired as Biggers' Charlie Chan novels; somehow, the characters didn't manage to hook me as intensely."

p. [6] Thanks for your analysis of THE X-FILES and why some episodes achieve effectiveness by resonating some real-world conspiracy theory while in your estimation the ones straight out of someone's imagination fall flat.

"Yngvi is a Louse" and Other Graffitos #36 May 1995 - T. K. F. Weisskopf

p. 16 With your comments about the World Fantasy convention awards, the Nebula award and the Hugo award you seem to imply that the Hugo is a popular vote. But that's one of the biggest problems with the Hugo, the electorate is rigged. When Earl Kemp had nominating ballots placed in the prozines so as to try to have genuinely democratic nominations there was an outcry from WorldCon members who were afraid that they'd lose control (and some contended that open nominations would lead to ballot stuffing, actually they've got it backwards). It doesn't matter how many "fans" vote in the finals when it takes only a few nominations to make the final ballot.

You Mean You Don't Know? [no#, nd] - mike weber

p. 5 You wonder why the federal building in Oklahoma City was targeted. The supposed answer is that the perpetrators were acting out a science-fiction novel titled THE TURNER DIARIES in which that very building was blown up. This novel is supposed to have gone over with a bang among the right-wing militia types.

p. 6 You wonder about the 17 Apr 1995 date of the Oklahoma City bombing. Supposedly it was in commemoration of the attack on the Branch Davidian compound.

Oblio #98 Apr-May 1995 - Gary Brown

p. 15 Your statement about reprinting Dave Barry's Year In Review:

"No, there's no copyright violations on my part -- I'm not selling it, the version I run is what the MIAMI HERALD runs in it's [sic] TROPIC magazine, and it's well after release date."

shows a different view of copyright law. Under the law it makes no difference if you sell or give away more than one

copy, you're in violation. A faithful reproduction of someone else's version is still piracy and the legally required delay after release date is seventy-five years after Dave Barry's death for something copyrighted during his lifetime.

Seasons #22 Apr-May 1995 - E. M. Binker G. Hughes

Your back cover verse titled "Memorial Day Service" and copyrighted 1968 is effective.

A Minuscule Amount of CHATSWORTH #12 - anonymous [Ruth Judkowitz]

p. [3] You're close when you consider "psi" to be a Greek word. It's the twenty-third letter of the Greek alphabet. However, George H. Wells is correct about its adoption among science-fictioneers (I presume derived from the works of Rhine) as a prefix for extraordinary mental powers.

p. [4] Thanks for still being able to enjoy the works of Abraham Merritt. See Redd Boggs' letter in this issue. But I know that Chester D. Cuthbert will approve of your tastes.

As for Fritz Leiber, Jr.'s usage of "Burn, Witch, Burn" -- wasn't that a retitling of his "Conjure Wife"? I'm sorry to disappoint you but I don't recall any other usages of the title.

As for the originality of your idea of time as a marketable commodity I can't recall any previous usage of the idea (which isn't to say that there isn't). Even if there are, it's what you do with the idea that's important.

THE STORE THAT SELLS TOY'S Vol. 134 #1-11 May 1995 - Alan Hutchinson

Again you have my best wishes for the best possible resolution of your marital difficulties.

LETTERS:

from: A. Langley Searles, 48 Highland Circle, Bronxville,  
New York 10708 30 Jul 1990

Dear Norm,

Thanks for the recent numbers of your TAMBOUR and TYNDALLITE. My letter (pp. 243-244) and your response (p. 244) on classification of stories is getting us, of course, into a definition of precisely what science-fiction is -- and this has indeed become a very sticky question. In the pre-WWII period nobody was much concerned with that, for the simple reason that everyone KNEW what it was. Their knowledge was derived intuitively, from intensively reading the genre; many fans then could validly claim that they had

read almost all of the magazine science-fiction that had ever been published in this country and probably a third of what had been printed only in books. They didn't NEED to ask, and their discussions in this area were more likely to involve differences between science-fiction and its sibling genres, weird/supernatural fiction and pure fantasy.

Such fans would probably be very surprised if you accused them of defining by example and intuition, which many would class as unscientific and possibly even irrational, since it is the method resorted to for a number of hard-to-formulate concepts, such as religion. Yet they would be in good company. The famous poet A. E. Housman, in his Leslie Stephen Lecture (1933), said that he could no more define fine poetry than a terrier could define a rat, but that both recognized the object by the symptoms it produced. So did pre-WWII fans recognize science-fiction when they encountered it.

Somewhere around the time of World War II I suppose the definition question surfaced in a fashion that could not be answered simply by handing the questioner a copy of a recent ASTOUNDING. Since science-fiction fans were often potential scientists, I am sure some must have pondered definitions even earlier. (Probably historian Sam Moskowitz can cite an example or two.) As the years passed, a diminishing percentage of those following the genre could claim to have read enough of it to define it intuitively; academe took the area to its bosom; and a body of criticism about science-fiction began to take shape. It became necessary to define what was being talked about.

Shortly after WWII, I myself took a swipe at the problem. "To me", I said, "it represents fiction treating unrealized scientific extrapolations which have a positive probability of actually occurring, this probability judged insofar as possible on the basis of what people knew about science at the time of composition. (I specify 'insofar as possible' because otherwise this rough definition would include stories about witchcraft, fairies, etc. once believed to be logically authentic, but which opinion now usually excludes from the field.)" (THE ARKHAM SAMPLER Winter 1949, p. 21)

I did not and do not claim this definition is air-tight, and freely admit it may be far from perfect; but since I am one of those fans who judges science-fiction intuitively and by example, I've never felt the need to formulate something better, a task I cheerfully leave to others.

I have noticed, however, that academics are among those who worry about the definition most, and that they circulate in wide circles of disagreement. What bothers them particularly, it seems, is when science-fiction started. Again, this has never been a problem with me; I feel it goes back to Lucian of Samosota -- as did Herbert G. Wells, who traced his own early novels to that source, and as do Moskowitz and Darko Suvin, historians of the field. Lester

del Rey, in THE WORLD OF SCIENCE FICTION (1980), feels it is as old as literature. Indeed I cannot imagine any source and tradition to be more obvious. But this is becoming a minority viewpoint. James Gunn excludes everything before the Industrial Revolution, around 1790, in THE NEW ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SCIENCE FICTION (1988). In his pseudo-history THE TRILLION YEAR SPREE, Brian W. Aldiss begins with Mary Shelley's FRANKENSTEIN (1818). The latter point of view is rejected, most recently, by a newcomer to the ranks of would-be definers, Gary Westfahl, on the naive and erroneous belief that FRANKENSTEIN "was not regarded as anything new in its time, and that it was not in fact identified in print as a work of science fiction until 1946, or about two decades after the concept of science fiction entered the language." (FOUNDATION 47, Winter 1989-90, p. 7)

Believe it or not, the epitome of Westfahl's argument is that science-fiction never existed until it was recognized by someone who defined it as we might today, and "offered a complete critical theory concerning its nature, purposes and origins, and persuaded many others to accept and extend his ideas." (IBID p. 10) Who is this percipient someone? It is Hugo Gernsback, and the date science-fiction began is 1926! It's okay, says Westfahl, "to examine authors outside the Gernsback tradition in the context of science fiction," but apparently it's a no-no to call them, and maybe even their works a part of the genre.

I want to emphasize that Westfahl takes this mental masturbation seriously. We are really and truly being asked to abandon and exclude from our thinking such writers as Herbert G. Wells, Jules Verne, Edgar Rice Burroughs, Jack London and all the rest -- including, of course, the author of FRANKENSTEIN. (Our only solace, it would seem, is an acceleration in the rehabilitation of Hugo Gernsback, which has been proceeding slowly over the past decade.)

Westfahl's thesis is so absurd that the most minor rebuttal seems like overkill. Consider, by analogy, the history of meteorites. References as late as the 7th Century B.C. show that they were recognized for what they were by the ancients. These explanations then went out of favor, and not until the early 19th Century A.D. were they reaccepted. The Gospel according to St. Westfahl would transubstantiate meteorites into mere stones at some point, and then magically restore them to their former status about 200 years ago. (We should be permitted, I imagine, to examine them "in the context of" meteorites in the interim, though we couldn't call them that! This sort of underthinking reminds me of the conundrum I remember hearing as a boy: "When a tree falls in the forest and nobody's there, does it make any noise?"

Why, I have been wondering, would anyone try to foist such stuff on us? After considerable thinking I have a plausible reason to suggest. Note, please, that as our cutoff points progress from del Rey to Moskowitz and Suvin to Gunn to Aldiss and finally to Westfahl, we are



constricting science-fiction to a smaller and smaller time-span -- indeed, from millennia to just two generations. This certainly makes it an easier discipline to master; think of all those dreary tomes and old magazines critics won't have to read, or at least know about anymore because they're not science-fiction. Think of all the once-seminal research, such as Moskowitz' SCIENCE FICTION IN OLD SAN FRANCISCO and critical biography of George Griffith, that can now be relegated to the dust-heap because nobody called the stories they discussed "science-fiction" when they first appeared. Think of the money financially hard-pressed libraries can save by not buying any book in the genre dated earlier than 1926. Think how much easier it will be for academics to plump out their vitas and get promoted. All these advantages accrue automatically, just by revising a little history! After all, this scheme worked for Stalin and his successors for seventy years, didn't it?

Indeed, why should anyone be surprised that all the Johnny-come-latelies in academe should be self-seeking? Are not other people looking out for themselves, and did they ever let a little thing like truth stand in their way?

Yes, you may print this--provided it's uncut.

Sincerely,  
Langley  
A. Langley Searles

[Westfahl falls flat on his face by his own criteria. None of the stories in the Gernsback AMAZING STORIES were styled as science-fiction. Gernsback didn't use that term until he began SCIENCE WONDER STORIES in 1929. Furthermore, most of the stories in AMAZING from 1926 until 1929 were reprints. So even if they had been termed "science-fiction" they weren't science-fiction until they were reprinted.]

from: F. M. Busby, 2852 - 14th Avenue, West, Seattle WA  
98119 7 Jul 1995

Dear Norm,

Printed out my SAPSzine last night, so before I get up to speed again on THE PARTHENOGENE RENALLE it seems a good time for comments on your latest zines -- for which, thanks. (Molly Dodd on my lap is not making this easy. She's calico, you know.)

TYNDALLITE V2 Nr. 56: In which Marsbook would I find reference to John Carter being a Thern? I must have missed that somehow.

I read "Renaissance" in a Quonset hut on Amchitka Island in the Aleutians and remember loving the extremely puzzling situation but feeling quite let down by the solution. I experienced a similar disappointment with the ending of Chris Priest's INVERTED WORLD.

The ASF appearance of FURY was in 1947. In those days a lot of us readers went by the magazine version, especially

since many of the early paperback reprints were badly revised (SLAN which worsened at each successive appearance, THE WEAPON MAKERS, BIG PLANET, SLAVES OF THE KLAU which was actually very good in its first incarnation as "Planet Of the Damned" and of course Doc Smith's insistence on the Lensman series prefaces that blew his overall punchline.)

Harlan Ellison spends a lot of time and effort trying to keep people from discovering what a softie he is. Of course his bad side (which no one can deny) gets all the press while the good stuff stays hidden. But he does it on purpose....

I may have asked this before, but could George H. Wells be the same who as a very young fan was associated with the "South Gate in '58" (SolaCon) ConCom?

"Frig's Day": I think that Norse goddess is usually spelled Frigga and Freya, but I believe it's her husband Frey who gets the nod for Friday.

I thought that the idea of automatic hospitality to all fans came to a crashing halt with the behavior of Claude Degler in the late '40s. In 1961 would that have been the late Marland Frenzel (spelling?) ("Merlin Pretzel" the CRYgang tended to call him) and his slogan "A fan in need is a fan indeed!"?

TYNDALLITE V2 Nr 58: Guinan's alien origin was brought out a number of times on STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION -- she was hundreds of years old and (I believe) the last survivor of a destroyed world.

I remember that book of Don Bensen's: AND HAVING WRIT...., a sort of alternate-worlds time-travel piece, and very well done.

Okay; all for now.

Best,  
Buz

[John Carter's Thernism is implicated in almost every Mars story of Edgar R. Burroughs, though ERB didn't reproduce his hatching certificate.

The 1958 SolaCon fan you're probably thinking about was George W. Field(s) aka as George F. Williamson who operated in fandom under an alias to avoid repercussions in his mundane life. In the 1950's George Horace Wells (later of SFPA) was making plays upon his name in comparison to Herbert George Wells. George, if you were connected with SolaCon forgive me for not recalling it.

Friday is supposedly derived from the Anglo-Saxon goddess Frig rather than the Norse goddess Freya/Freyja.

No, it wasn't Marland Frenzel who attempted to abuse the hospitality of Chuck Hansen, but someone else you know. And I've witnessed 1960's hospitality abuse by other famous fans who showed up unannounced and uninvited demanding room and board. One of the abused told me that he acceded rather than be subjected to sure denunciation. In my case I don't think postal regulations permit people sleeping and dining in my post office box, even the ambassador from Lilliput.]

Chester D. Cuthbert  
1104 Mulvey Avenue  
Winnipeg, Manitoba  
Canada. R3M 1J5

July 9, 1995

Dear Norm,

You kindly sent me the following:

THE DEVIL'S WORK V. 2 #37

SULPH V. 1 #28

TYNDALLITE V. 2 #58

I continue to be amazed at the extent of your reading and your ability to remember in such detail. I cannot offer information on the matters you discuss. I read ARGOSY ALL-STORY WEEKLY for years from about 1928 to 1934 and some earlier issues, and BLUE BOOK in the early 'thirties, but turned to WEIRD TALES and the science fiction magazines and then to books. I've enjoyed so many good authors that I have never caught up with current more current material.

Since most of my collection was acquired generations ago I am still discovering good writers, most of them long dead. One is Nigel Balchin. So far I have read The Small Back Room, Mine Own Executioner and Kings of Infinite Space. I can recommend them all as competent and intelligent novels. I've also enjoyed the movies based on the first two titles, particularly the role played by Burgess Meredith as the lay analyst in the second. I cannot recall if Balchin has been discussed by you.

You and your readers are more familiar with American writers than with British. I wasted many years reading Canadian authors most of whom are inferior to both.

My recent reading has been concerned with the Salem witchcraft trials, but the literature is so vast that I am unable to assimilate it all. In fact, the research materials still extant are so extensive that years could be spent on them.

A newspaper article informs me that Barbara Cartland wrote 621 books and at the age of 93 still dictates 6000 words a day. And I have never read any of her romantic novels. There seems no end to the books I have not read.

Thanks, and best wishes,

*Chester*



## Redd Boggs

P.O. Box 441 El Verano California 95411

Monday 17 July 1995

Dear Norm:

I HOPE you're not ill. Today I didn't receive any back-issue fanzines from you. Obviously you must be ill or are so upset about the man in Utah who learned, after three and a half years, that his "wife" was actually a man that you couldn't manage to totter over to the post office.

The earliest fanzine you've sent of late was *Resin* for the October 1992 SAPS mailing, which was interesting in that you seem to believe that Asimov as a fiction writer was basically a childrens' author. I never thought that, although I never admired his fiction as much as his science articles in *F&SF*. The novel you missed in your list of Isaac's best is *The End of Eternity*, which I reread a year or two ago and found still enjoyable.

I was rather shocked by G. M. Carr's comment which you quoted, advocating dumping "junkies and panhandling 'Street People' in our deserted ghost towns," but I guess I shouldn't be, for G. M. seems not to have changed much in 40 years and more. When did the milk of human kindness curdle in her? And, more important, why?

I am also surprised, if not shocked, at your list of writers from the Gernsback era that you say are still read. We are talking, I suppose, about their contributions to Gernsback or Gernsback era magazines, and of these only Doc Smith and perhaps Williamson are still read in their dawn-age writings. Who reads Phil Nowlan anymore, even though he created Buck Rogers? Wells and Merritt were only reprints, and these days their work is found only meagerly in print. Is Merritt really still in print at all? I haven't seen his work in a long time. Thank god! I always thought his stuff was pretty bad.

It was news to me that my introduction and JoKe's "Where the SAPS Came From" were reprinted by Art Rapp back in 1992. That's the first I heard of it. I remember publishing the article, but I don't remember writing an intro to it. I wonder what I said?

I too wonder about the joke you mention "about Chesley Bonestell being 'dead' in 1951." What means that? There are at least three Bonestell paintings in Carl Sagan's *Pale Blue Dot* (1994), and a caption to a painting reproduced in *The Planetary Report*, July-August 1995, by one David Egge, is said to have been "inspired by the work of the late Chesley Bonestell, known as the dean of space art." So Bonestell is hardly "dead" even today.

In a more recent *Resin* (April 1995) I learn that Art Rapp seems to have reported that my story "Craters of the Moon" recently appeared in SAPS. If it did, that's news to me too. I hope it isn't so, for I would like to forget that piece. Ed

Cox once reprinted the story, bringing it more up to date (with my permission) and I think it was reprinted a couple of other times as well. As I have no doubt said on more than one occasion (in old age one starts to mumble the old anecdotes again and again!) the story was at least partly inspired by a remark of Poul Anderson when we both lived in Minneapolis and, with other MFS members, were strolling from our meeting place in the YMCA to the Paradise bar. We noticed a movie theater with a marquee advertising a film that was as close to science fiction as they got in those days (c. 1948), whereupon Poul remarked that he thought it might be a *Bad Thing* if science fiction really became known to the masses. Little did we know what would happen in the next 20 or 30 years, and I am sure Poul is grateful that his opinion of 1948 was quite wrong!

I am very disilllusioned, if what you say is true in *Sulph*. April 1995, that Larry Farsaci had only one issue of *The Black Cat*. I forget all of the details, but Larry had a column or recurring series of articles in Phil Bronson's *The Fantasite* in 1940 or 1941 called something like "Adventures of a Collector," and in the installment I remember quite clearly -- after all, I read it only about 55 years ago! -- Larry described an adventure in which he discovered a whole set, maybe not a complete set, of *The Black Cat* in a used bookshop or some such place in the city where he resided (Rochester New York?) and carried them home in great glee and high triumph in a wicker basket, I think it was. This foray was not labeled fiction, but perhaps it was.

In *Tyndallite* for November 1994 you mention Dick Schultz, whom I remember from the late 1950s and/or early '60s, but haven't heard of since then. Aside from the fact that he was a good artist and a good fan editor, all I remember about him is that he was a big admirer of an actress named Diana Rigg. Was she on "The Avenger"? If so, he must be the same person you mention in connection with "The Avenger." Diana Rigg was mentioned once on "Married...With Children" as an actress whose beauty has gone completely to pot.

Tony Boucher was an interesting fellow, a good editor and a so-so writer, I always thought. Even "The Compleat Werewolf" doesn't stand up, as I discovered to my dismay in 1972, when I reread it. I thought it was perhaps his masterpiece. Last time I checked his old address (and that of *F&SF* when he edited it), 2643 Dana street, was still listed as that of William A. P. White in the Berkeley phone book. I sometimes used to drive past that house for old times sake, as I did also other familiar addresses in and around Berkeley like the house at 1300 Arch street where Walter Breen and MZB lived in 1965. I never knew where you lived in Berkeley; otherwise I might cruise by that address as well.

*Tyndallite* January 1995: Stories that quote the *Rubaiyat* would make an anthology in themselves. But I thought the story "about the solar system hatching out" was Neison S. Bond's "Lo, the Bird!"

I am dubious about stories that tomatoes were generally considered poisonous until late in the 19th century. People have eaten things that certainly wouldn't seem to be at all

edible, such as oysters and snails, and various insects, and it seems likely they would cautiously sample tomatoes, which look a lot more luscious than snails, and find them to their liking. The Peruvians ate the fruit long before the arrival of the Spanish explorers, I remember reading, and the plant was cultivated in Europe after that. Like other plants kept for their appearance, such as the nasturtium, it would have been sampled, without serious consequences, by gardeners.

In regards the writing style of Edgar Rice Burroughs, see Gore Vidal's interesting essay, "Tarzan Revisited," which is found in his collection, *United States* (1993). It's easily the best and most judicious essay ever written about ERB. The same book also has an essay on "The Oz Books," and the same thing can be said about that work. The latter essay, by the way, calls Ray Bradbury "admirable," but supposes Bradbury's introduction to a book about Oz by Raylyn Moore is "written in an uncharacteristically overwrought style." Gee, if I had to characterize Bradbury's style in one word I would call it "overwrought." Rereading Bradbury, alas, is not very rewarding, no more so than rereading other writers that you mention who once seemed so wonderful.

I don't think I would call Heinlein a fascist, but in subjecting an author to "psychobiographical analysis" you would certainly consider aspects of his work other than the mere "confusion between authors and their fictional characters." Obviously even a liberal or radical writer could write of a fascist person, but the general tone of Heinlein, at least in his later years, certainly was appallingly militaristic and antihuman. However pleasant he was in person -- and he was not always so,

from what I have heard -- he had decidedly unpleasant ideas that grate on one's sensibilities. I'm sure that Conan Doyle, for example, was a nice fellow too, in person, but his prejudices are not very nice, even if he shared them with other popular British writers of the day, like John Buchan and M. P. Shiel.

And speaking of Conan Doyle, I have always been a little dubious about that anecdote related by Christopher Morley in his introduction to *The Complete Sherlock Holmes*. Doyle was visiting some ancient writer, George Meredith, wasn't it?, and they were walking up a hill to a summer house or gazebo when, behind him, Doyle heard a sound that indicated Meredith had fallen down. Not to embarrass the poor fellow, Doyle walked on as if nothing had happened. What did Meredith have to do, holler, "I've fallen and I can't get up"? It's easy to fall down, not so easy to get up, when you are old and infirm, and I think real kindness would have dictated that Doyle stop and help poor George. There are other ways to avoid embarrassing someone than merely ignoring their distress. I don't think that anecdote proves that Doyle was a nice sensitive person.

I don't know of Jack Finney's story about a twin brother involved in an escape from San Quentin, but it sounds interesting. What's the title? Only weeks ago I read of a man assuming the identity of his brother who had been convicted of a crime, in order, quite heroically, to serve time for him so the brother wouldn't lose his job. I guess it didn't work for long, and both brothers are probably serving time by now.

I don't remember ever hearing of the late Karl Edward Wagner. I am sorry he died, but who was he?

Reed

[Chester D. Cuthbert: Thanks for recommending Nigel Balchin. I don't think I own any of his books.

I have quite a few works by British authors on my shelves and in my boxes, both in American and British editions. There have been a large number of British authors whose works don't appeal to me, I wonder if it's because I'm not British or if they also don't appeal to British readers. Many of my favorite authors are British, such as John Buchan, Arthur C. Doyle, Henry R. Haggard, William H. Hodgson, Herbert G. Wells, Eric Ambler, Edmund C. Bentley, John K. H. Brunner, etc. As for Canadian authors probably my favorites are Alfred E. van Vogt, Gordon R. Dickson and Vilhjalmur Stefansson (all three of whom spent considerable time in the U.S.). My most widely read and rejected Canadian author must have been "Ralph Connor". My grandparents had an extensive collection of his books which I read when I was a kid, even then wondering why I was reading them (aside from hoping that they'd get better).]

[Redd Boggs: I don't recall exactly how I characterized Isaac Asimov's fiction but I think it was something to the effect that he felt that plotting and broad human reaction were more important than high-style and individual characters (though The Mule, Susan Calvin, Schwartz and R. Daneel Olivaw do come to mind). Leigh Edmonds also noted that I'd forgotten THE END OF ETERNITY, which I do recall with pleasure.

The last I knew Phil Nowlan was still in print though obviously for the comics tie-in, not for his other works. I checked the other day and most of Abraham Merritt was in print. (Gernsback did publish a part-original Merritt, "The Metal Emperor", an extensive revision of "The Metal Monster".) Most of Wells' science-fiction is still in print (or recently was), though most of his non-science-fiction seems to be out of print.

In order to debunk Farsace/Farsaci Bill Evans did a story-by-story synopsis of THE THRILL BOOK (not THE BLACK CAT) for A. Langley Searles' FANTASY COMMENTATOR. Sam Moskowitz devoted pp. 424-427 of UNDER THE MOONS OF MARS to detailing what THE THRILL BOOK was about. He even quoted the editor's (Harold Hersey) letter to writers detailing his requirements which doesn't ask for science-fiction (or predecessor terms). Farsace/Farsaci also threatened to sue Sam Moskowitz because Sam said that AMAZING STORIES was the first science-fiction magazine. Farsace/Farsaci later admitted that he'd found only one issue of THE THRILL BOOK. In sixteen issues there weren't sixteen science-fiction stories. THE BLACK CAT has also been claimed to have been a science-fiction magazine, my incomplete set is woefully short of science-fiction. Did Farsace/Farsaci also claim THE BLACK CAT to be science-fiction?

Where appeared Nelson S. Bond's "Lo, the Bird!"?

Thanks for mentioning Gore Vidal's burrowing.

Jack Finney's book was THE HOUSE OF NUMBERS.

Karl Edward Wagner published excellent books as Carcosa, supposedly had a complete set of WEIRD TALES, edited excellent anthologies, wrote some supposedly good stories (which I haven't read) and made a considerable impression upon Southern fandom.]