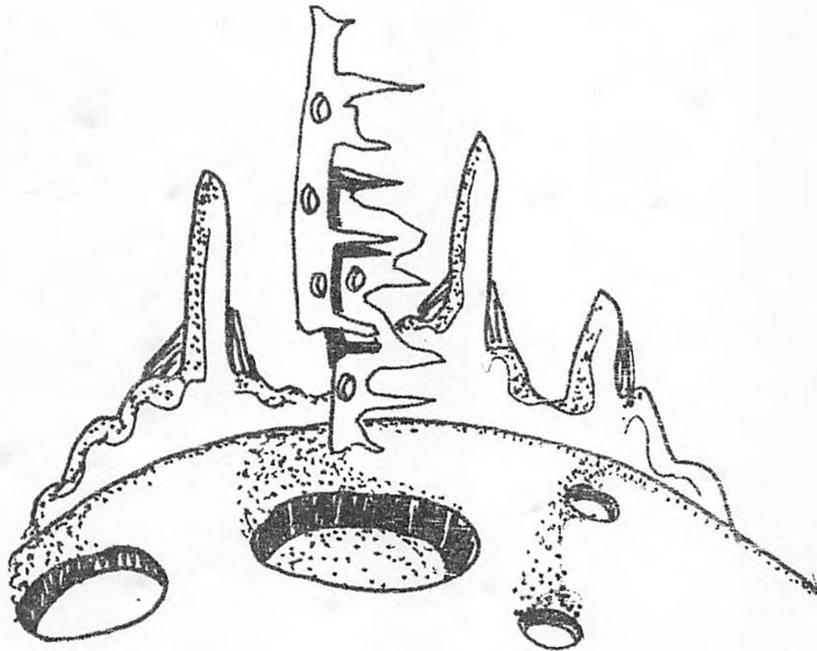


THE WSFA JOURNAL

(The Journal of the Washington S.F. Association)

Issue Number 80: May, 1972



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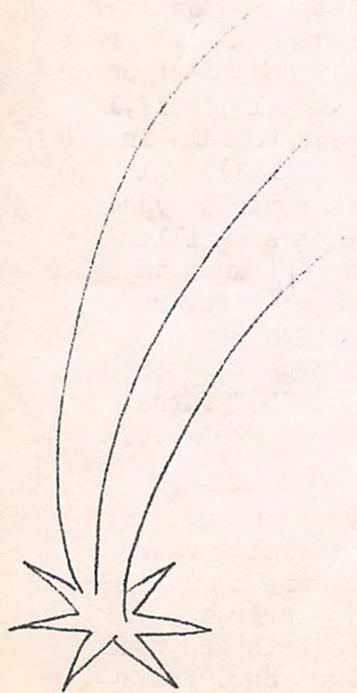
Front Cover by Alexis Gilliland (collage of work by various artists from earlier TWJs); Back Cover by Walt Simonson; Interior illos by Alicia Austin (A2), Derek Carter (R10), Charlie Ellis (F10), Dany Frolich (P4), Alexis Gilliland (Section Dividers, A4,5,5,8,9,12, B1,4,7, C1,4,7,7, F1,1,2,3,4,5,6,8,13,14,15,15,16,17,17, 18, L1,4,7,7,10, M1,4,7,7, P1,7,10, R1,4,7, Z1,3,4,4,7), Mike Glycer (SYLMAR in '84 Flyer), "Mick" (Z8), Ray Ridenour (F19,19,20,21,22), Jeff Schalles (L13), Walt Simonson (4-page art folio), and an unknown artist (1). ### Offset pages typed by David Weems; electrostencilling by Jack Chalker; remaining illos stencilled by Alexis Gilliland (and Ray Ridenour, who did his own). Don't know yet whom to thank for the offset work and the collating, but we thank Brian Burley for running off most of Sections A & B, Jim Landau for serving as go-between with Brian, and Bill Hixon for honchoing the collating and mailing. ### There's much we'd like to say about specific things in this issue (like, last page should be "Z8" rather than "Z6", many addresses in lettercol no longer apply, etc.), but no more room....

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TWJ is published irregularly. This issue is \$2.00 by mail (\$1.75 by hand), or 7 issues on SOTWJ subs (6 by hand); WSFA members: \$1.50/\$1.25; financial summary in SOTWJ; prices for back-issues vary. Subs are 4/\$5 (4/12), but TWJ is normally avail. as part of SOTWJ sub (currently 9/32 or multiples thereof), prorated vs. sub according to cost. Ads accepted for SOTWJ, but not for TWJ. Both are free for published contributions; trades by arrangement only or by Trade/Sub. SOTWJ is currently approx. weekly, 10 pages, mimeo (double-issues in future, subs may drop to 10/\$2; details in Aug. SOTWJ). Editorial Address: Don Miller, 12315 Judson Rd., Wheaton, MD, U.S.A., 20906. Deadline for material for issue #85: 31/10/74. ### Views expressed by contributors do not necessarily reflect those of WSFA or ed.

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## THE UNTARNISHED SILVER SCREEN

by

Thomas Burnett Swann

The source of a writer's characters is a cornucopia which sometimes appears to be empty but which, if you shake it hard enough, will dislodge a new character, like a gold sovereign or a bad penny. It is a cornucopia with many chambers. There are characters borrowed and adapted from the books of other writers. Many a lesser Camille has died with the exquisite sorrow of Marguerite Gautier in The Lady of the Camellias (most recently, the leukemia victim of Love Story). There are characters drawn directly from life. Somerset Maugham complained that it was almost impossible for him to invent; he had to record the people he had met. There are characters who are partly or wholly autobiographical, like Nick Adams, the young Hemingway.

Most writers draw from all of these sources, and some writers draw from a further source: movie stars. In a television era inhospitable to the movies, Hollywood's Milky Way has dimmed but not disappeared. Raquel Welch is much more famous than the premier of Ceylon, and Burton and Taylor titillated the world until they married and grew domestic and dull. Writers like Harold Robbins deliberately pattern some of their characters after stars: a Jean Harlow in The Carpetbaggers; a Sophia Loren in The Inheritors. And the heroine of Where Love Has Gone was so recognizably Lana Turner that the actress refused to forgive the author until she was offered the lead in his short-lived TV series, The Survivors. Jacqueline Susann, a kind of female equivalent to Robbins in readability and forgettability, modeled one of the anti-heroines in The Valley of the Dolls after Judy Garland, who, ironically, was selected to play a second anti-heroine in the movie version, though she had to be replaced by Susan Hayward because, offscreen, she behaved like the first.

Now I must make a confession. Being an inveterate movie-goer like Ray Bradbury, who used to see a picture a day, I have modeled at least one hero and at least one heroine on movie stars. I say "confession" not out of shame but out of deference to people whom I greatly respect and who may not particularly care to find themselves in roles I have chosen for them without their consent.

The hero is Zeb in my novel Moondust, and the model is Alan Bates, the British actor.

Zeb did not appear for several chapters but, once introduced, he refused to disappear, even though I had meant to dismiss him after two brief scenes and return the story to the narrator and nominal hero. He became the only character I liked besides the hyena, and all in all he made himself as indispensable as a good genie. He had come as mysteriously as a genie, and I was not even aware of having rubbed a bottle or muttered an incantation. Since I had never met such a man, I accepted him, gratefully and without question, as a gift from my Muse.

It was not until the book was published that I realized his true and earthly genesis. Physically, he was modeled after Alan Bates in Georgie Girl. Bates had played Georgie Girl's roommate's roommate as a hairily handsome Cockney named Jos, and Zeb, down to the last hair, might have passed for Jos's twin.

What about the character of my character? I have never met Alan Bates, and what the public knows about movie actors is often colorful but rarely accurate. Bates, fortunately, is not the product of a publicity machine; on the other hand,



apart from reviews of his performances, little has been written about him. Certainly the reliable Zeb did not resemble the capricious Jos; rather, he resembled a composite drawn from all of Bates' performances and unified by that unshakable integrity which reveals the single man behind the many-masks. I pictured him thus:

He was a thinker, sometimes shy and introspective (Zorba, the Greek and The Running Man), but with a sense of fun (The King of Hearts); and with the courage to speak for a cause (The Fixer) and the muscularity to back his words with fists (Women in Love). In short, he was an ideally balanced man, but he did not make lesser men feel their flaws; he was worthy of admiration but he did not know himself admirable. He was flesh and blood and not a bust of bronze.

Alan Bates, the man, may not in truth resemble Zeb--he may hide in his roles instead of reveal himself in them--but I felt so indebted for his inspiration that I wrote him a letter of thanks and apology and sent him a book.

If Alan Bates inspired my favorite hero, even more surely did Stella Stevens inspire the heroine of my latest, still unpublished and unaccepted novel, Will-O-the-Wisp. In the past, my more successful heroines have tended to be earth mothers, Zoe in Day of the Minotaur and Lady Mary in The Manor of Roses. My less successful heroines have been pale young virgins, cool and untouchable, like Thea in Day of the Minotaur. Will-O-the-Wisp, containing a lusty poet, pagan, and vicar as its hero, demanded a suitable consort for him, not old enough to be an earth mother, not young enough to be a virgin. At first she eluded me. At first the woman who did not appear in my pages was altogether incapable of arousing ardor in either the author or the hero, and the hero must be ardent if my book was to fulfill its theme that a strong and loving relationship between man and woman, today as in the 17th century, can endure for a life-time only if it is neither puritanical nor pagan; neither spiritual at the expense of body nor bodily at the expense of spirit, but a happy combination of desire and yearning.

After weeks of grappling--of remembering women I had known or dreamed--I deliberately decided to attempt a portrait of Miss Stevens--her beauty and her spirit--in print. My heroine, being a Gubbing or Woodpecker Woman, must have red hair. I recalled Stella as the nearsighted but delectable redhead of that first and best Matt Helm picture, The Silencers, and drew accordingly (though I had to diminish her voluptuousness to the point where her wings could carry her weight in the air). As her nine-year-old daughter remarks to her, a propos of her Puritan garb--black gown, skull-tight cap, tall stockings--"Mama, you can look naked even in black."

What about character? Miss Stevens, unlike Mr. Bates, has been widely publicized for more than ten years. We have been repeatedly told that she was born in Hot Coffee, Mississippi, and that, after the breakup of her adolescent marriage, she went to Hollywood with the fervent ambition to play Harlow. She did not play Harlow, but she posed nude for PLAYBOY on several occasions and in several positions, and she swore off marriage and took a succession of lovers (about the latest: "Why get married? We're much too happy."). Some of these facts are doubtless true, even if highly off-colored, but I chose to dismiss them as concentrating too much on Miss Stevens' beauty and too little on her ability, and to form my own, so I hoped, more accurate image from her screen roles, even as I had done with Alan Bates. Prostitute, nun, career girl, drug addict...The Ballad of Cable Hogue, Where Angels Go--Trouble Follows, How to Save a Marriage and Ruin Your Life, Synanon.....an enormous range of roles, an enormously complex woman required to play them. A beautiful woman, unafraid to exploit her beauty to get or play a good role, but intelligent, versatile, and indefatigably stubborn; compassionate without being in the least motherly; and so softly wistful that you want to dally with the prostitute, pray with the nun, marry the career girl, and reform the addict. Persephone instead of Ceres, but Persephone after she has been ravished by Hades and learned that there are nettles as well as hyacinths in the world. With a few alterations to accomodate her to the Seventeenth Century, and to condition her body to bearing wings and laying eggs, I had found my heroine, and out of gratitude I dedicated the book to "Stella Stevens, Star. Incomparable in beauty, inimitable in genius, love goddess to a godless age."

Perhaps my characters resemble their prototypes only in looks. Perhaps they are either more or less than their prototypes. Nevertheless, without Alan Bates and Stella Stevens, I would not have found my Zeb and my Stella. Condemn Hollywood as the Dream Factory or Tinsel Town. Disdain its products as slick and superficial. Complain that even foreign productions may be tainted with Hollywood money and slanted for a Hollywood-oriented audience. I will agree with some of what you say, but I will make the vital reservation that I like the dreams, if they are artfully fashioned; that under the tinsel there are many fine people and dedicated performers, and that our baffled and baffling era badly needs to have stars who are larger than life, stars like Alan Bates and Stella Stevens, who can inspire producers to put them into films and writers to put them into books.

And then there is Sally Kellerman, who played an alien in an episode of Star Trek and a bird woman in Brewster McCloud. An actress one likes to watch. A woman one would like to know. I wonder how she would look in one of those bell-shaped skirts of the old Minoans, or wearing a tunic like Artemis. And Jon Voight. Could he wield an Achaean sword....?

\*\*\*\*\*

THE POPPY TERRACE

(Dedicated to Donald Wandrei)

In slumber-hidden Karkapan,  
 A wizard's league past Ispahan,  
 From the Poppy Terrace there's a view:  
 In August moonlight  
 If you stand right  
 You'll see the fountain of Xanadu  
 Flashing in the mist.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

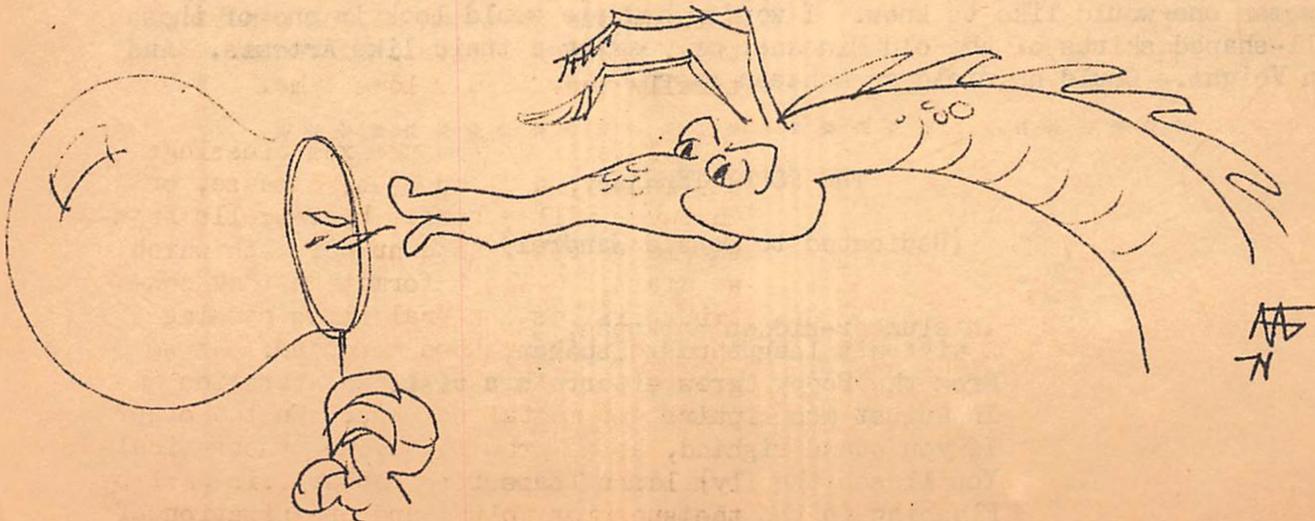
T'swomda Porlak.

Martian poet and dramatist, contemporary, during the "Golden Millenium" of the pre-Zyn Period, of such illustrious statesmen, scientists, artists, etc., as Y'droz Thragg, Ponzath Tzlor, D'zorth Throxx, Drongor Drang and others too numerous to list here. T'swomda Porlak is the author of the epic Ode to Mount Haladok (Spandokkian heterometer); and of the Martian planetary anthem, Requiem: Oceans Lost (Phylopodan counterpulse). The tranquil yet majestic imagery of the former, so redolent of the ethereal symmetries associated with the pre-Zyn Period school, and the stately grandeur of the latter--a triumph of Spaldorian parenthesis--offer a startling contrast to the barbaric thunder of Vorlath V'larg's The Unwatered Lakes of Thrang: A Protest (psychalgian staccato). The last--fluid, anti-f'thostiastic, unimpeded by traditional hyalthic color disciplines, and augmented by massive infusions of Kluvorian arqualisms, echoes and enlarges upon both of Porlak's major themes. (Compare the breathtakingly vivid color complexities of Thrang to the unexpected introduction by Porlak of intermittent variations of the more brittle of the Pylarthian fragments into the "Vlorian" phrases of the Ode.)

Notwithstanding, while paying deserved tribute to the historical sweep and savage opulence of V'larg's masterwork, the laurel of supreme achievement remains secure upon T'swomda Porlak's noble carapace. (One of the few likenesses of T'swomda Porlak still extant--excluding those officiously idealized representations vulgarly displayed in certain culturally-wanting universities and libraries--appears in Mr. Jason Mt. Sandalwood's incomparable collection of pre-Zyn Period kl'eth etchings.)

-- JAMES ELLIS

\* \* \* \* \*



## ON OCEANS AND IMMORTALITY

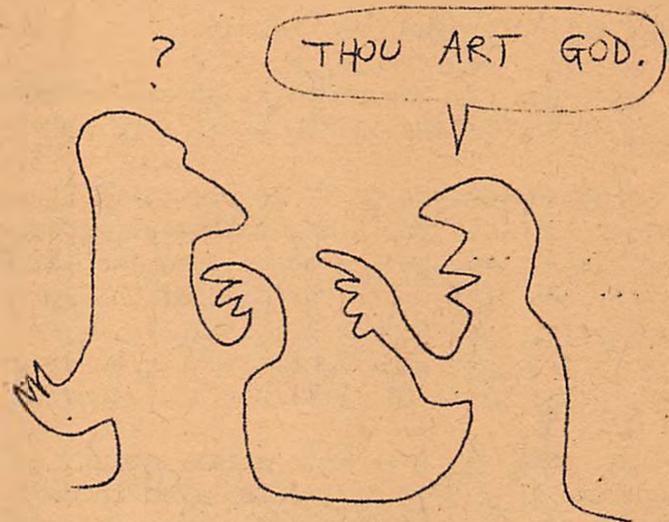
by

Alexis Gilliland

"No man is an island," said John Donne, and while he was thinking in terms of the solidarity of man with men, his assertion is true in another sense. Being about 90% water, with salts and such very similar to the composition of the primordial sea from which life sprang, we may say with some truth that "No man is not an ocean". (After all, an island is not an ocean.)

In fact, each of us is a tiny ocean, inhabited by billions of one-celled animals working together with a great deal of efficiency, and very little individual freedom. The main function of the white blood cells is not to chase germs that get in the blood stream, but to inspect and police the individual cells in the body. When a cell gets old and feeble, it doesn't pass inspection and is...liquidated.

An inevitable event in the life of every cell is liquidation. Cells are replaced totally about every six months (except for the nerve cells, about which more anon), but the ocean rolls on. An interesting thing: as each cell is liquidated (catabolism) it is replaced by a duplicate of itself (anabolism), prepared from a DNA molecule which serves rather like a blueprint, or...more fancifully...like a mimeograph stencil. As we grow older, the instructions for replacement cells grow less exact, and organs become less efficient. By analogy, after many, many copies, our stencil is beginning to get fuzzy...and what we are at 70 is a worn and blurry copy of what we were at 30 or 20.



Now the cells of the brain...who live on the Miami Beach of the ocean us...are never replaced after the initial formation. They sit passively in a luxurious environment and generate tiny, precise electric currents. Naturally they live a long time.

This is not an unmixed blessing: any injury, a blood clot, disease, or whatever will subtract brain cells from the large-but-finite number with which we started. The information they contained is lost, neural flows passing through them must be rerouted. As we grow older, this cellular attrition impairs our mental prowess. On the other hand, as we grow older, we (theoretically) learn to perform better...in part by the superior volume and organization of the information which we have accumulated.

In any event, our own personal ocean is inhabited by two species of creatures, the short-lived replaceables and the undying elite.

How does a liver cell, crippled by cirrhosis, feel about the administration which consumed all that alcohol to alleviate imaginary fears? (Perhaps cancer of the liver is really the Liver's Liberation Movement.)

Small wonder that we find a dichotomy between body and spirit. Equally, the psyche and the soma are one: all cells are laved by the same ocean, even though all cells are not the same.

Diseases may be viewed as sharks swimming in the ocean, conception as the mixing of the waters in the straits of Veneus, and death as dessication.

Today--even today, it is conceptually feasible to take a hair of the great Napoleon, and...after a few delicate operations and a classical nine-month pregnancy...reconstitute the ocean that tumbled the crowned heads of Europe. The cells of the body would be identical, only the memories would be different. Spiritually, this is not immortality...the élan vital that animated the grey cells is missing, and the cells themselves...the brain...are identical, but having a different history, not the same.

Which raises a question: How similar do you have to be? Granted, our newly-minted Napoleon will be the child of another time, and subject to the slings and arrows of an outrageous fortune quite other than the one which led us to choose him in the first place.

Nevertheless, because he interacted with a specific historical era, and because he floated like a bright leaf on a raging current, the Napoleon we know is inseparable from Austerlitz, Jena, Marengo, Waterloo, the Code Napoléon, and other monumental trivia of history.

But suppose we were to recreate a talent? Say, perhaps, Enrico Caruso? Put him in a music-oriented environment...an opera-fan uncle, a cousin who teaches voice...and with that voice, he would be on his way to the Met, exactly as Caruso I was. To be sure, the physical plant of the Met is different, but the roles would be the same.

Or, if we took the trouble to rerun some obscure bank clerk or .225-hitting short stop would we not get a similar performance? I think we would, and I think that a series of such reruns would be essentially different from an immortal man.

From a liver cell's point of view, there would be no difference. Liver cells live only a few months as individuals, and should one of them climb into a time machine and shoot forward 100 years he (or it) would not be rejected by the then-liver in which he found himself.

An immortal man, now...an undying ocean...the cells of his brain would furnish continuity of information and experience (assuming, of course, that these cells were not subject to the normal attrition of aging. And it is this continuity plus the cellular continuity which is the essence of immortality.

So let us take a man of some talent, and include a measure of literary talent in his make-up. He lives, and does, and writes his autobiography.

That autobiography, read and studied by his rerun, will provide a measure of continuity, and...since we may presume that our hero is artistically selective,

perhaps a better continuity than that provided by an organic memory. Rerun I will have a unique upbringing in that his prototype did not have biographies and/or autobiographies to study, but rerun II and on will be able to read about themselves reading about themselves, and if this does not satisfy the requirements for immortality's continuity, then nothing will.

Especially if you add to this sense of identity the will to believe oneself immortal, and an entailed estate, or other secure fortune to support this belief. In short order, the "b" in belief becomes "B", and we may have rerun X producing rerun X/1 and bringing him up in The Faith to the point where it is impossible to doubt one's real, tangible immortality. (Which is a myth with supporting evidence and the color of credibility, but a myth nonetheless.)

Each rerun is born, and each dies, and they may be so similar that a displaced liver cell couldn't find its (her?) proper home...but they are not identical.

And if we do not insist on identity...that is, on the real thing for the grey cells...then what is the point in creating an undying liver? And if we don't insist on an undying liver, our own, personal, cellular continuity to give the shadow of immortality without its substance, then we fall back to the position that our essence is embodied in the race.

That is, if we imagine our genetic endowment as a bridge hand, then in the course of a few thousand hands, its essence...say a five-card heart suit to the KQ and 15 points in high cards...will be repeated many times. And perhaps in some hands you will have the same 15 points, and in a very few even the same distribution and the same spot cards.

All that is missing is the illusion of immortality which would, perhaps, greatly console some people.

So we come back to our notion that "No man is not an ocean".

When you were conceived, when every person was conceived, that ocean was momentarily part of a network, the great racial ocean.

And when you die, only the brine that is then part of you is affected, and even that is eventually recycled through the ecosphere.

In every breath you take are five atoms that were exhaled by Julius Caesar after he gasped, "Et tu Brute?".

Just as the real ocean is diminished by evaporation and fed by rivers, so the waters of our racial ocean are indestructable and reused. The coffee I am drinking as I write becomes part of my ocean...for a while...and then goes on to the Atlantic. Before it was coffee it was tap water, reservoir water, rain water, ocean water, part of a clam...and in the remote vastness of time, dinosaur tissue and cenozoic jellyfish.

So the water of our racial ocean endures, even as our personal ocean must dry.

And it doesn't matter whether or not the short-lived cells of muscle and liver are exact replicates or not, because an undying liver, like an undying chicken heart, is not the badge of immortality.

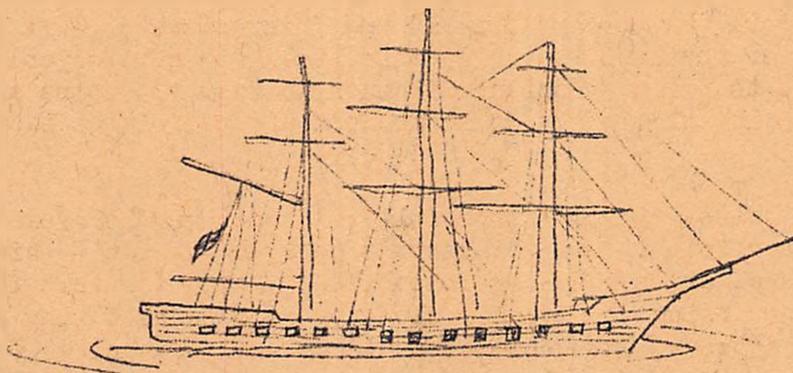
What does endure are the traits or combination of traits that define what you are. Somewhere, in the racial gene pool (a technical term which should in no way be confused with our metaphoric racial ocean) rest the talents of a Gauss, a Rubenstein, or a Bobby Fischer waiting only a chance recombination to generate great math, music or chess. Somewhere in that same pool, and occurring with far greater frequency (assuming that your talent, like mine, is more modest--i.e., nearer the average) are thee and me.

How do you define yourself? Once you get past names...Alexis Arnaldus Gilliland, son of William Lester Gilliland...and down to essences you find yourself with the luck of the genetic draw (used in the poker-playing sense, but one may also draw water from a pool) as influenced by your environment.

Now, in one sense we are inseparable from our environment...no 25-year-old veteran of Vietnam could really imagine himself without the war, for instance. But once we define ourselves in genetic terms, the god of statistics assures us that "we"...or at least an entity conforming to your self-definition...will live again.

And that is a good note on which to end this essay.

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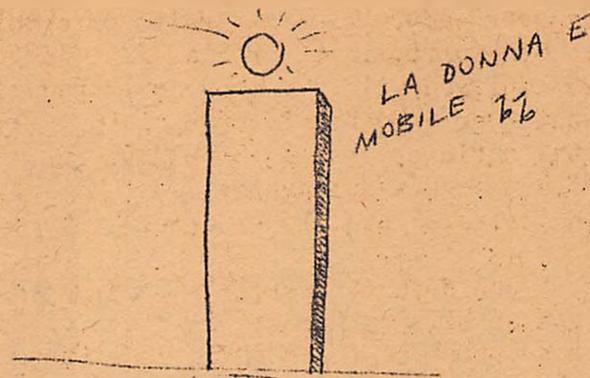
SEA STORY

I swam a fabled Ymolian lake,  
Said to contain the Bounty's wake,  
From when that ship raised Tofoa Isle--  
I grudge you not that doubtful smile,  
But listen: whichever wake it is,  
It's frothing there right now!

-- JAMES ELLIS

MUSIC OF THE SPHERES  
(or, Sci-Fi Music)

a column  
by Harry Warner, Jr.



V. TV and Opera

Many years ago--eight or ten, at least--there was opera on commercial national television networks. I sometimes thought that the network people deliberately chose the operas least suited for mass audience televising so they could kill the whole concept of televised opera for a half-century or more, thus solving pesky decisions about artistic matters. There was the incredible decision to telecast "Golden Child", a bad opera by a fourth-rate composer, Philip Bezanson, during the 1960 Christmas season. Somebody in the sponsoring Hallmark Cards organization must have been delirious. A little earlier, Poulenc's "Dialogues des Carmelites" had been chosen for national television. This opera has magnificent music and absolutely no suitability for telecasting because the subtleties in the accompaniment didn't survive the bad sound systems in video receivers, the cast is almost all-female with a vocal line geared to the original French which doesn't have the heavy stresses required for an English translation, and the plot is almost actionless until the very end when all the nuns get their heads chopped off.

But opera is making a comeback on national television through the non-commercial station's network. Somebody is doing a saner job of choosing what shall be produced. There have been several fantasy operas on PBS stations in recent months, particularly "Hansel and Gretel" and "Pique Dame". This started me to thinking about other possibilities. I would like to urge everyone to write PBS and request it to telecast science fiction operas, but there are hardly any such critters in existence. So let's look at some of the fantasy possibilities.

A couple of ground rules, first. Regretfully, I won't mention some of my favorites like "Die Zauberflote". I love Mozart's opera but I don't think that operas that contain lots of arias and long ensembles are good for televising. The cameramen and director bring the watcher closeups of singers during cadenzas, and neither nature nor composers intended the audience to see at close range the ugly things that happen to the human face and throat when someone is straining for vocal effects. Arias seem chopped up and lumpy when the tube shows a couple dozen different angles and image sizes during four minutes of singing. Also, I'm not going to talk about extremely long operas for television potentialities, as a matter of practicality. Rimsky-Korsakoff wrote some fine operas based on weird and fantastic happenings but they average perhaps three hours of music apiece, too long for hearing without intermissions--and even PBS isn't likely to reserve four hours or more for one opera with intermissions provided.

The fantasy opera that I would like most to see televised is one that didn't make much of a splash on the stage. It's "Rip van Winkle" by Reginald de Koven. The composer is best remembered for his operettas; this opera's music

shows some influence of the lighter genre, but I think it's quite worthy of revival in a judiciously cut form. The opera might outrage Washington Irving fandom, because it doesn't stick too closely to his original tale. Percy Mackaye, the librettist, provided a new feminine interest in the person of Peterkee, at the opera's start a half-grown girl who isn't nearly old enough for the Rip whom she adores. She gets him in the end through a device that could be turned into enchanting poetry on the tube, even though it may have been impossible to realize on the stage: a sudden renewal of youth for Rip, making him just right for Peterkee, who had grown up during his slumber. There's a hint of folk song in much of the music for the villagers of the Catskills, a charming collection of ghosts who sail the Halfmoon, and--as far as I can tell from the vocal score, which contains no orchestration information--a real sense of nostalgia for the lost past of rural New York State. One problem: for some reason, de Koven wrote Rip's music for a very high baritone voice. I can't think of any first-rate singer today whose voice would be just right for the role.

Ravel's "L'Enfant et les Sortilèges" would be ideal for television. It would fit nicely in an hour-long time slot, it would have enough trick photography and stage effects to interest kids too young to pay proper attention to the music, and it would mesh perfectly into the ecology and peace movements. Beneath its simple surface, there are several important morals suited to the mood of the times. There have been several good recordings, so you may already know how the little boy throws a tantrum and is immediately besieged by all sorts of strange events: a princess crawls out of the book of fairy tales he has damaged, a Wedgewood teapot dances a foxtrot with a Chinese cup, two cats meow a love duet, and the animals the child has mistreated bring about his reformation of character. Ravel's brother once wanted Disney to put the opera on film, but it's too late now.

I've never found anyone who thinks as much as I do of the music of Horatio Parker. He is dismissed in all the books about American music as a hopeless fuddyduddy. He strikes me as a very great composer. One of his two operas has an unfortunate title, "Fairyland", but that's the only thing I can say against it. I believe it could be televised successfully and enjoyed by people for the same reasons that they enjoy movies about days long past. Fans would enjoy it for some uncanny resemblances it possesses to literary forms of pure fantasy. I suspect that bigotry had something to do with the opera's failure in stage performances. It was written in 1915, when anti-Catholic feeling in high musical places in this country was strong enough to cause Rossini's "Stabat Mater" and several composers' "Ave Marias" to be published in translations that removed all references to the Virgin Mary. "Fairyland" involves a novice in an encounter with a dreadful villain, the scene shifts between 14th-century Europe and fairyland, and except for an occasional attack of Victorian churchiness, Parker writes quite strong music. The very opening scene conveys to me the essence of pure fantasy and the supernatural--solely through musical effects--and the whole thing breathes somehow the spirit of the Middle Ages.

If "Fairyland" corresponds to William Morris' fantasy writing, Prokofiev's "Love for Three Oranges" is a good match for L. Sprague de Camp's fantasy novels. It's based on an 18th-century satire by Carlo Gozzi. You get the impression that everything satirizes some specific person or event, but you can't pin down the exact identities, and you eventually satisfy yourself by grinning at the types and customs that are parodied. The opera seems to exist in several versions, and it might be necessary to create yet another for television purposes, since in actual performance the audience is constantly aware of a whole batch of characters who sit at the extreme ends of the stage or in galleries, uttering comments in chorus-form from time to time; this would be extraordinarily

hard to translate to the small screen of your television set. The opera concerns a prince who is unhappy for no apparent reason and the struggle to cheer him up. There is a dreadful battle between a gentleman magician and a lady magician which ends with their mutual disappearance; the conjuring up of fountains that spout wine and oil and cause the prince to want to go to bed; a curse which forces the prince to go to the rescue of three oranges with which he has fallen in love while they are held in captivity; and eventually the disappearance of all the bad guys into a trap door while the big rat turns into the prince's bride. (The rat used to be the girl who climbed out of one of the oranges, but we won't go into that.) A suite of orchestral music from the opera is performed often enough to give you a good idea of the exciting things that happen all during the opera.

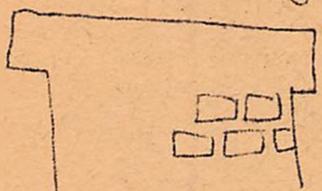
Despite what I said about the length of Rimsky-Korsakoff's operas, "Le Coq d'Or" might work as a televised opera. It probably gave Prokofiev some ideas because it has much of the same madness and magic that the younger composer emphasized. The older opera also has the advantages of conveying an anti-war message, one that is obvious and strong enough to have made it unwelcome to Russian authorities for quite a while. Nobody, to my knowledge, has ever solved with certainty the question of exactly what is meant by the conclusion of the opera, when two of the most improbable characters--an old astrologer and a Theda Bara-type queen--are identified as the only real people. In any event, the warmongers get what they deserve, the music doesn't go on quite as long as it does in most of the composer's fantasy operas, and I would like to see a production with the proper balance between slapstick and intensity.

Of course, it would be possible to cheat by recommending for televising some operas whose fantasy content is minimal. There's Puccini's "Turandot", with its chorus of ghosts of the princess's former lovers who are ghosts because of her behavior; and Massenet's "Thais", which leaves us uncertain as to whether certain visions are really visions or just the outcome of sexual repressions. It would also be nice to see again the one fantasy opera that made it big on commercial television, "Amahl and the Night Visitors". I feel every yuletide as if my Christmas has been spoiled by fear that the poor little fellow will be using his crutch for another year, now that it isn't televised every December. Another Menotti opera, "The Medium", was among the more successful commercial network productions and deserves a revival. So does the same composer's "The Consul", if you want to rank as fantasy the enigmatic scenes involving the hypnotist.

And finally, there's the opera that I like too well to wish a television version for it. That's Janacek's "Cunning Little Vixen". It has beautiful music, an unaffectedly convincing combination of talking animals and human characters, and a genuine impression of having been written by a very good man. But it's the one opera that I have no desire ever to see performed in any manner, on stage or on screen. If you can find it on records, buy it and enjoy it that way. Some people live in dread of seeing Tolkien's "Ring" stories translated into a movie, and I keep wondering with half-felt fear if the awful day will come when I turn a page of TV GUIDE and encounter a listing for this opera on the educational network.

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((A couple of quick comments. Ravel's "Le Enfant et les Sortilèges" has long been one of my favorites; sometime I'll tell you the amusing tale of how I discovered it. Horatio Parker's "Hora Novissima" is one of the loveliest pieces of music in my collection. Did you see the recent PBS production of Stravinsky's "The Nightingale"? What about Orff's "Der Mond?" for PBS? (And even the delightful "5,000 Fingers of Dr. T", altho it's not really an opera?) -- DLM))



ODE TO SAMANTHA

We leave you a legacy of filth and disease,  
 This world you inherit will sadden and displease.  
 And if you must live here, and live here you must,  
 Remember the pollution was a gift just from us.  
 And if, when you breathe in that poisonous air,  
 You think of your parents, don't think we don't care.  
 Don't think we don't love you, my child you're our own!  
 We just couldn't help it, you see we have grown.  
 From such a small number our species increased  
 That now every creature may soon be deceased.  
 We wanted so much of what this world could give,  
 And barely considered how our offspring could live  
 In a world so polluted with our poisonous waste  
 That water's not water, but a sickening paste.  
 You see we could stop it if only we'd try.  
 "It costs too much money!" is what we all cry.  
 We just can't stop progress, that wouldn't be wise;  
 And we really can't help that the smoke hurts your eyes.  
 Just think of how awful this poor world would be  
 If we shut down the factories, my child, don't you see?  
 Besides, with all of our modern technology,  
 We know you'll find a way to help our ecology.  
 Your fate's in your hands, and we know you'll succeed.  
 You just have to study, yes--that's all you need..  
 See there, we do love you, we gave you our best.  
 It's now up to you--yes, you do the rest.

-- BARBARA E. KELLER

THIS AIN'T NO INCINERATOR...  
 THIS HERES A POWER PLANT THAT BURNS  
 LOW-SULFUR TRASH





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by Mark Owings

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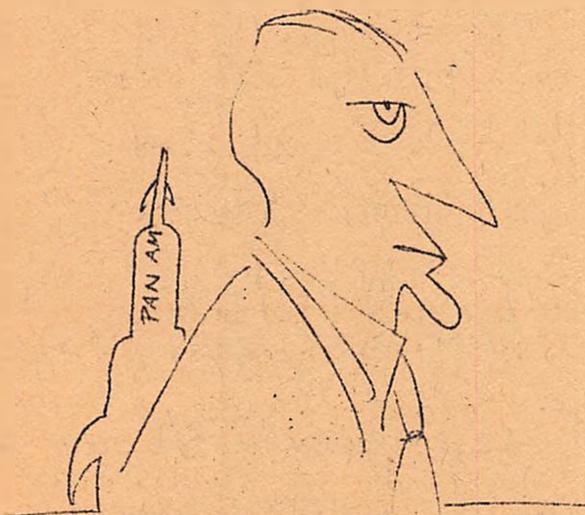
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- Storm Warning -- NEB #17, 7/56. (2.17)
- Study in Still Life -- ASF 1/59. (10.0)
- Sustained Pressure -- see The Army Comes to Venus.
- Symbiotica -- ASF 10/43; Brit 2/44; included in Adventures in Time & Space, ed. Healy & McComas (Random House: NY, 1946, pp 997, \$2.95) (as Famous SF Stories: Modern Library: NY, 1957, pp 997, \$2.95) (as FSFS: Random House: Tor., 1957, pp 997, \$3.45); in Men, Martians, and Machines (q.v.). (nt)
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- Tieline -- ASF 7/55 (as by Duncan H. Munro); in Six Worlds Yonder (q.v.); in Somewhere a Voice (q.v.). (3.0)

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Top Secret -- ASF 8/56; in Six Worlds Yonder (q.v.). (6.2)

U-Turn -- ASF 4/50 (as by Duncan H. Munro); in Somewhere a Voice (q.v.). (s)

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Ultimate Invader, The -- see Design for Great-Day.

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Weak Spot -- ASF 5/54. (3.3)

Wisel -- see Mr. Wisel's Secret.

With a Blunt Instrument -- UNK 12/41; in Dark Tides (q.v.). (s)

With a Strange Device -- Dobson: London, 1964, pp 182, 15 s; Penguin: London 2358, 1965, wpps 155, 3/6; Lancer: NY 72-942, 1965, wpps 158, 50¢ (as The Mind Warpers); URANIA #393 (1965) as La macchina dei delitti; as Wie rauhe Wirklichkeit: Goldmann: München 2174, 1967, wpps .

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World's Eighth Wonder, The -- TALES OF WONDER Sum/38. (s)

with Leslie J. Johnson:

Seeker of Tomorrow -- ASF 7/37. (nt)

There is also an autobiographical sketch:

The Road to Glory -- TALES OF WONDER Aut/40.

And these articles:

And Still It Moves -- ASF 6/57; included in 14 Great Tales of ESP, ed. Idella Purnell Stone (Gold Medal: NY, 1969, wpps 303, 75¢).

...And Who the Pot? -- AMZ 6/59.

Asstronomy -- NW #37, 7/55.

\*Creeping Coffins of Barbados, The -- FAN 4/58.

Many Legged Thing, A -- FU 11/59.

Over the Border -- UNK 9/59.

\*Riddle of Levitation, The -- FAN 5/58.

\*Satan's Footprints -- FAN 8/58.

\*Ship That Vanished, The -- FAN 6/58.

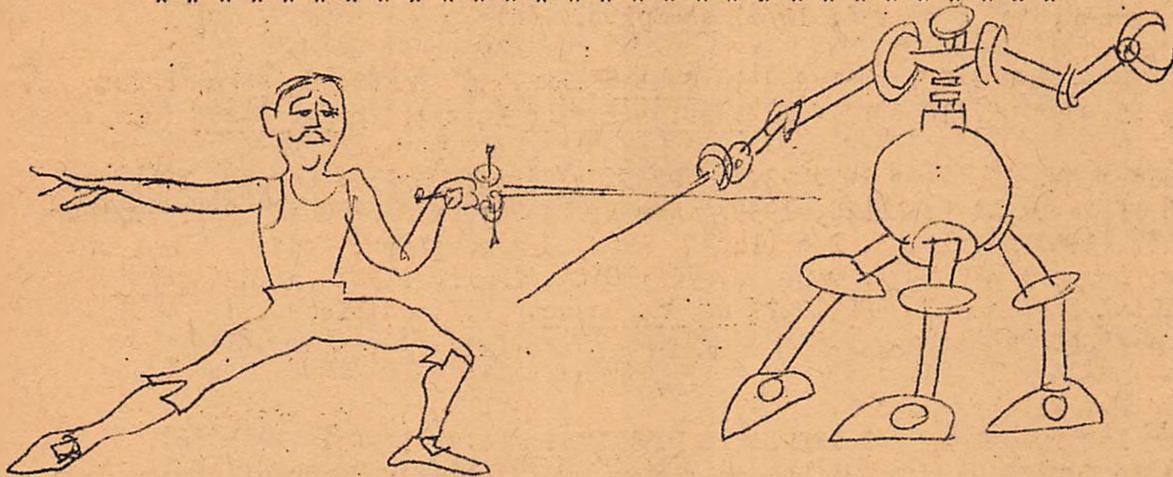
Spontaneous Frognation -- UNK 7/40.  
 Stargazers -- AMZ 1/59.  
 Trench...and Two Holes, A -- NW #100, 11/60.

Articles marked (\*) are part of:  
Great World Mysteries -- Dobson: London, 1957, pp 191, 16s; Roy: NY, 1957, pp 191,  
 \$3.75; Mayflower: London B32, 1962, wpps 160, 3/6 (#3230, 1967, 3/6). Which,  
 to my mind, is the best Fortean book ever done (excepting maybe Fort).

Russell also has a book on mob psychology, politics, etc., called The Rabble Rousers, whose only known edition was a paperback from Regency: Chicago in 1962.

The numbers, incidentally, which follow many of the titles are lengths, in 1,000's, of words, taken from the Metcalf Index. Where no number is given (excepting, of course, in the case of novels), "s" means short story and "nt" means novelette.

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NEWS RELEASE (from Gale Research Co., Book Tower, Detroit, MI 48226):

The SF Index, a major new and comprehensive bibliography of the science fiction and fantasy book, has been announced for 1974 publication by the Gale Research Company, Detroit reference book publishers. Research and editorial effort on the project will be directed by R. Reginald, a professional librarian, bibliographer, and collector in the SF field.

Mr. Reginald indicates the index will not be based on any previously published material, but will be compiled completely anew from the traditional sources, including public and private collections of speculative fiction, and the standard library trade tools. An attempt will be made to list all English-language first editions, together with any subsequent title changes; original paperbacks will be considered first editions.

The typical entry will include author, title, publisher, publishing date, and some indication of the type of book listed (novel, anthology, collection, poetry, plays, etc.) Current plans also call for separate sections covering pseudonyms and biographies of selected authors, plus an annotated bibliography of science fiction reference works.

Douglas Menville has been appointed associate editor of the project, and Barry Levin and Michael Part are assistants. Others are expected to become associated with the undertaking in its later stages.

Those wishing either to help or to learn more about the book should contact the editor at his home, Hill House, 379 Edgerton Drive, San Francisco, CA 92405; or meet him personally at a coming convention. Credit will be generously given.

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BIBLIOGRAPHIA:  
 Books About Science Fiction  
 Reviewed  
 by  
 Hal Hall

Twenty Years of ANALOG/ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION-SCIENCE FACT, 1952-1971, by Jan A. Lorenzen (Locomotive Workshop, 32650 Lake Rd., Avon Lake, OH 44012; 40 pp.; \$2.50.) --

An index to the fiction, editorials, cover symbols, fact articles, department of diverse data (cartoons), and artists appearing in ASTOUNDING/ANALOG from 1952-1971, which should be of interest to the ASF fan. The fiction and artist sections are arranged by name, with all other sections arranged chronologically. Since the fiction is already indexed in at least two SF magazine indexes, the value of this particular index lies in its treatment of editorials, artists, and non-fiction articles. Had Jan gone on and completed his indexing, this could have been an outstanding research tool for access to all aspects of ASF. Specifically, the index needed the following things: citations to pages, especially in the artist section; a title index to fiction, non-fiction, and editorials; and better subject access to the non-fiction and editorials. It would have taken only a little more time and effort to have included pagination and a title index, and would have greatly improved the index. Finally, one last question: Why the 1952 beginning date? Will there be a 1930-1951 index forthcoming?



Fantasy and Science Fiction: A Critical Guide, by John R. Pfeiffer (Palmer Lake, Colo., Filter Press, 1971; 64 pp.; paper, \$1.50; hard cover, \$4.00.) --

With the stated purpose of providing "resource information in virtually every important aspect of the field", this guide could have been a real help for the teacher unfamiliar with SF and fantasy. As it stands, it has some value, but only to the real neophyte.

The guide is divided into a number of sections: beginnings to 1500; 1500-1599; 1600-1699; 1700-1799; 1800-1899; 1900-present (listed out of order--this is the first section); selected periodicals; special anthologies; bibliographic works; history and criticism; fanzines. A title index is appended. Data supplied includes author, title, date, number of editions, and a coded subject guide. Place of publication is given in some cases, but not publisher. Winners of the Hugo, Nebula, and IFA are indicated, if they were included (at least two award winners were excluded).

Other omissions include Joanne Burger's helpful lists of SF books published, 1967-1971, Day's Checklist of Fantastic Literature in Paperbound Books, and Panshin's articles in LIBRARY JOURNAL and WILSON LIBRARY BULLETIN. In the History and Criticism section, Blish's More Issues at Hand is excluded, as are Panshin's articles in FANTASTIC. Panshin's valuable study, Heinlein in Dimension, is neither listed in the criticism section nor indexed, but does appear buried at the end of the Heinlein listing in the first section. The section on "Selected Periodicals" contains at least three glaring errors, and other sections have enough errors to compromise the accuracy of the total work.

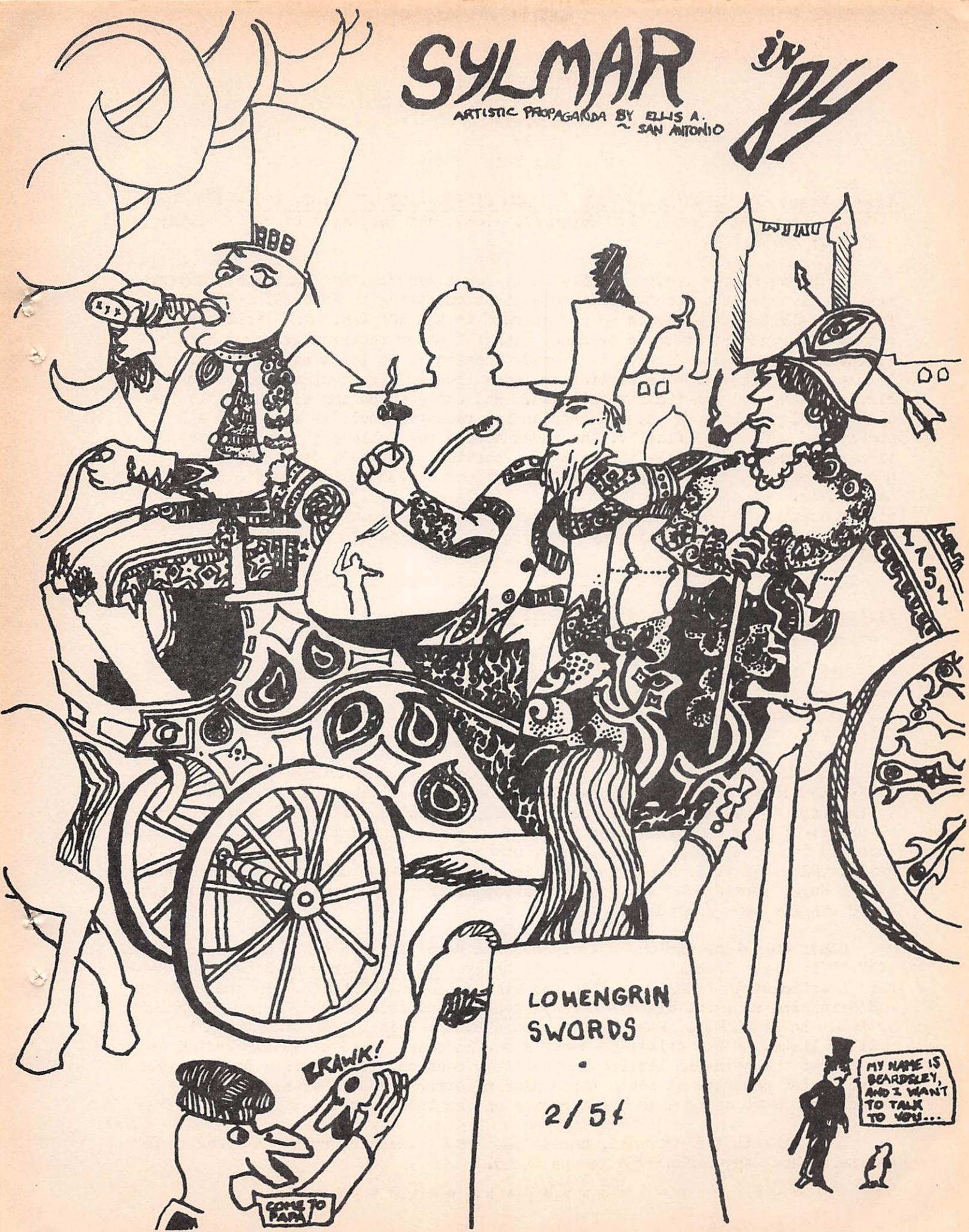
Don't buy it for yourself, unless you know a teacher trying to offer an SF course without any background in the field.

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# SYLMAR

ARTISTIC PROPAGANDA BY ELLIS A. SAN ANTONIO

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84



BRAWK!

COME TO PAPA

LOWENGRIN SWORDS

2/51

MY NAME IS BEARDSLEY, AND I WANT TO TALK TO YOU...

SFWA Nebula Awards 1972

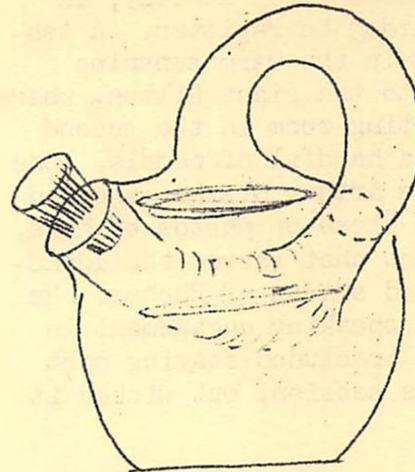
by Jay Kay Klein

Festivities this year were to be differently arranged, with an SFWA business meeting the morning of Saturday, April 29, a program in the afternoon, and the banquet with awards that evening.

President Jim Gunn was in Syracuse, New York, Thursday to speak at Syracuse University about science fiction and show two of his films made at the University of Kansas. One included John Campbell, but unfortunately the camera specially devoted to him proved defective and only a few segments containing John actually came out. Prior to the event, some two dozen persons interested in science fiction had dinner with Jim at a country club, the group including Dick Wilson, Dan Steffan, Dave Kyle, and myself. After the event, a smaller group met at Dick Wilson's for a party.

Friday, Dave Kyle and I boarded an AMTRAK train at the former Penn-Central station in East Syracuse. It was a strange sight to see a locomotive hauling just two coaches and nothing else on the same old, rusting tracks that formerly had hauled such crack trains as the Empire State Express. In deference to the roadbed's old age, the schedule had been lengthened to take about six hours between Syracuse and New York, but the ride was peaceful, and the total trip devoid of the present-day airlines scramble to check baggage, reclaim baggage, take a taxi downtown, and threats of hijacking. The cost was also half that of the airlines, making allowance for savings on taxis. Also, for Dave, a retired U.S. Air Force Colonel, the train had the added benefit of not requiring air travel.

We arrived Friday, 2:30 p.m. at the headquarters hotel, the Algonquin, finding Jim Gunn, Gordy Dickson, and a strange bearded person sitting together in the lobby. "Bet you don't know who I am", challenged the apparition in a down-South, out-West Randolph Scott



OLD J.K.

voice. I immediately identified him as the Sage of Morehead, Kentucky, Andy Offutt, whom I had last seen as a beardless youth at the St. Louiscon. This now-bearded youth first achieved fame within SFWA circles by publishing an article in the BULLETIN admonishing writers against the use of clichés. We moved to Andy's room for a couple of hours where beer was served from a portable refrigerator furnished on request by the hotel.

The Algonquin is a pleasant establishment, and the restaurant menu was attractive, too, though Dave Kyle, Jerry Shutz, and I discovered at dinner that the establishment had a \$1 cover charge and prices that matched this bit of elegance. Still, wild rice cooked in wine is not to be lightly dismissed. Afterwards, worn out with my labors on behalf of the SFWA--printing endless quantities of publicity photos two days previously of the Nebula winners--I collapsed into bed for the best night's sleep I'd had in a couple of weeks.

Saturday Morning I headed for the New York Hilton, where the business meeting was scheduled to start at 10:00 a.m. As I was about to

leave the hotel lobby at 9:45, in came Tom Purdom to register. A ten-minute walk in the warm sunshine brought me to the giant Hilton, where a large meeting room in the second floor held a handful of people. One of these was Arthur Clarke, who had a supply of close-up photos of Mars, including one that showed the Idaho-potato-shaped shadow of Phobos. He said that a speaking engagement in Connecticut precluded staying past the business session, but wished it didn't.

Also on hand were Jack Williamson, Jack Dann, George Zebrowski, George Scithers, Chip Delany, Harvey and Audrey Bilker, and a very few others. Getting underway at 10:30, Jim Gunn was quickly interrupted by Andy Offutt, who complained about the late start, although he himself had arrived past the stated starting time because he had walked three blocks in the wrong direction. "Don't you have any pride?" he asked. (Laughter.)

"We were waiting for you!" ri-posted Jim. (Bigger laughs.) He then announced the results of the SFWA election, with Poul Anderson the new president, Norman Spinrad the new vice president, Robert (Buck) Coulson the new secretary, and (Honest) Joe Haldeman the left-over treasurer. Jim made the amazing and fantastic statement, "The SFWA is now financially sound." Some \$3088 was in the treasury. He suggested that a permanent paid secretary be secured for the organization. This led to other suggestions for improving the organization and its activities. A particularly difficult problem has been the Nebula voting, and a number of persons added their ideas to the record, including the most complicated procedure you can imagine by Jay Kay Klein. (If you have an evening sometime, let me explain the first part to you....)

Other questions were brought up, but not disposed of, since almost never does a mass meeting produce concrete actions. (Though possibly

"mass meeting" is not quite the term for an assembly of 20 persons, by actual count at 11:15.) A few others came trickling in, including Harlan Ellison. Isaac Asimov arrived at 11:50 and announced, "You can start now." (Why-do-I-deserve-this nervous laughter.) Realizing from the sound that the mob is a fickle creature that could instantly turn into a Golem and destroy the high and mighty, Isaac apologized for being late, explaining that he had been in Philadelphia that morning and had to drive in. George Scithers and Tom Purdom objected to this line of reasoning, saying that had been in Philadelphia, too.

"But I had to wash!" triumphantly declared Isaac, at which there was silence, since, after all, the statement can be taken two ways.

Adjournment came 20 minutes past the originally-scheduled noon. Several luncheon parties took place downstairs at the excellent Hilton restaurant. Sprague and Catherine de Camp, Jack Williamson, and I shared a table.

The program started at 1:15 p.m. with a panel "Science Fiction Goes to College". Tom Purdom introduced the panel, consisting of the advertised Jim Gunn and Jack Williamson, plus the special added attraction of Harlan Ellison. Tom said this year's arrangement of events would set the pattern for the future, with no speeches at the banquet. (Smiles and cheering sounds from the audience.)

Jack Williamson was the first speaker, saying that he had spent his early life on an isolated farm. He told of the first car he'd seen that also had the first electric light he'd seen. He recalled his first sight, too, of an airplane--and contrasted these with the fact that in World War II he wound up forecasting weather in the South Pacific. And now he has even witnessed the advent of space travel. But he feels that his interest in science fiction has

protected him against what is termed "future shock", and that science fiction, through its forecasting ability, has and will continue to protect others.

Also in his lifetime, Jack has seen the beginning of science fiction courses at universities. He showed the syllabus of one early course to John Campbell, who expressed disappointment that only the Wells material was hard science fiction. John also volunteered the opinion that only ANALOG offered hard science fiction currently.

Jack went over science fiction's origins in antiquity and in the more recent past. He took a swipe at the Main Stream for dealing mostly with the sordid details of life, whereas science fiction looks much more hopefully at man's capabilities and the future. "Science fiction offers a useful language to discuss our place in the world today and tomorrow", he said, concluding, "Science fiction is still good medicine for future shock."

The audience, swelled by the arrival of more members and a few fans, numbered 48 at 1:30.

Jim Gunn spoke next, saying that as president of SFWA, he had been besieged with letters from teachers at all levels who asked, "What should I teach?" There is a shortage of qualified science fiction teachers, since until recently there not only was no such subject in the curricula, but the topic was even considered too inelegant for anyone to know anything about. The teachers have no idea which stories are which, and request suggested reading lists. Libraries, too, request recommended lists.

Now there are very large numbers of high schools offering courses in science fiction. The teachers have learned that young people like science fiction and will read it as relevant material, where they will reject the old literature classics. Still, there are a lot of students who reach

college with no preparation at all. Jim taught one course that had 160 students, with only a few knowing anything about the subject. A questionnaire showed that most of those who signed up did so because they thought the course would be interesting or they wanted to know more about the subject--not because they were already readers.

A poll of these students covering 22 writers showed 103 were acquainted with Ray Bradbury, 83 with Isaac Asimov, 76 with Arthur Clarke, 68 with Kurt Vonnegut, 43 with Van Vogt, and lesser numbers with Harlan Ellison (39), Frank Herbert (39), Poul Anderson (39), Fred Pohl (34), Brian Aldiss (28), Jim Gunn (28), Lester del Rey (27), Bob Silverberg (26), and others.

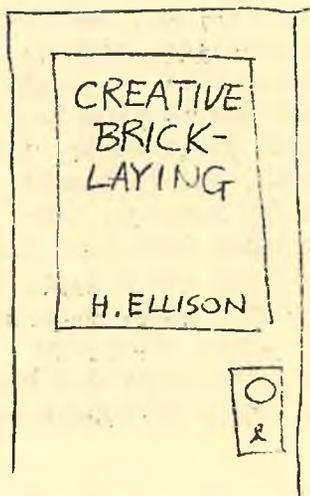
The students showed great enthusiasm for science fiction, and are part of a great potential market. Another poll showed that 22 bought one hardcover science fiction book a year, eight bought one a month, five bought two a month, and 78 bought none. As you might suppose, purchasers of paperbacks were more plentiful, with 45 buying one a year, 52 one a month, 13 one a week, nine buying more, and 25 none. Very few bought magazines, with only one buying one a month, while 90 bought none at all.

Young people are more familiar with television than with reading, and are very unfamiliar with hardcover books and magazines. Jim tried an experiment in having his college bookstore stock ten of each magazine instead of none--and they consistently sell out. He suggested that publishers should get college bookstores to stock science fiction, since they are undoubtedly a prime source of sales. This is for an audience that changes every four years at 2,000 colleges in the United States.

Jim called it a "tragedy" for persons trying to teach science fiction that "you simply can't get the

books." Most of the science fiction classics are out of print, either temporarily or for long periods of time. As a result, it is difficult to plan a course and even more difficult to cover desired books. He pointed out that in his experience, college bookstores can't get what they want to order. This doesn't seem to make good business sense.

Harlan took over the microphone, saying that he has made 263 college lectures in four years, covering every state except Rhode Island. "Except for college lectures, I would have had to take up brick-laying." He pointed out the recent depression has affected nearly every writer, and that there is a big market for science fiction college lecturers.



There is a phenomenal interest among college students in science fiction. Invited to one college at midterm time, Harlan discovered, contrary to expectations, that the 500-seat auditorium was filled to overflowing, with hundreds more sitting in the aisles and on the stage itself. Harlan thought this particularly revealing since there was almost no publicity given the event. In a show of hands, the audience indicated a fourth knew Harlan through his TV columns, while most of the rest had read his works. They were very interested in the science fic-

tion authors. "What is Isaac Asimov like?" is the most frequently-asked question.

Even in the midst of recent riots at Cornell, Harlan had 500 students in the audience. Young people are vitally interested in science fiction. "They look to us for an ordered world view." Confirming Jack Williamson's earlier statement, he said, "We're the only literature written today that is optimistic." And confirming Jim Gunn's statement, Harlan repeated that in teaching courses himself he has found it hard to get basic science fiction books that are actually "legendary on campuses". Publishers should realize this and publish books for students.

Harlan concluded with an exhortation for writers to get on the lecture tour circuit. He cited Harvey Bilkner's SFWA Speaker's Bureau as being well-run and productive of many dates.

Dick Peck spoke up from the audience, saying that some years ago he couldn't get faculty permission to teach science fiction at Temple University, where he is on the faculty of the English Department and Assistant Dean of the Graduate School. However, students in an honors course chose science fiction as their subject and couldn't be refused. Afterwards, science fiction readers on the faculty came forth and wanted to teach such courses, too. Now, there are more volunteers than available courses. In the first regularly-scheduled course at Temple, the class was filled immediately, with only room for 35 and over 100 applying on the first day of registration.

The panel ended at 2:15, though many more persons in the audience were interested in asking questions and volunteering information. Tom Purdom stated that there simply wasn't any time on the program for these activities. Later, he told me that in following years he will schedule time for audience participation.

Dr. Leslie Fielder went on next, shuffling his notes around at first and informing the audience that the papers were absolutely necessary to permit him to talk without exceeding his time limit. Fielder has written books and much literary criticism. He began, "I come to talk to you from a different point of view."

"I am one of those secret faculty admirers of science fiction." He admitted he is now willing to come forth since it is safe to do so. "I want to talk primarily from a critic's point of view."

Science fiction has come out of its ghetto and is taking a place in the university. There is considerable nostalgia among the old aficionados over science fiction coming into the university, with the feeling that it was pleasant to have science fiction the property of a restricted number of people. Unfortunately, science fiction is now liable to become a stuffy pedagogical topic. Fielder has taught for 33 years at university English departments, and can see this being visited on science fiction. He said he would hate to see heavy-handed lecturers on science fiction and fantasy, and the publishing of "deadly dissertations".

Without saying so, Fielder took a swipe at the New Wave, pointing out that the "modernism" movement exemplified by Proust, Joyce and Mann is dying or dead, and that the injection of this moribund "Main Stream" treatment in science fiction is a dead end. Further, the old-time distinction between "literature" and "junk" is passé, too. "We have come to the end of a period of elitism." Critics now will have to distinguish between good and bad, not high and low.

The old dicta of what is right and proper belongs to an old class-structured society that doesn't exist anymore. We have to abandon the old notion that there are certain types of literature that are inherently superior or inferior. The critical

redemption will have to be extended not only to science fiction but also to pornography, Westerns, thrillers, fairy tales, and other literary forms for many years relegated to an inferior status. Fielder added that all types will have at first to be infused with pornography, because this is a common denominator that is understandable to everyone. Because Phil Farmer already has done this, he is in the forefront of the new literature.

Fielder pointed out that fiction reading has declined, and that only science fiction has kept the short story alive in recent decades, during which time the art story has been dying. He said that for a while critics will have to follow popular taste rather than trying to lead it. The new place of the critics is to explain to readers why they like something rather than why they should like something.

A very important part of the new viewpoint is to stop thinking that people's reading changes as they mature, first from fairy tales, then to science fiction and pornography, and finally to great literature. The new notion is that we read all these things through our entire lives. The only way to present the old art literature is to retain it as part of a complete literary mix.

The old techniques of writing, which stressed form and theme, are not enough. Myth is also needed. The finest writers, such as Shakespeare, have all three. Still, as long as the contents are interesting, even badly-written books can be supremely good books.

Science fiction can help English departments not only at the college level but also in high schools. We must break the circular reasoning that says books are written to be put in libraries and on reading lists--and that only books on reading lists and in libraries are worthwhile for reading. Universities are like totalitarian states, where whatever is not

forbidden is required. College professors today find that their traditional courses do not attract students but that science fiction does. Now university professors are trying to get into the teaching of science fiction.

Still, "relevance" should be at the end of teaching, not where it begins. Otherwise, you may set up "anti-elitism" as another form of "elitism".

Fielder stated that science fiction tends to become scriptural--and he cited Heinlein's Stranger in a Strange Land--where science is re-deemed as myth.

Universities can help science fiction. Just as science fiction can deliver the university from elitism, the university can deliver science fiction from "Samboism"--or self-depreciation. In addition, universities can give science fiction a new audience.

The problems with having science fiction come to academia lie in the tendency for academic types to be pretentious and arty. Fielder urged science fiction writers to avoid this. He said it is "heartbreaking to see people reinvent symbolism" and other techniques long outmoded. In particular, he said that Kurt Vonnegut has made a great mistake in passing himself off as a Main Stream writer and producing second-rate stuff instead of first-rate science fiction. On the other hand, Phil Farmer represents the hope that science fiction won't be opted into academia and rendered dull and impotent. Fielder concluded that he would hate to see science fiction bowdlerized or cut up for the benefit of professional academicians.

A brief intermission was announced by Tom Purdom, during which time many persons expressed admiration for Fielder's excellent talk. He made a great hit with the SFWA members. The allotted ten minutes was spent by the

audience mostly in greeting old friends. Fred Pohl commented on Harlan's unique--not to say weird--pipe. Harlan claimed it cost him \$300. "You were taken", said Fred.

At 3:15 Isaac Asimov began his talk on "Science Fiction and the Future", saying he is used to speaking at universities with enthusiastic fans in the audience rather than to unawed writers of equal or greater talent. As was his custom when facing a hard speech, that day he opened his mail in the expectation there would be something to suggest a good approach. Sure enough, he received a letter saying that science writers are being trimmed from editorial staffs, and that science and technology have become suspect.

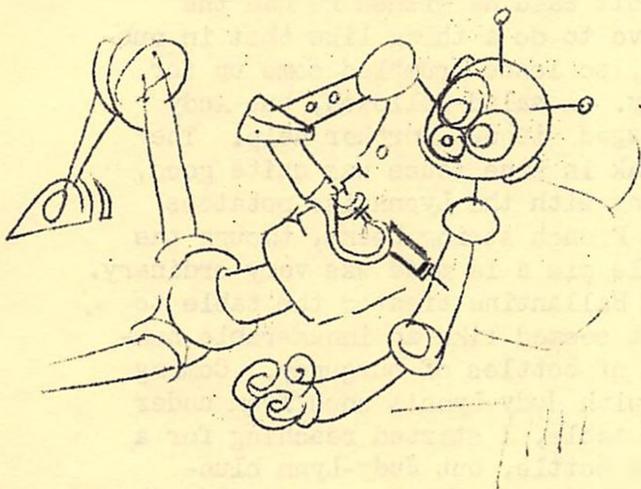
This led into a theme that Isaac has expounded before and a prediction that when science fiction is taught in academia it will be taught not by scientists but by people ignorant of science. In fact, this has already happened.

Isaac lamented that lots of science fiction is being by literary types who don't know anything about science. He stated that science is going to change the future, and this is worthwhile being written about. In fact, the only aspect of human life that changes over the centuries is the level of technology. The eternal verities, so belovedly spoken of by literary persons, and the human situations stay the same.

As an example of technology changing the world through changing the social scene, and not just adding gadgetry, Isaac cited how the printing press permitted Luther's heresies to be spread around Europe. Previous heresies had never reached very many people and had been easy to suppress.

He said that he writes his own stories in the language of science so they sound authentic and plausible. "I write what comes out of my head and let others figure out what I say";

ITS THIOTIMOLINE HYDRO-  
CHLORIDE, ANHYDROUS



Isaac added by way of pointing out he does not consciously add myth to his writings. The ring of Isaac's authenticity is so strong that readers still ask about psychohistory, a concept made up for the Foundation stories.

Isaac's talk had little of the famous Asimov humor, and was surprising to those who knew him well. For the first time, I think, those of us in the auditorium heard a completely serious Dr. Asimov, who stated that if a writer portrays the future without considering science, the story becomes fantasy.

Pointing out that the Protestant revolution and scientific revolution took place simultaneously, he said that it is necessary to understand what is happening scientifically now to be able to present what will happen in the future.

He added that today most science fiction is written by the literary types so that Isaac's own work is especially popular because there isn't much competition. Only a very few of the new writers deal with science.

"Science fiction can play a role completely out of proportion to its value as literature." He concluded that "Science fiction is man's liter-

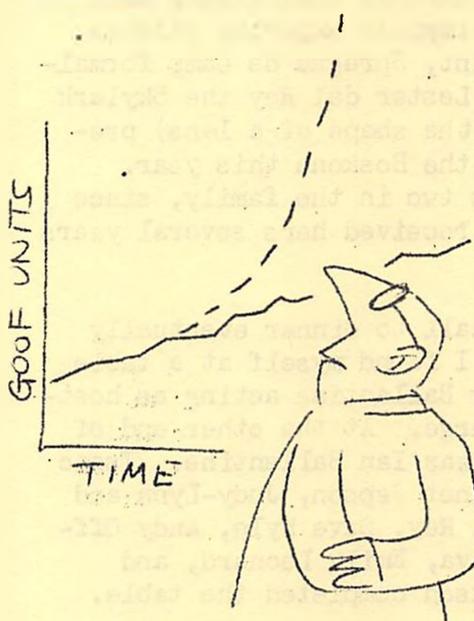
ary response to technological change and saving himself from it."

A panel followed at 4 p.m. with Fred Pohl, Ben Bova, Katherine MacLean, and Gordy Dickson. Ben Bova began with the mention of the study by MIT predicting doom because of the world's using up irreplaceable natural resources. He stated this is a good argument for attempting to change the predicted future with space travel.

Kate MacLean pointed out you need a viewpoint from which to observe the future, and that science fiction performs this function.

Fred Pohl said that "the whole study of the future is misconceived." There is no real value in predicting the future. If the prediction is good, it can't be prevented anyway and you can only make yourself unhappy worrying about it. The real reason for looking into the future is to decide what kind of a world you want to live in and to try to make it become reality.

Gordy Dickson said it is impossible to study the present except at close range, and that a science fiction story can provide a platform in the future from which to view the present at a distance.



Ben added that authors write about the here and now, even if the story is set on Alpha Centauri. Fred said along that line that he had just rejected three novels from a good writer because the themes weren't the writer's own and he therefore hadn't known what to do with them. Gordy said, "You've got to write out of your own skull." He also stated, "I much prefer science fiction to speculative fiction."

The afternoon program ended about 4:35. The morning business session had not accomplished anything, but had proven valuable in airing members' ideas, though unfortunately none of the new officers was present to hear them. The afternoon session had presented a couple of excellent talks, an excellent panel, and a panel that compared favorably with the average panel at a science fiction convention. A nearly empty auditorium at all times indicated something, but I'm not sure just what.

Les Champs restaurant was the scene of that evening's festivities, with a cash bar opening at 6 p.m. To name all the celebrities would be an impossible task since 105 attended. Considerable socializing was done over rapidly emptying glasses. At one point, Sprague de Camp formally handed Lester del Rey the Skylark award (in the shape of a lens) presented by the Boskone this year. That makes two in the family, since Judy-Lynn received hers several years ago.

The call to dinner eventually came, and I found myself at a table with Betty Ballantine acting as hostess in charge. At the other end of the table was Ian Ballantine. Isaac Asimov, Janet Jepson, Judy-Lynn and Lester del Rey, Dave Kyle, Andy Offutt, Ben Bova, Emily Leonard, and Gordy Dickson completed the table.

Other tables were similarly endowed with writing and editorial talent, of course, and I have no

doubt the persons there had as much fun. Noticing Isaac crumbling up breadsticks for the onion soup, Andy Offutt said he wished he had the nerve to do a thing like that in public, so Isaac crumbled some up for Andy. A salad followed, but Andy managed without further help. The steak in wine sauce was quite good, along with the Lyonnaise potatoes and French string beans, though the apple pie a la mode was very ordinary. Ian Ballantine treated the table to what seemed like an innumerable number of bottles of burgundy. Coming up with Judy-Lynn's shoe from under the table, I started reaching for a wine bottle, but Judy-Lynn blue-pencilled the idea as an unacceptable plot gimmick.

At 9:30 Harlan Ellison added an unexpected touch to the affair at the request of Jim Gunn, who remained crouched nearby not quite sure what to expect next. Harlan took over as a sort of borscht circuit comic. He joked with Isaac over his singing, took Fred Pohl to task for publicly saying he didn't care for Again Dangerous Visions over the Long John Nebel radio program during a panel discussion with Harlan, and introduced a few notables: Ejler Jakobsen, Jim Gunn, Sprague de Camp, Betty Ballantine, Don Wollheim, and Elsie Wollheim.

Harlan joked about everyone, saying such things as Don Wollheim was an android run by Elsie, "that little lady at his side". Harlan said Ben Bova had the only science fiction magazine printed on pepperoni. The comedian also said scathing things about the food which were really not so, and the waiters took obvious umbrage since Les Champs is quite a good restaurant, not a hotel where the help is itinerant and the food matches. Still, the SFWA members have become tired of the same place every year, and Andy Porter volunteered to Tom Purdom to search out another establishment. (Tom Purdom is in favor of holding the banquet at his beloved Muffinburger restaurant.)

After an unnerving half hour, Jim Gunn took up the formal part of the brief program. He announced the new slate of SFWA officers, and went directly to the Nebula awards.

Short Story: "Good News from the Vatican" by Bob Silverberg. Bob was at the West Coast dinner, but Fred Pohl accepted a publisher's plaque for Ace Books.

Novelette: "Queen of Air and Darkness" by Poul Anderson. Poul was at the West Coast dinner, but Ed Ferman picked up the publisher's plaque for FANTASY & SCIENCE FICTION.

Novella: "The Missing Man" by Katherine MacLean. Kate was at the dinner and received her plastic-wrapped Nebula with evident pleasure. Ben Bova picked up the publisher's plaque for ANALOG.

Novel: A Time of Changes, by Bob Silverberg. Publisher's plaques were accepted by Ejler Jakobsson for GALAXY and Ellen Asher for New American Library.

The culminating event took just ten minutes, and most people headed for the Algonquin and a cash bar party. As expected, more drinking,

talking, and singing took place. A highlight of the affair came when I struggled with Harlan for the possession of a chair. Audry and Harvey Bilker looked on with amazement as eventually we compromised and Harlan let me have the chair while he took a different one. It was really a very quiet party, and people left one by one or in small groups until at last the bar closed.

Sunday morning I had breakfast with a large group in the Algonquin dining room, where I didn't mind the 95¢ for four ounces of fresh orange juice, but the \$1 cover charge seemed out of place with a breakfast order. Still, the company made the high cost bearable. Eventually I wound up in the lobby for a couple of hours talking with Fred Pohl, Andy Offutt, Jim Gunn, and Jack Williamson until it was 3:30 p.m. and time to walk a few blocks to the old Grand Penn-Central Station. When I expressed surprise that they were taking a train, too, instead of flying, Fred told me you just don't fly to Red Bank, New Jersey, from New York City. I said, "Oh!".

((A shorter version of Jay Kay's report was published in SFWA BULLETIN #41/42. --ed.))

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THE GREATEST OF THE GREATEST; or, WRITERS PITTED AGAINST THEMSELVES  
by Michael T. Shoemaker

This Issue: Leiber vs. Leiber.

For various reasons, this column has not appeared for some time. Consequently, I have been sitting on the Leiber poll results for an equally long period.

I find the results to be very conclusive. Ninety-two people were polled, and their votes named 14 titles--of which eight were shorter than novel-length and one was a series. The series was "Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser", and votes for any individual story in that series went toward the series as a whole. Here are the results: (1) Gather, Darkness (61.08%); (2) Conjure Wife (38.04%); (3) The Big Time (34.78%); (4) "Fafhrd & the Gray Mouser" series (31.52%).

Very surprising to me was the poor showing of The Wanderer and "Coming Attraction". As for my own choice, I voted for Gather Darkness and The Big Time.

The next poll is on Arthur C. Clarke. What two stories (any length, SF, fantasy, or horror) of his are your favorites? Call (548-2709) or write (2123 N. Early St., Alexandria, VA 22302), or tell me in person what you think.

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CHECKLIST OF MAJOR SCIENCE FICTION AWARDS  
Compiled by Hal Hall

HUGO

1953	Alfred Bester	<u>The Demolished Man</u>
1954	No Award.	
1955	Mark Clifton & Frank Riley	<u>They'd Rather Be Right (The Forever Machine)</u>
1956	Robert A. Heinlein	<u>Double Star</u>
1957	No Award.	
1958	Fritz Leiber	<u>The Big Time</u>
1959	James Blish	<u>A Case of Conscience</u>
1960	Robert A. Heinlein	<u>Starship Trooper</u>
1961	Walter M. Miller, Jr.	<u>A Canticle for Leibowitz</u>
1962	Robert A. Heinlein	<u>Stranger in a Strange Land</u>
1963	Philip K. Dick	<u>The Man in the High Castle</u>
1964	Clifford Simak	<u>Way Station</u>
1965	Fritz Leiber	<u>The Wanderer</u>
1966	TIE: Frank Herbert Roger Zelazny	<u>Dune</u> <u>...And Call Me Conrad (This Immortal)</u>
1967	Robert A. Heinlein	<u>The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress</u>
1968	Roger Zelazny	<u>Lord of Light</u>
1969	John Brunner	<u>Stand on Zanzibar</u>
1970	Ursula K. LeGuin	<u>The Left Hand of Darkness</u>
1971	Larry Niven	<u>Ringworld</u>
1972	Philip Jose Farmer	<u>To Your Scattered Bodies Go</u>
1973	Isaac Asimov	<u>The Gods Themselves</u>
1974		

NEBULA

1965	Frank Herbert	<u>Dune</u>
1966	TIE: Samuel Delany Daniel Keyes	<u>Babel 17</u> <u>Flowers for Algernon</u>
1967	Samuel R. Delany	<u>The Einstein Intersection</u>
1968	Alexei Panshin	<u>Rite of Passage</u>
1969	Ursula K. LeGuin	<u>The Left Hand of Darkness</u>
1970	Larry Niven	<u>Ringworld</u>
1971	Robert Silverberg	<u>A Time of Changes</u>
1972	Isaac Asimov	<u>The Gods Themselves</u>
1973		

INTERNATIONAL FANTASY AWARD

1951	George R. Stewart	<u>Earth Abides</u>
1952	John Collier	<u>Fancies and Goodnights</u>
1953	Clifford Simak	<u>City</u>
1954	Theodore Sturgeon	<u>More Than Human</u>
1955	Edgar Pangborn	<u>A Mirror for Observers</u>
1956	No Award.	
1957	J.R.R. Tolkien	<u>The Lord of the Rings</u>

((IFA was originated at 1951 British Convention, with awards selected by international panel. Nebula's are selected by members of S.F. Writer's Assoc., and awarded at their annual banquets in April. Hugo's are selected by members of annual World S.F. Conventions, and awarded at Sept. convention. For Hugos and IFA's, works were published in year preceding convention date given above; for Nebulas, publication date is given above, with award given in following year.--ed.))

## FLUX DE MOTS: Editor's Pages

Well, we finally made it! If you're reading this, TWJ #80, the "jinx" issue, is finally out...! Our co-editor for issues #83 and on thinks we should write several pages detailing the trials and tribulations of #80. We would prefer to have someone work up a multi-page comic strip on the subject (some of the things which happened to the issue were so bizarre as to be properly presentable only via the medium of the comic strip....). But, as time is very limited (we leave for England tomorrow!), a couple of paragraphs here will have to suffice.

The Trials and Tribulations of TWJ #80; or, The Perils of ~~Being~~ an Editor.

It started when, after TWJ #78, we decided that (a) with our worsening eye problems and (b) ailing mimeo, we needed to find someone to do the publishing, so we would be free to devote more time to the editorial end. Gary Labowitz volunteered (he said he liked publishing...), and put out #79 with no problems.

As #79 was being published, we started the typing of #80. One day, in late Jan. or early Feb. '72, Gary showed up unexpectedly with the pages of one of the 'zines he had run off for us (forget whether it was TWJ #79 or THE GAMESMAN #6). We hastily grabbed all the TWJ #80 stencils we had typed at this point (which didn't need artwork added), and handed them to him to take back and run off, to get a head start on the large May '72 Disclave issue.

After Gary had departed, we realized we hadn't noted the contents of the pages we gave him--which made the typing of additional pages somewhat difficult. At any rate, we wrote him immediately, and asked him to send us a copy of each page as soon as they were run off, so we could complete the typing of the rest of the stencils and mail them to him in time for the 'Clave.

About this time, we gave several pages of odds and ends of artwork for #80 to Jack Chalker, to be electrostencilled.

Time passed, with no word from Gary. Several notes to him asking about the status of the material he already had, and inquiring when he wanted the additional material we had managed to prepare without knowing what was on the 22 pages we had given him, went unanswered. And inquiries to Jack about the status of the artwork brought forth the reply that the artwork was "missing".

Disclave '72 approached, and went...no artwork, no word or sign of Gary (we had expected him to at least show up at Disclave)...and the '72 Disclave issue didn't make the con....

Additional time passed, and our frustration grew at not even knowing if we were ever going to see the stencils (and artwork) again. And the material in the issue, much of it depending upon timely publication for its value, dated more & more.

One day in July, Gary showed up and returned the stencils (it seems he and his wife had split, and he had either remarried or was heavily dating someone else). We sat down and typed most of the remaining stencils, and bypassed the missing artwork wherever we could.

Before we could start running off #80, our mimeo went down (it looked like it might be permanent at the time--as it was, it was down for two months), and we frantically began looking for another publisher. Brian Burley volunteered (no problem, he said--he could run the 'zine off in a single evening); and we made the mistake of telling him there was no big hurry, as the 'zine was already late.

Exact sequence of events at this point is somewhat hazy in our memory. During the next several months, Jack found the missing artwork and then lost it again; we mailed some stencils to Brian (and had difficulty in finding out if he had received them--or in communicating with him at all--it seems he doesn't answer his mail...we finally ended up establishing a hot-line via phone between a WSFA member (Jim Landau) and Brian); Brian had trouble in obtaining paper; Les Mayer delivered the bulk of the remaining stencils to him at the '73 Lunacon; after finally giving up on the missing artwork, we pulled out some of the #80 pages and sent the remainder to Brian to complete the issue).

Time passed...and communication became almost non-existent. The issue was in limbo, and the artwork was still missing. We published #81, #82, and #83. And still no #80. TWJ almost folded completely, due both to our frustration, and the

(Over)

FLUX DE MOIS (Continued) --

fact that material stopped coming in almost completely because so many of our formerly regular contributors had material in #80 and were waiting to see it published. (We had a 70-80% turnover in contributors after #80, and we had to develop almost an entirely new staff for TWJ.)

Things finally began to break around the time of our late-1973 eye surgery. (Again, things are a bit hazy as to the order in which they occurred. During this time, most of Sections A and B was returned completed from Brian; Jack found about 2/3'rds of the missing artwork, lost it again, and then found it and returned it to us; we pulled out the pages we had put aside, cut in the electro-stencilled art, and mailed the remaining few stencils off to Brian.) We expected the bulk of the issue would be ready and picked up by a WSFA member at the Philly-con...then at the Balticon...then at the Lunacon...but nothing happened. Finally, we learned via the hot-line that Brian and Sherna had split (the "jinx" issue did it again!), she had "custody of the mimeo", so Brian would return the rest of the stencils and the paper to us at Disclave.

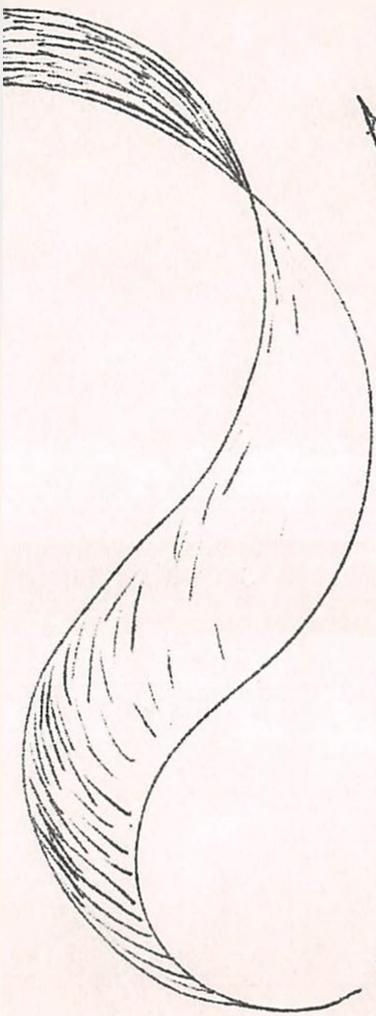
Come Disclave, and Brian showed up--but said he had forgot the issue. So arrangements were made for Jim Landau to pick up the stencils and paper on June 15 (which left us with almost no time to run the issue off--finish #84--and run off 7 SOTWJs before we departed for England on July 1. And, to make matters worse, as soon as we heard we were going to get the issue back and have to run off 80-100 stencils on our ailing machine, the machine went down again (same problem as in '72; the jinx strikes again!).

Well, we struggled, as did the machine (several times things started to go wrong...), and we finally, after spending day and night, completed running off the stencils. We have no time left to collate and mail the issue before we leave, but we are turning the pages and the mailing list over to our co-editor, Bill Hixon, with our fingerscrossed that the jinx has been overcome and this issue can be in the mails before the DISCON. It's only 2½ years late....

Things to Come:

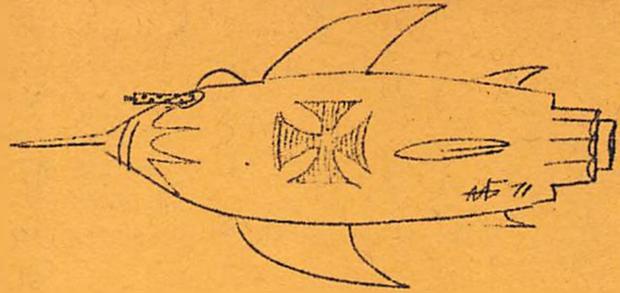
For the rest of this editorial, now that #80 is finally a reality, we can stop looking back and start looking at the future. What does it hold in store for TWJ and SOTWJ? Well...on our return from England, things are going to change. Putting out seven issues of SOTWJ in one month, for example, will be a thing of the past. Our plans call for double-issues of SOTWJ (22 pages, 3rd-class) to become the rule rather than the exception, with an occasional 10-page 1st-class issue when the situation calls for it. It is our intent to put out a maximum of two double-issues per month, plus a maximum of one single issue/month. We also intend to speed up (and decrease the size) of TWJ; its main problem now is that because of production problems, each issue takes so long to get out that material piles up; since it will be so long between issues, we try to get all material on hand in the current issue, which means an even longer delay. On preparing the indexes of back issues of TWJ, we found these issues to be, in many ways, more relaxed and enjoyable than some of the recent monstrosities. The format and layout may not have been up to what Mike Glicksohn said it should have been, and every issue wasn't a balanced issue--but we enjoyed putting them out much more than we do these overblown giants. It's nice to have balance, to work hard on layout, etc...but all this takes time, delays the issue, and results in a constant strain on the editor and the staff. So... we're not going to turn the clock back; that's not possible. But we are going to try to bring back some of the better features of the older TWJ's, while at the same time working to improve the magazine in every way possible. The addition of a co-editor, Bill Hixon, will help us greatly in the future, as will the acquisition of a small offset and a back-up mimeo by the club. And, once the DISCON is past history, we expect a much greater involvement on the part of some of the WSFA members who have been head-over-heels in working on the con. It is our hope that the production end will eventually be taken completely from our hands, so we may devote our time and energy to the various editorial tasks we have had to neglect while struggling with the production problems which keep occurring. To tomorrow!





REPUBLICAN

TALES TO WAG YOUR DOG BY  
(Fiction, et al)



OPEN UP DEM PURLY GATES, by W. G. Bliss.

I'd like to say I finally succumbed to old age and orneryness, but that would not be the case--neither would be getting hit with a meteor, getting run over by an elephant stampede, or fixing the lightning rods during a storm--not even something moderately spectacular like a fatal case of athlete's foot. As it was, smog, hypertension of the times (not mine, but everyone's else's is still a lot of wear and tear; keeping your cool becomes work), atomic fallout, processed foods, and who knows all what else was too much for my 46-year-old system.

A year before, my physician had commented that I definitely did not have any one thing really wrong--I was kind of like a Ford with 211,000 miles on it--that I should kind of take it easy, as obviously my chassis didn't have much service-life left. But how can you take it easy and still make enough money to pay taxes? The sawbones didn't know either, and so, a year later, I was moonlighting by working in a pretzel factory on second shift (I needed the money to pay my State income tax, since there wasn't anything left over after I paid my Federal income tax), and my metabolism faded away and poop!--my soulstuff had to find new diggings.

The question of heaven and hell came up immediately as it does on such occasions, and I wondered if there could be a happy medium--maybe a heaven with just enough sin to make things interesting. I was about to go flitting about space from here to infinity looking for a place like that, when an ectoplasm helicopter dropped right through the Perfect Pretzel factory roof and landed beside me. An efficient young man stepped out and said, "Are you Alfred P. Hyscompoop?"

"I'm what's left of him," I replied.

"Hop in," he ordered.

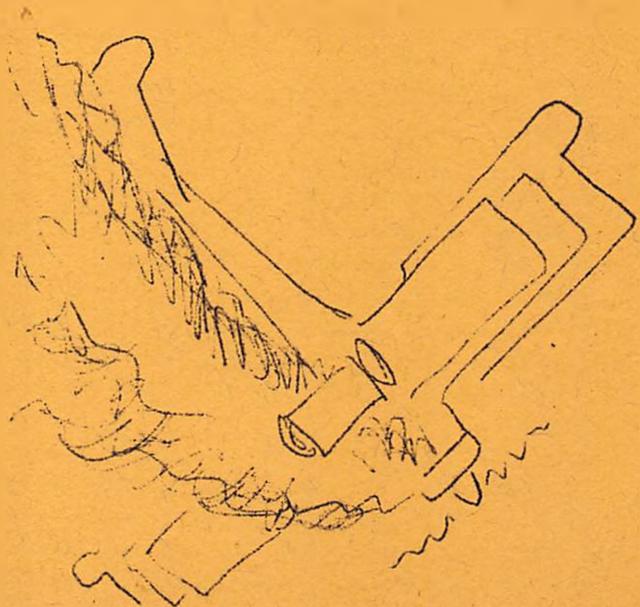
"I thought people got rowed across a river Styx or something."

"That was taken out of service in 1888 A.D."

"Suppose people will be going to heaven in flyin' saucers one of these days."

"They are already, from other planets."

"Figures!"



We kept rising through blue sky and soft fluffy clouds. I mentioned that the atmosphere seemed to go about two-thousand miles higher than science had reckoned. The pilot answered, "We're not in realspace--all those clouds are just aether drifts." I sat, and mused and mulled mentally for the rest of the trip, which wasn't long. Figured out by myself, if everything out of realspace is intangible, then I was also intangible, and everything here, even though intangible, was mutually tangible--even though it was all intangible.

The sky pilot let me off at the pearly gates as I thought he would, and took off to pick up another soul. It kind of looked like I was out of luck for a while, though. There wasn't anyone around, and the gates were closed and a sign hung on them which said: "Closed during alterations". I knocked anyway, and heard some rustling around back of the gates--finally an angel poked his head up over the top and said, "You will have to go around to the back gate."

"How far around is it?" I hollered up at the angel.

"Halfway."

"How far is that?"

"The heavens extend to infinity, in all directions," the angel explained with the bored patience of someone who has had to repeat the same thing a zillion times. He disappeared from sight, and that evidently was the end of the conversation.

One way around the wall (yes, there is a wall around heaven, though it never seemed to get mentioned that I could recollect; makes sense though--a set of pearly gates would look pretty foolish

without a wall to go with them) might be shorter--but there was a fifty-percent chance of walking the long way around. I didn't have a coin to flip, so since my right big toe is a bit longer than the left one, I decided that was an omen and set off trekking counterclockwise around heaven.

I began thinking of how to get over the wall and find a short-cut to the reception desk. That helped while away the time--it is monotonous just walking for ages. I ran for a stretch, hoping to catch up with somebody so we could at least bore each other, but evidently everyone else was either too far ahead or had taken the other way around. I tried leaping high enough to get over the wall, but I only made it half-way. I tried yanking up big chunks of the cloud I walked on and stacking it up, but it scruched right down when I stood on it. If I had had a pole I could easily have vaulted over, but there wasn't any in sight. (I couldn't fly over--I didn't have my wings, anyway--but I was thinking of levitation, which spirits are good at--but somehow I hadn't yet found the knack.)

Finally, at long last, I came to the end of a very long line of people. It seemed to move as fast as the century hand on a calendar clock. Nobody was in any mood for conversation, and it didn't take me long to think of why. All of the usual conversational gambits wouldn't apply here. Like the weather--all good for all of time and then some; nothing to comment on here. Also, most souls would naturally have reservations about yakking about their chances of landing



in the hot place instead of paradise. The best subject here evidently wasn't popular either. Like opening a conversation with, "How did you kick off?". "The operation was a success, but the patient died, if it's any of your business." End of conversation.



Eventually other souls extended the line behind me, and I came to a place in the wall which had a thin crack. Imperfection in Heaven???? I studied it closely, and found it was just painted on--put there evidently for psychological reasons, to assure the souls in line that the line was actually moving. (It would be dirty pool, I thought, for the management to slowly move the crack back towards the end of the line, and start out a new crack near the front of the line every now and then--but then I have always been the type to suspect such things.)

At last!!!! I was right up to the desk and sweating a bit--souls sweat thin ectoplasm--here at last, my fate was to be decided in a split second or less (but on second thought, from the slow pace of the waiting line, it would probably be a googol of split seconds). The clerk was female in gender--maybe St. Peter was out to lunch or something--and woes and fantods, she was the super-efficient heavy-duty type with whom, in life, it had been my fate to lose battles at other desks and counters--in employment officer, draft-board offices, and department stores and banks. (If I had any say about creation, that was one type who would have their own world, and they could spend their lives bugging each other. No doubt the casualty rate would be high.) While all this was zipping through my fevered mind, she said, "Soul Number ?" twice--a bit snappy the second time.

"I had all kinds of numbers--would social security, income tax file, State tax file, county tax file, neighborhood tax file, bachelor tax number, car license number, driver's license number, phone number, selective service number, voting number, library card number, fishing license number, or house number be it?" (There were doubtless other numbers, but the bit was running overlong and her visage was freezing up around the edges.)

"None of those apply. Just give me your Soul Number."

"Never was issued one." (That should pass the buck on to somebody else, I thought hopefully.)

"Oh no," she said despairingly, dramatically smiting her forehead, "not another unclassified death! How did it happen? Not what led up to it--we don't have all day--but just what did you in at the last?"

"Nothing, really."

"Don't hand me that--you sound like a sinner. You got caught doing something and were killed. You'd be amazed at how many murderers and ex-dictators stand right on the same soot as you and say that--'Oh, I just died, innocent like lambs.'"

I looked down, and noted that a big black "X" did mark the spot on which I was standing.

"Maybe I can explain. I didn't have any one thing wrong with me, but enough different things slightly wrong so that my metabolism just slowly konked out."

"That's kind of freakish, but plausible. No wonder you didn't register in the celestial computer."

"How come the sky pilot knew where and when to pick me up?"

"Oh, that's a different bureau division. They have their own computer. Here, take this over to special services." She flapped a sealed folder onto the desk at me.

"What's that?"

"Form A. It authorizes your return to Earth. We just can't have stray souls hanging around here or wandering around in limbo."

"Against regulations too, no doubt," I said.

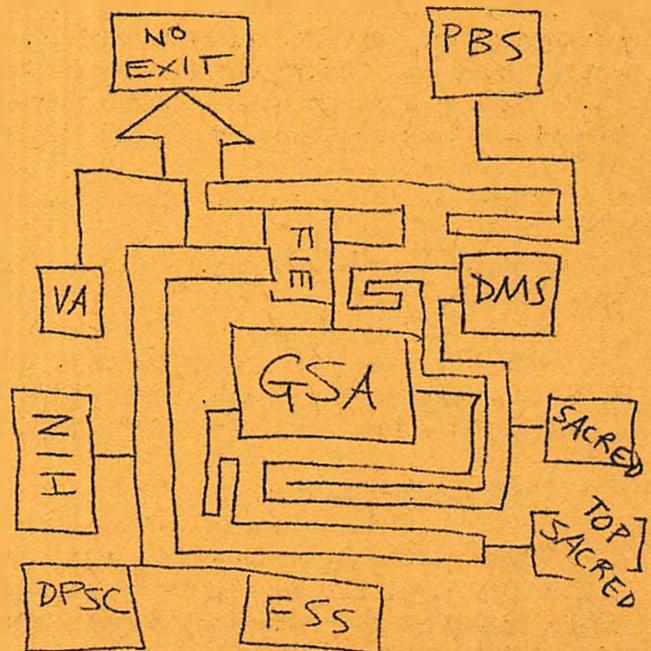
"You guessed right. Just take all the right turns inside and you will be at the special services department."

"Just what is the special services department?"

"I am not authorized to give that information out, sir." (Gads, she was frosting up again.)

Before I could interject, she hollered over my shoulder, "Next soul!" As I went on through the gates--they were just plain platinum gates--I heard her informing the poor soul, "We don't have a thing on you in the instant reference file--are you sure you have the right Heaven?"

There did not seem to be enough right turns--a couple of them ended up in dead ends at the wall, so I tried left turns and arrived at the Special Services Bureau. Evidently the directions applied to finding the place from the front gates. Possibly ages ago there had been enough angels to go around, but eventually most of them had to go out to help out with the steadily-increasing influx of new souls into heaven, and so the gentleman behind the desk at Special Services building (it was standard government-uninspired architecture, possibly circa 1923, but was dandied up a trifle with a thin layer of rhinestones; evidently somebody couldn't stand the thought of a common plain government bureau building in heaven) was a fat, middle-aged bureaucrat with at least two decades of obvious tenure to hold down.



I flipped the sealed document onto his desk and he looked at it like it was a dead snake. He inquired in wheezy rumbles, "Is there something we can do for you?"

From the intonation, he wished I'd get lost and not come back to disturb the tranquil state of absolutely nothing happening in the office. Instinctively, I knew that if I recited the story of how I got here he would cut me off in the middle of the first chapter, as soon as he had time to think of some way to foist me off on another bureau.

"I was told by the gal at the gate to deliver this here, and you would take it from there." I pointed to the sealed ms. and nudged it gently with my digit.

"Hmmm--well, we will see what it is, then." He zipped it open expertly with a fingernail, quickly scanned it, dropped it back on the desk, and flipped through a couple of manuals off a nearby shelf. (One, I noticed, was a manual for manuals.) He leaned back in the chair and peered at me through the wrong half of his bifocals, saying, "Actually, we just authorize expedition here. Primarily, you do not have a Soul Number and we are not authorized to issue you one. Without that you do not exist here, as far as the records go. Just suppose there were sixty Alfred P. Hyscompoops with no Soul Numbers--the confusion would never be resolved."

"Where can I get one?"

"You might try General Services." He stamped the forms with a half-dozen different stamps, scribbled a bit on them, and sealed them back up and put them into my pinkies. "It's easy to find--just take eighteen lefts and sixteen right turns from here." The phone jangled and he picked it up like he was shaking hands with an old friend. "J.J. Here. Hmmm...mmm...welllll...it's a bit early to venture an opinion, but the feasibility factor should be gone over a bit more...hmmm... well, you never know how the cake is going to crumble...."

I bid my leave but he deigned not to notice. I had been stamped and annotated satisfactorily out of his life. Somehow, I was suddenly very bone-weary of it all.

Six right turns brought me to the wall, and by those coincidences that be, there was a long vaulting pole lying close by it. I got a long run and was over the top, but overshot the cloud bank outside the wall. Down and down I fell. I passed through a lot of space and fell past a large pink cloud with a number nine and a lot of happy souls on it, and on down and down and plunk--right into a volcano! Falling out through the bottom of it, I landed plunk--right in the middle of Hades. A rather nasty-looking imp who was filing his spurs was startled by my sudden arrival.

"Nobody's come in that way in ages!"

"Where's the way out?" I asked, naturally worried no small amount.



"There isn't any for doomed souls," he said with a nasty chuckle.

"Well, I'm not qualified for this place. I pole-vaulted out of heaven and kind of overshot."

He reached over and pinched my arm. "Hey, the atmosphere here has vol-  
canized your ectoplasm."

"Is that serious?"

"No, not if you don't mind being tangible. Kind of solves your problem,  
too. In a few seconds you will be zapped back to Earth, since you are too tangi-  
ble for heaven or hell."

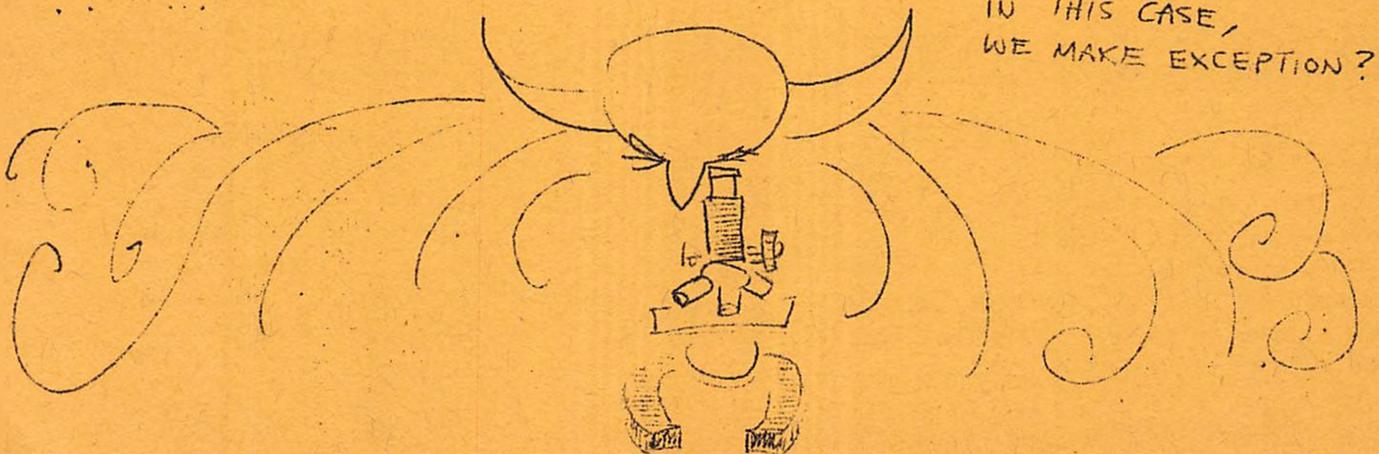
At that moment a huge rocket ship landed by us. "Climb in it," the imp  
said. I didn't waste any time, and with an awful roar it was off back up through  
the volcano, and I was ejected and parachuted down into heaven. The same sky  
pilot who picked me up from the pretzel factory flitted down in his helicopter  
as I was unbuckling the parachute. "Roll it up and leave it on," he said. In  
a few minutes we were back on Earth.

It was just before dawn as I drifted down in the cool air and landed in  
my back yard. The paper boy came along and flipped the paper on the porch, and  
the automatic coffeepot and flapjack-and-bacon-fryer turned itself on. I tossed  
the chute into the hall closet, put my work clothes on out of sheer habit, and  
looked at the paper while the coffee perked.

It was just the next day. Either things were a lot different timewise on  
the spiritual scale, or I had been zapped back in time. I felt healthy and  
hungry and went and washed off the smog that had settled on me in Hell, and put  
on another set of work duds. (It wouldn't do to show up at work at the Ace What-  
not Shelf Company (my daytime job) smelling like brimstone.)

I ate breakfast and thought the whole situation over end-to-end and sideways,  
and was home safe. I had the moonlight job at the pretzel works under an alias  
and fake numbers. If the question came up (and it turned out that it didn't), I  
could simply deny being dead. Of course, I still have to moonlight to make ends  
meet, but it is something I am now perfectly suited for: ghost-writing!

\*\*\*\*\*



FOUR DREAMS: a poem  
by T.D.C. Kuch

Dreams, flowers of frenzy in night's  
Formal garden, bloom as mind's desires.  
All the things you want to happen do,  
And all the ways you've thought to die  
Are easily done and equally harmless.

The First Dream:

You killed her last night in your dream--  
Murdered her bleeding in bed  
With your pointed blade, and fled  
To the warm electric coils  
Of the quilt. At dawn, curled  
In the oldest position, you woke  
Cold, and finding linty quilt-wound  
Scars, looked for her beneath.

Her body was gone; perception's  
Trade-rats left a withered blade,  
Stricken of pulse, bloodless jape!

The Second Dream:

The paper-plain was cold; you  
Peered through two-dimentioned sky  
To find a way around the lines.  
The artist drew a castle, windowed  
In wall-gaps, moss-mapped  
By time to last our histories.

An ink-armor knight  
Raised his sword in ancient sign  
Of chivalric lust; friendly  
He was, but dull and medieval.

And that which the artist draws next  
Will burn and claw, devour the knight  
As ever, attack the artist himself  
After killing you, O maid  
In the castle, locked out of love.

The Third Dream:

You climbed the hot volcano again  
Last night, trembled at tossed  
Rocks and drifting ash,  
Ascended to the top.  
You tried again to quench  
Your tongue in its firing pit  
And flow as wordless lava.

But again as ever you  
Spoke to it, its flames  
Seared your speech,  
And you were fused  
To its glowing coals  
By your first and only word.

The Last Dream:

You lured her to the room  
Where you keep the whip  
To drive out demons,  
Asked her to strip and submit  
To its crackling joy.  
But she refused, and you  
Chained her to the rack,  
Uncoiled, oiled the lash.

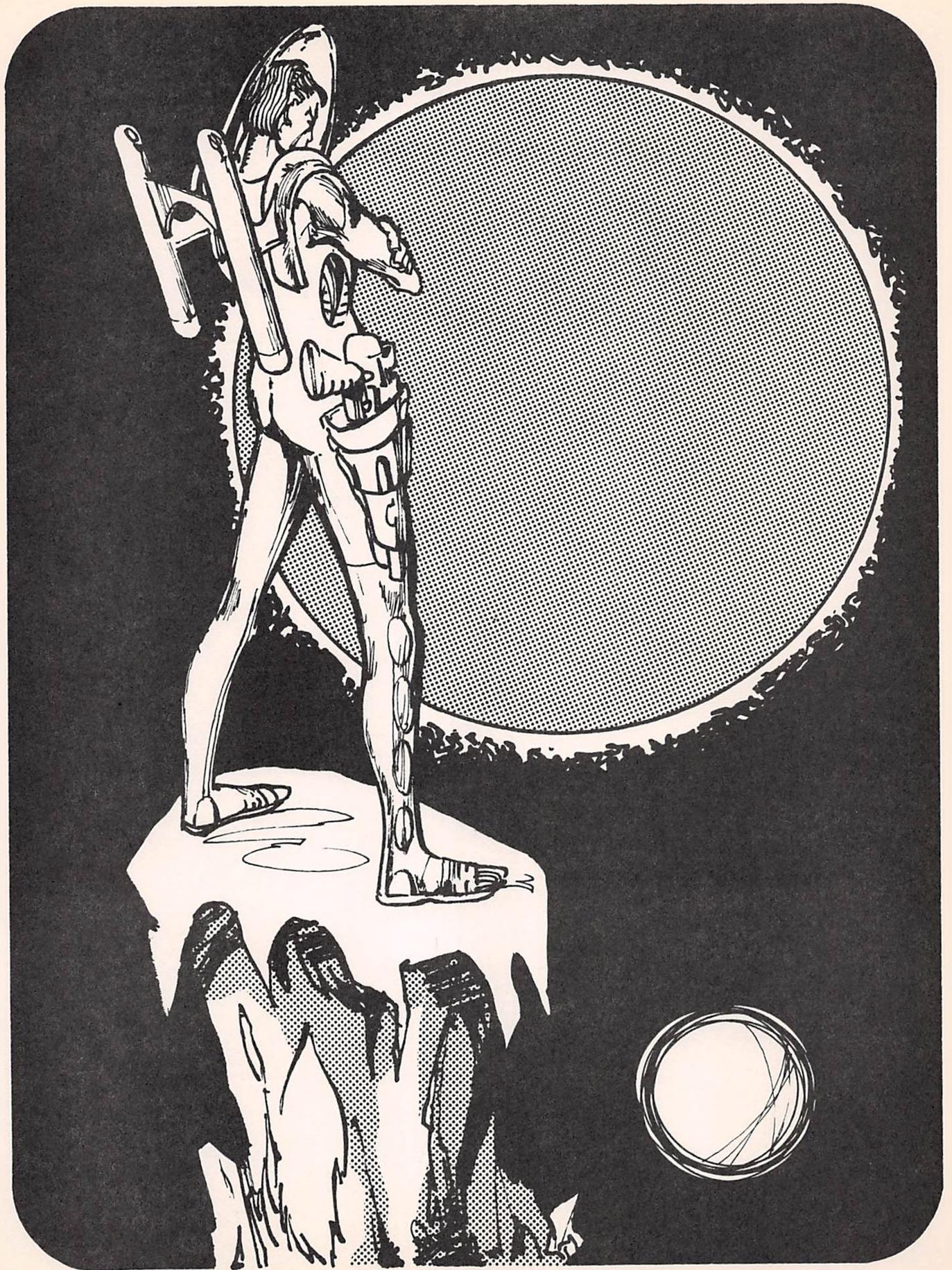
Then in letters of leaves appeared  
An ancient fable's wreath:  
How a slave, cunning rebel,  
Wrested the whip from his owner's hand,  
And flogged himself till he was lord.  
...And at the end an ivy footnote twined  
"There are no demons--there never were."

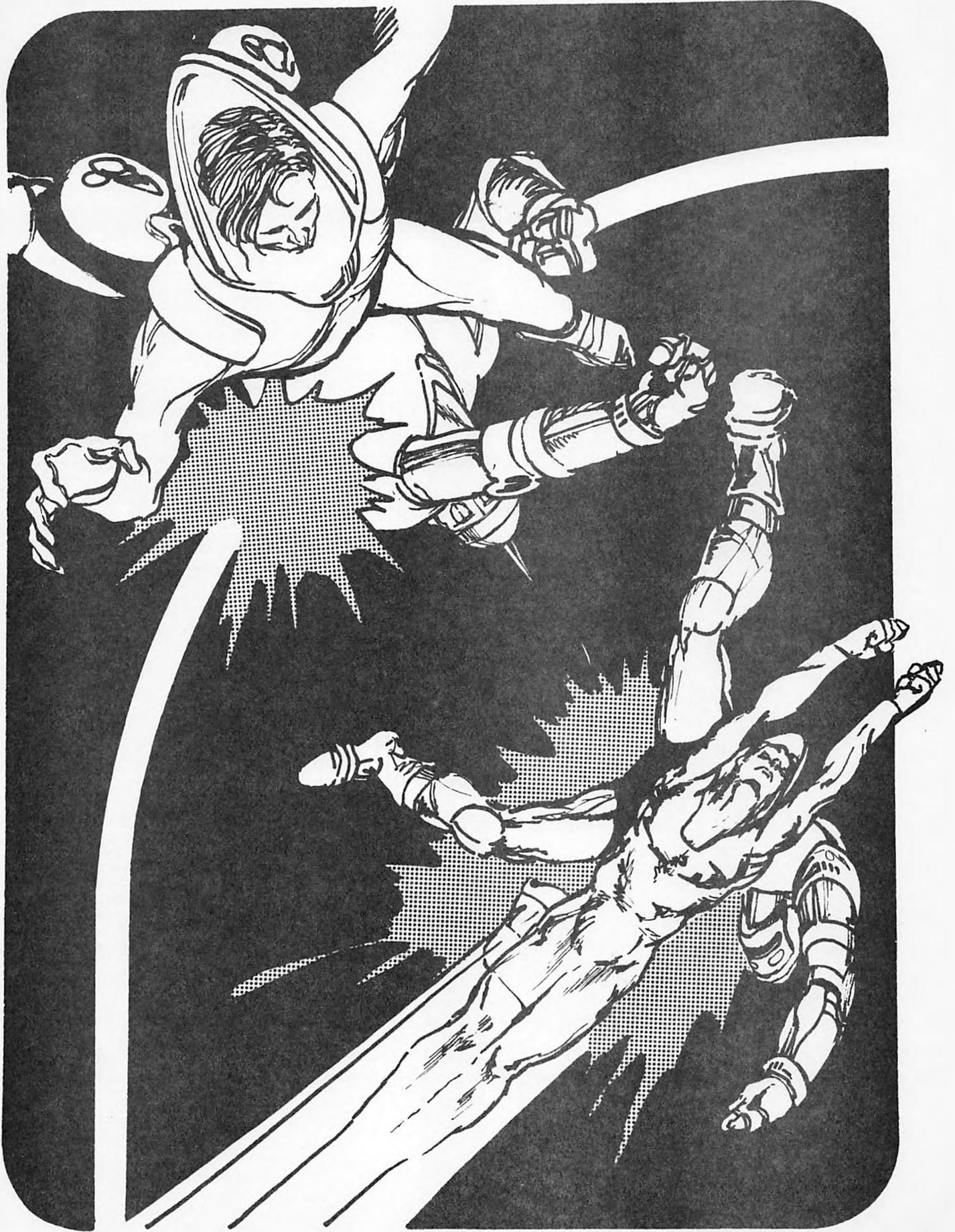
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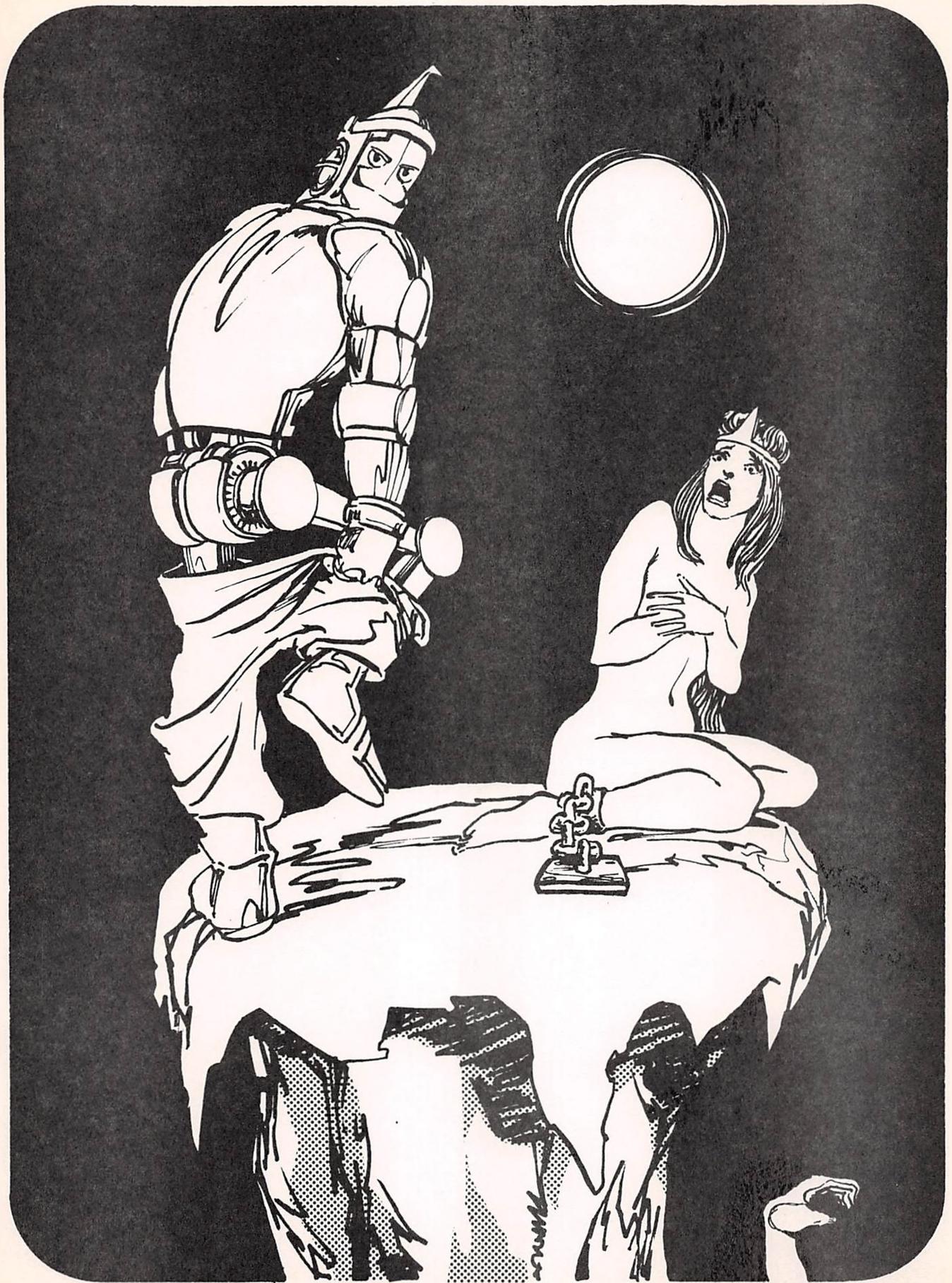
Morning fades the dreams,  
Petals fold on seedless fruit.  
All I have now is a sense  
Of some stifled cognition  
And the sight of florid weeds  
In the factory-sealed air.

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THE HOUR OF BLOOD, by H. E. Roberts (as told to Don James).

Part Two. Chapter VIII: A Thunder of Echoes.

Now an evilly dripping tongue slavered out of a hideously spiked maw. Three eyes, like the triple suns of some extradimensional hell, blazed insanely. An appendage, which perhaps Solitary Kane in his most incoherent nightmare might have judged to be an arm, whipped lightening-like. Kane leaped sideways, an involuntary shriek of rage and pain and loathing issuing from his sundered lips. The repulsive muzzle, like a Dante-esque horror-cavern hung with boney stalactites, was but inches from Kane's throat when the Earthman, in a primal excess of mind-blasting hatred, unsheathed his sword and closed with his scaley adversary.

Red carnage ensued. Not since Earth's bestial dawn had the affrighted moon looked down upon such an elemental pandemonium of breaking bones and bursting thews. Blood was everywhere.

The titanic battle raged through the deepening dusk and on into the night. The landscape trembled; lightnings flared out of a cloudless sky; the surrounding hills were lost in swirling curtains of dust. From the distance came the eldritch wailings of wolf and mountain lion, and milder creatures of the woods and slopes abandoned their nests and burrows and fled in panic.

The battle raged. The high black scarps echoed to the blasphemous din; a bedlam of discordant screechings, poundings, alien hootings and hissings and the snapping of countless bones rent the air for miles around.

Then with startling suddenness a hush, broken only by the frenzied laborings of a single pair of mighty lungs, settled over the gore- and limb-strewn valley.

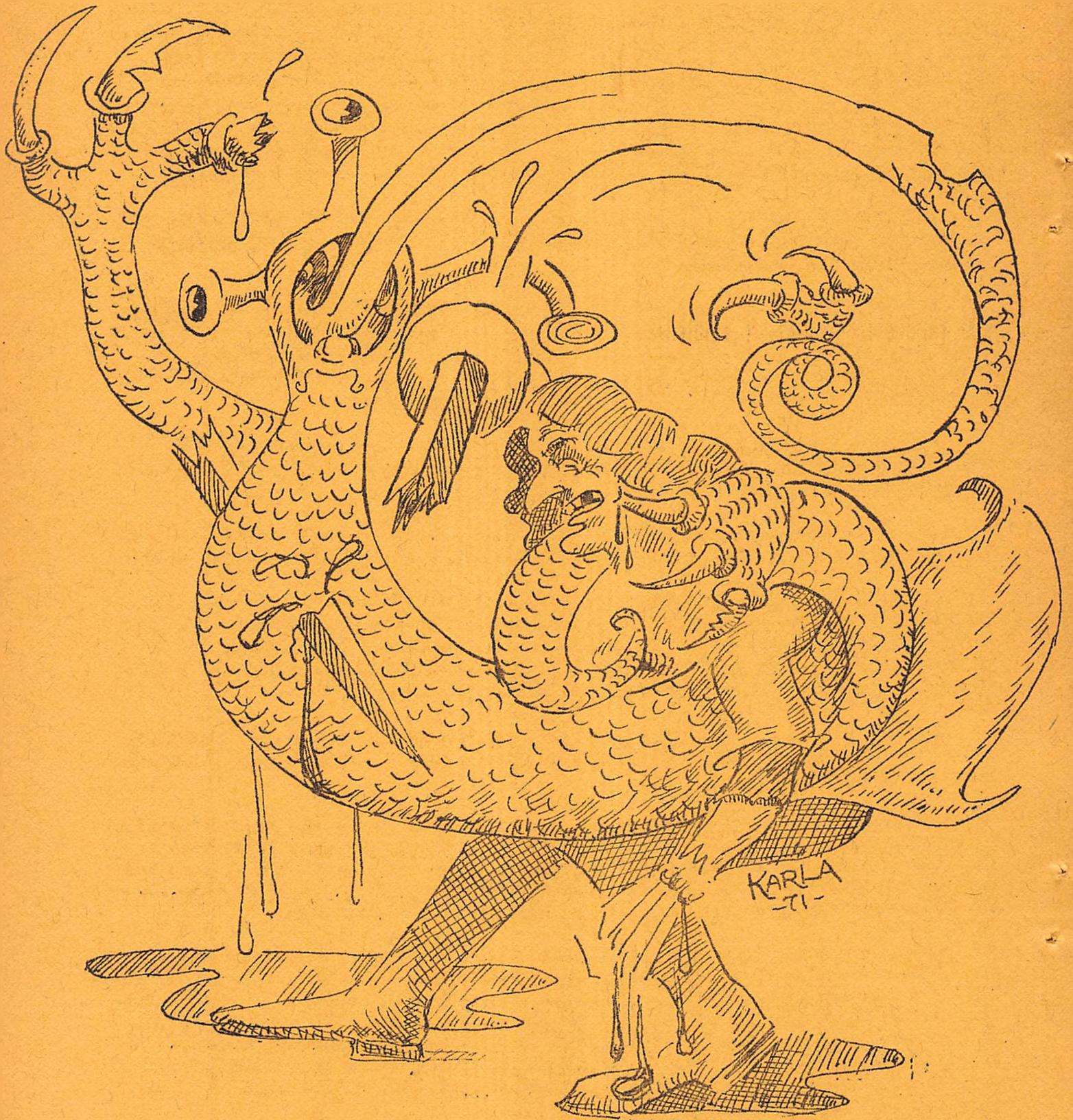
Solitary Kane tottered drunkenly, gasped dazedly for breath. Leaning upon what remained of his broadsword, he glared at the horrible fragments of the late Tarbak-Zil, where they lay in widening pools of malodorous green ichor. He laughed bitterly, spat splintered teeth through shredded lips, and dourly weighed the prospects of Tarbak-Zil's not having come here alone.

But at no time did Kane harbor misgivings. Doubt he equated with weakness, and in his iron-girt Puritan philosophy he looked upon weakness in all its guises with withering contempt.

Resting for a moment on the trunk of a massive oak which had been uprooted in the stupendous encounter, Kane vented a rare expletive--less a curse than a challenge to all the malignant denizens of the vampire planet Poyzon to come and be made one with their obliterated kinsman, Tarbak-Zil. Yes, let them come.... The buzzards would dine on uncommon fare upon the morrow, he vowed.

Grimacing terribly as his cracked ribs tore at his lacerated chest walls, Kane bent and fastened rawhide thongs about his broken leg. That the rawhide was likely to pose a problem in the days ahead, he was grimly cognizant. But no matter; he had faced and won out against severer tests. Those hellish three months he had endured in the torture halls of the necromancer Varthag, for example. The kneecap vise...the melted lead...the cat-o'nine-tails, fiendishly modified by the evil Varthag to make room for additional tails...the acid-tipped needles slowly forced beneath the fingernails....

Kane laughed harshly, spat more blood--and listened. Was that a rustling in the shadows of that heretofore tomb-quiet pine copse yonder?



Kane wiped sweat and blood from his eyes, observing as he did so his flayed knuckles, the exposed bones of which gleamed leprously in the corpse-white moonlight. He grunted, strove vainly to ignore the increasing torment of a raging thirst. A three-day march to the nearest spring, he calculated. His tinder-box was missing also, he realized after a fruitless search. Wolves were considerably more troublesome in the absence of fire, he admitted. The sporadic lupine titterings of which he had been conscious since the vanquishing of Tarbak-Zil seemed--yes, nearer.

Big ones too, by the sound of them....

(To be continued.)

\* \* \* \* \*

#### SILENT WATCHERS

We walk upon this world close-watched by shades--  
Wherefore this spirit mortal life invades?  
Ordained companions, secret sharers all,  
These darkened echoes on our footsteps fall  
Observers only, other passengers  
Of Time's lost gods, the dreaded messengers  
Relating every thought and word and deed  
Unseen by Man: Eternity will heed  
Their tales, recording all against the day  
Athwart which nothing human dare delay.

And thus embarked unto a fate unnamed  
To which the way these spectral fingers aimed  
The lares sense with other than the mind  
The flimsy keep to which we are confined  
Imparting now and then a fleeting glance  
Of human lots, the workmanship of Chance.  
Besides existence, what may then exist  
Which may celestial magnitude resist?  
Encumbered by a heavy solitude  
That stuns the pious and benumbs the rude,  
We miss the fact that they bide near at hand,  
Too simple for our minds to understand.  
The Silent Watchers keep their vigil still  
Obedient to a force of Higher Will,  
As we observe a bird within its cage,  
Now warbling on its iron-fretted stage,  
Now sleeping, and now hopping to and fro  
As far as its confines will let it go;  
And though we free it from its captive chain,  
It flies back to its prison once again.  
How often have our own kind well revealed  
The secrets of the Universe concealed  
And though for us they opened wide the Door,  
We pass back to our mortal state once more  
Revealed to us, emancipated men,  
Yet we to barbarism turn again?  
And yet we walk, each in his Universe  
And never through Their higher planes traverse  
That we might realize, by what we be,  
A higher rebirth in Eternity.

## FOUR POEMS

Mirage

There is a place--  
 Off there, somewhere, it comes and goes--  
 An island of restless, greening shards  
 Curls from the desert's gritty claws...  
 The accursed lost bones of a riven elder land  
 Pulse and turn, never keeping a pose,  
 Lest one discover in them  
 Their true unwholesome character,  
 And choose instead their ocean's sand.

Seamare

(Suggested by W.H. Hodgson's The Ghost Pirates)

"Aloft--the trees!" came the bosun's shrill cry,  
 And we looked where the spars and rolling sky  
 Wove patterns dredged out of some churned-up hell:  
 Acrawl were the tops--gaunt flickering shapes,  
 How formed or whence come only they can tell  
 Who have tasted the wine of nightmare grapes.  
 All night they pranced in foul harlequinade;  
 And the ship plunged wild, and wildly we prayed.

Morning at last, never welcomer ray;  
 But the things now revealed in that light  
 Drove us into the boats in awfuller fright,  
 And we pulled, God how we pulled! all the day.  
 For swinging like puppets and all painted red  
 Were our shipmates--those damned shapes of our dread.

Around the World

Footprints there behind me:  
 An unlevelled track narrowing,  
 Counting back through glare and shadow...  
 Rising, dipping...gone now over the world's edge...  
 Can they be mine?  
 Have they led me here only to maroon me  
 In this dim and cancelled outpost?

Something

Something that flashes greenly  
 And shaped like nothing I know,  
 Opines that my visit's unseemly  
 And says I had better go....

THE JUDGMENT OF KATHNA-RA, by James R. Newton.

Routine sentry sensor sweeps detected the ball of fire shortly after mid-day. None of the Reetha had ever seen anything like the searing brilliance rapidly swelling out of the blue-black sky.

The dominant emotion that rippled through the interstices of the loosely-held group mind was mild irritation at first. But that gradually hardened into active resentment, then crystallized into full-blown anger.

It is falling directly toward us. The sentry's observation flashed instantaneously through a tightening neural matrix. It could hit near the Dankstha!

The Dankstha--literally Well of Life--lay in the exact center of the stone-ringed Circle of Immortality. Its huge red sandstone cap, suitably graven with the Reetha identity sigil, locked precious moisture away from desiccant desert winds that blew howling across the flat desolation every dark period.

Sacrilege! A multitude of exclamations burst out simultaneously.

Wait! The command from Kathna-ra, Reetha chieftan, cut off further comments. Let us wait and see. Sentries, sweep for identification.

The chief sentry responded. Cannot identify, Kathna-ra. There is nothing in memory records to compare. No matrix is present.

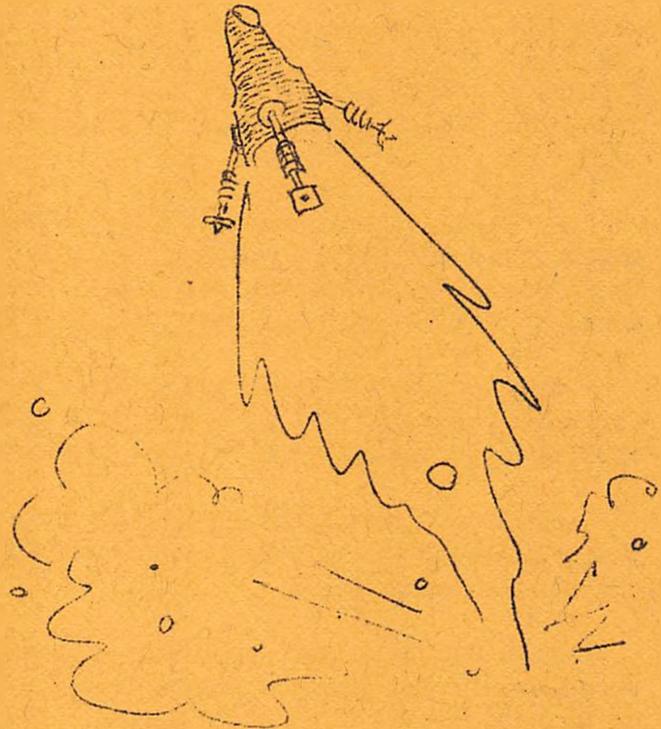
No life?, Kathna-ra queried.

A small sign, but not like any in memory records.

Now the alien's descent was a roaring which actually shook loose red sand around anchoring appendages. All audio cilia, except those of the sentries, were tightly withdrawn against the sound. Matrix tension swelled in proportion to the increase in noise.

But Kathna-ra's thoughts were calm and steady, as always. Nothing is to be gained from anxiety until the event is concluded. We will wait.

The ballooning brilliance slowly resolved into an object from whose underside a single bellowing finger of white-hot flame thrust groundward. The Reetha vibrated in painful resonance. Anger surged into cold rage as the fire-spitting thing settled ponderously midway between the Dankstha capstone and Circle boundary markers. Gouts of sacred sand blew violently outward under the splash of fire. Red dust billowed, almost obscuring the moment when the bulky object finally settled sedately down on four extruded legs.



Abrupt cessation of the terrible sound was almost painful. A final booming reverberation fled across the flat red desert, dying in the distance like the cry of some monstrous life form galloping in hasty retreat across the russet wastes. Silence roared in, but it was a long time before the Reetha hesitantly tested the ringing stillness again.

The object hulked on its four legs. Slight cracklings and clicks and metal-on-metal slithers sounded faintly on the thin air, and once there was a hint of movement as its feet sank a little deeper into the sand.

The group mind seethed with righteous rage. Sacred Dankstha-ground beneath the upright alien was disfigured by a shallow depression with blackened edges and sides fused into rusty slickness. The thing's ugly planar surfaces reflected progressively more faint yellow highlights from a distant sun as the dust veil lazily dissipated. Nothing else moved in the chill of waning afternoon.

At last a thin crack suddenly marred the object's side, otherwise unbroken, which faced the silent Reetha. An oval section detached itself and swung smoothly to one side, revealing a shadowy outline, like one of the caves sometimes found in the far northern Mountains of the Wind.

Shortly, two utterly weird figures appeared, one after the other, and scrambled clumsily out to stand on a ledge beneath the exit. They twisted from side to side several times, then clambored slowly down one thick metal leg.

Sight of the misshapen beings filled the Reetha group mind with amazement. Their grotesquerie was even more pronounced once they stepped onto the red sand and straightened up.

Each had only four appendages instead of a normal ten! And what an awkward arrangement: two mounted oppositionally near the top and two below which served as body supports. And what bodies! All out of proportion. Tall and lumpy, with a featureless sphere on each upper end, shiny, nearly opaque, behind which one caught only a hint of something moving. But nowhere was there evidence of any sensory cilia. And none of the four appendages was long enough for a feeding arm. How did they ingest food and precious moisture? It hardly seemed they could be live beings!

Still, Kathna-ra was fair. These creatures moved purposefully; they must be alive. He flashed his decision into the group mind. We will try to communicate. Talkers, pass control.

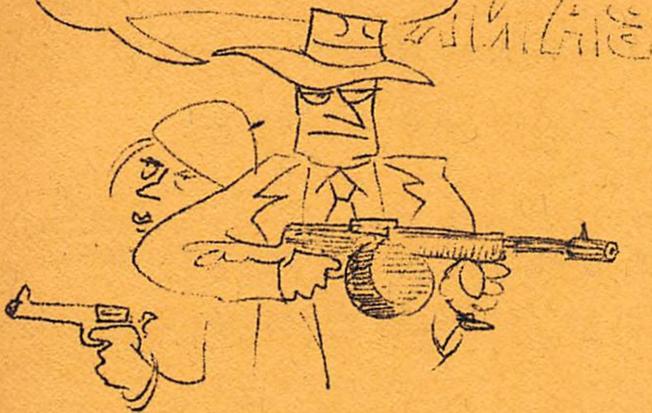
Obediently, seven Reetha members specializing in far-thought went into neural stasis. Kathna-ra focused their output potential.

Welcome, he beamed toward the two strangers.

Neither gave an answering sign. Sensors detected no mental activity at all.



OKAY, BONNIE, LET'S  
COMMUNICATE!



Kathna-ra directed a stronger neural transmission at them. Welcome, Strangers. May your Well of Life flow forever. This was the salutation usually reserved for mind-touch with another tribal chieftain.

Still no response.

As the grotesque figures edged closer to the Dankstha capstone, a new wave of indignation quivered through the Reetha neural matrix. Rage increased intensity again.

Peace, Kathna-ra soothed. We must communicate if we can. They obviously do not understand Dankstha-law. His logic could not dispel anger, but its energy remained matrix-locked.

Thastor, go to the strangers, Kathna-ra directed one of the sentries. If their method of communicating is short-range, perhaps you will be able to touch minds by approaching closer. We will hold you in matrix.

Reluctantly, the sentry retracted his two feeding arms from sweet deep-stratum moisture up into recesses in his basal pad. He pulled his six legs out of the warm surface sand and spread broad running pads. The two digital appendages he folded up out of the way.

Approach no closer than necessary to touch minds, Kathna-ra instructed. Thastor signified understanding, then scuttled across the sand. He came to a halt about twenty body-lengths away and probed toward the two alien figures. Nothing. He moved another twenty body-lengths, footpads whispering in coordinated propulsive sequence. Still nothing. With sensory cilia quivering as he sought maximum receptiveness, Thastor scuttled forward again, halting just outside the wind-scoured ring of stones marking the edge of the sacred ground.

As he covered this last stretch of sand, one alien figure's shiny top-sphere swung his way. A brachite upper appendage bent, the distal extremity moving in to touch the center of the trunk to which it was attached. As it swung outward again toward Thastor, it seemed to have grown an extension.

That was all Thastor had time to sense before a lance of white fire flashed from the extended appendage to him. When the flame-spear winked out, there was only a black spot disfiguring the red sand and a few wisps of rapidly dissipating water vapor.

At that instant, every Reetha member, linked in total intimacy of group-mind, felt Thastor's neural lattice rip violently from the matrix fabric. The pain was shattering.



"What the hell happened?" Colonel Jake Lattimer shouted, jerking around toward Captain Alvin McDonald.

"My God!" the captain cried. "Did you see that...that thing?"

"What thing? Mac, what did you see?" The colonel's hand hovered nervously near his own holstered weapon.

"I don't know. But it was horrible! Like a...like an octopus. All tentacles. God! I just caught a glimpse out of the corner of my eye. It was coming at us!"

"Hey, Joe," the colonel called tersely into his suit mike. "Monitors show anything from up there?"

"Negative, colonel," replied Captain Joe Lynch from twenty feet up in the landing module's control room. "At least, nothing registered."

"Mac? Sure you weren't just spooked?"

"No! No! I saw something, I tell you! Coming right at us. Over there." He pointed, laser pistol still in hand.

"I see where your shot hit, but there's nothing over there but some kind of vegetation. Nothing else but sand and rocks."

"Okay. But something laid out this stone circle," Captain McDonald said defensively.

"Granted. But what? Or who? Certainly not those plants. See anything else that looks like native life? Anyway, this is the only unnatural formation we spotted coming in."

"All right! Nothing's in sight now. But I tell you I'm not spooked. Something was moving toward us and I fired. That's all."

Colonel Lattimer wasn't entirely convinced.



Kathna-ra, first to recover from the shock of Thastor's discorporation, sent a surging command for attention through the group mind. Rage and fear charged the matrix with explosive energy. There was no question what must be done. No greater crime existed in all this harsh desert world than physical violence against a mind-brother performing duties relating to the Dankstha.

Swiftly, Kathna-ra shaped cerebral cells into attack configuration. Then he triggered the tremendous neural force thrumming through the Reetha matrix. A bolt of pure thought-energy hurtled forth, almost instantaneously striking the killer creatures. No cellular being could withstand the disruptive potential of that lethal concentration of force.

BEING A FAN, MY BRAIN  
HAD ALREADY BEEN TURNED  
TO JELLY. SO I  
SURVIVED.



"Come on, Mac," the colonel was saying, "you could have been mistaken. Seen a shadow, or...."

"No! No, colonel! I saw...."

A flash of white-hot energy exploded in both men's brains. Then it was over. The two figures collapsed bonelessly to the sand. Above, in a dimly-lit compartment filled with humming equipment, the third man slumped over a panel of toggles, meters and winking status lights.

Sixty miles overhead, the orbiting main unit vainly tried to reestablish contact with the landing module. But the calls went unanswered.

The first United States Manned Martian Landing mission was ended.

The Reetha dug appendages deep to feed and anchor bulbous bodies against night winds which would soon howl down from the north. Before the group matrix loosened, Kathna-ra pronounced his judgment of events just concluded.

Although the strange creatures moved like living beings, I now believe they could not have been truly sentient, for they had no thoughts, no matrix. We were right to avenge Thastor's discorporation by discorporating them. Further, we must be ready to disincorporate any similar creatures that may come to our land in the future.

Then he added, We cannot put Thastor's spirit to rest properly until we clear and purify the Dankstha. We will begin planning how to do this at first light, after the night winds have gone.

SENTIENT BEINGS WITHOUT  
FANZINES ARE UNTHINKABLE.



SHADOWS, by D. A. Casteel.

Beware those whose ignorance is joined with piety. --Hebrew Proverb

Anger blows out the lamp of the mind. --Robert G. Ingersoll

The reasoning of the strongest is always the best. --La Fontaine

Once there was peace upon the land, but a worthy man of God found evil there and exhorted good men to fight it. He saw a thing that was, to him, passing strange; and it was, to him, a work of the Devil. What it was, no man can say; for, to him, it seemed to be the Prince of Darkness walking the night. It could have been a gloomy night, with long shadows and a howling dog, and, perhaps, a small amount of rum; it does not matter. To him, and to the people to whom he spoke, it was Satan, Beelzebub, Esmodeus, Lucifer, Moloch, Mammon, Belial, the Devil....

The people waxed sore afraid, and in their fear there was anger. So they struck out at the Devil; they hunted out his worshippers, who were those who had done them injury, or who were strange or different in their actions and appearances, or who refused their simple requests....

And who could argue with the mob, for the mob was strong, and wise, and righteous. And so it began, the witch-trials, and the torturings, and the executions. A man saw shadows, and a hundred people died for it.

ACTUALLY, IT WAS THE THEORETICAL  
FRAMEWORK THEY TRIED TO PUT  
ME IN...



\* \* \* \* \*

SONNET XLIII: Poe

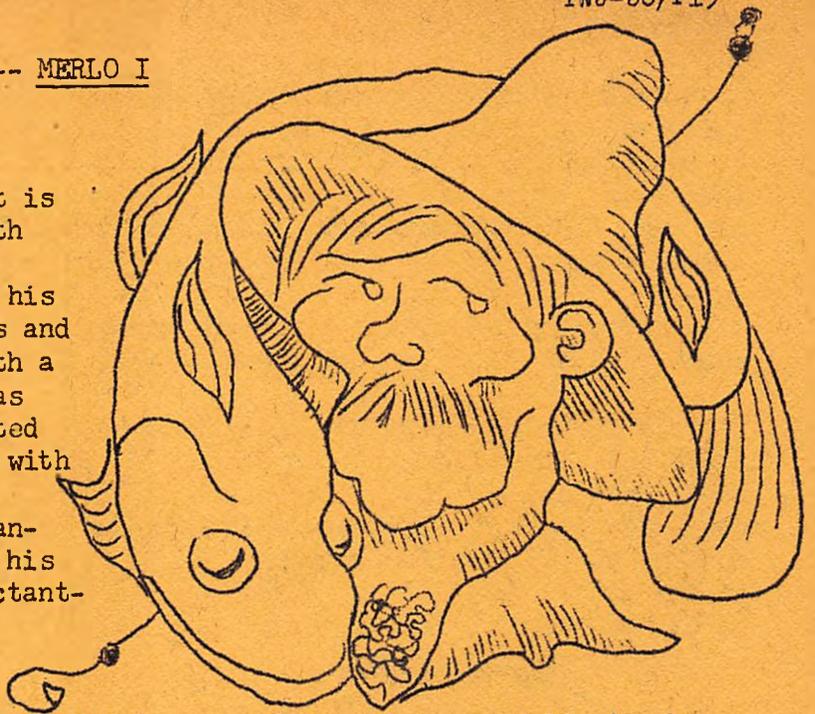
Embellished with a force of cosmic mien,  
Down yonder circling path among the trees  
Gather the lares of oft-forgotten men  
A hoary, blinded host that further sees  
Regarding Life and Death with calmer ways  
As touched with gifts divine, such shades are apt.  
Lost memory, like a dying sunset, plays  
Light and its rippling movement on their rapt  
And sombre shadows, tinselled with the gold,  
Not of the grasping coffers of the world,  
Perchance, but gold that silence fails to hold  
Of that dark Place where Poe his shroud unfurled,  
Ever sentient of its everlasting cold.

-- FRED PHILLIPS

CUENTOS DE LAS SIERRAS DE CORDOBA -- MERLO I

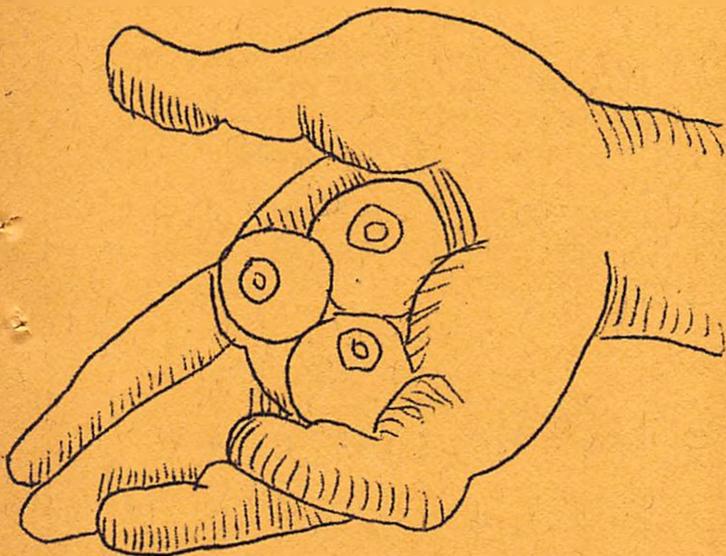
"Orco Mountain", by Mae Strelkov.

When the mountains grumble, it is because Merlo is coming along. With fishing-tackle and a gun over his shoulders, and a game-bag slapping his thigh, he plods crabwise over hills and through gorges, to keep a tryst with a huge, old trout, as canny-seeming as ever. Thrice, he has already visited its pool, and his mind is obsessed with the experience. He seeks sympathy among his fellow-peones at the estancia, and they grudgingly listened to his rhapsodies--and sneer. (Yet, reluctantly, they are envying him this, his ecstasy.)



Not that he is articulate. His body alone speaks volumes...and his hands. He squirms with delight as he grimaces and mutters. "The tipo!" he cries over and over again. And, in those two words, he is conveying a world of longing and passion, as he tells of a Grandfather Trout--a tremendous fellow--who refuses to be ravished by man. (It is like the Ancestor of all Fish, known to the Chaco-santiagueño Indians, not far away. It once lived in a World Tree, but it was killed by a native's dart, thus creating a tremendous catastrophe, like that caused by the fisherman Thor (of Nordic myth).)

Merlo does not merely fish or hunt. He woos--and seeks to ravish--Nature. Nor is he at enmity with anything, but loves the hare he hunts, as does the puma which will eventually devour it. It is a mute rhapsody of need and of conquest, in which he partakes.



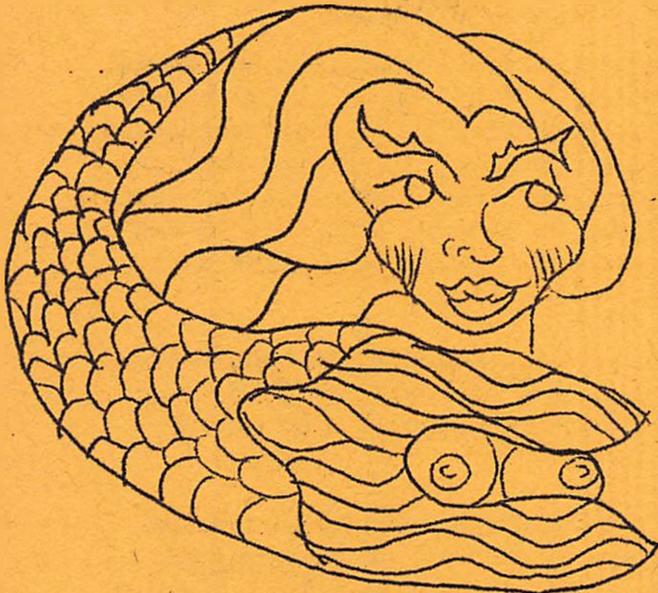
Stranger denizens live in these windswept hills and thorny quebradas of northwest Argentina--beings of pre-Columbian mythology (and the duendes, as well, of Spanish lore)--and watch as the game goes on. Merlo sees them not, nor is he aware of them, so intent is he on his search for new thrills. But they must surely watch him, with glee and admiration--for he is a naked soul, undecked by human frivolities or fashions. A desperate hunter--a Nimrod, anew.

Was Nimrod manly? Did he hunt women too, and seduce them successfully, or bag them and lead them to his tents? But Merlo has no woman. He has never lost his virginity, though he has tried for years on end to seduce each new yearly crop of nubile maidens...with candies! Little twelve-year-olds, they are seduced...but not by him.

Over and over, the same story occurs. The damsel eats his candy, like the child she still is, and squirms as he flatters her with clumsy intensity. He is watching her as he watches his trout. Then comes an amused fellow-peon to take over. Nine months later, she brings forth her first baby to this other man (who flees quickly away, and plays "innocent"), and Merlo crawls off, at a loss. (Another fish that "got away" from him!)

and so he is still a "virgin", though well into middle-age, and the peonies think it is wonderful--and almost admirable.

Is Merlo then a feeble thing that he has never seduced a maid, though he tries and tries? And why has he not, at least, bedded a whore, who needs no seducing--just her fee, which he could of course well afford? The other peones patronize local prostitutes, each Saturday night, and think nothing of it? Why doesn't Merlo? Is it cowardice? Or is it that he would feel cheated of the joy of the hunt? Merlo has no hunger for the fish you buy in the markets. He has no hanker, either, for the human fish on sale at every stand!



Poor man, he knows no other way to fish for females than by using the same systems he used for trout. And the technique is not always satisfactory; worms for trout--and candies for girls--are not alone sufficient!

Balked of his human prey--all those virgins who have fallen, as game, to some other male--he returns to his mountain pool; at least that is still inviolate.... He is the rash male that would spear a Diana in flight! He, the foolish man who sees in that trout a true lover!

It hides beneath a rock under a waterfall, where the pool is eight meters deep. Amid the roaring and the constant spray, it lurks, and warily studies the queer human. From the bank of slippery stones, Merlo tosses his line towards it with an alluring worm, but the trout is not hooked. It knows Man.

The pool is the Womb of Nature. The trout is an "egg" in Her Ovary. He must get it. But he cannot. He does not know why such waves of longing engulf him. It is a pain that is physical--a need almost sexual--but he understands it not one whit.

Orgasm cannot be achieved...the fish will never be so easily captured! At last, poor Merlo hobbles away, a pitiful failure. And Mother Nature feels a pity more profound than any Ocean's Deep, where lurks Leviathan, unconquered by Man.

Man, the eternal Fisherman...fishing now for our Moon! Climbing its rugged protuberances, hunting new game that is stranger than anything earthly, perhaps. (Who can know?)

But Merlo is not interested in moon-baiting! With the Moon he has naught in common, save for its use at times in lighting his way.

Do not think, however, that he is always doomed to failure, on those quests upon which he embarks each Saturday night (while his fellow-peones hunt elsewhere, and only for women)!

At times he brings home big fish--incredibly big trout for a mere mountain stream! At such times, soaked to his gills, he will straggle home, supernatural bliss illuminating his homely features. Six fish of considerable size, indeed, coil around one another now--slippery and dead--in his bag. Reaching his little room in the peones' quarters, he draws forth his game. Their wet slipperiness is part of the ecstasy; but is there more to it than that? Does he know, subconsciously, that it is an ancient female symbol, so that--by proxy, now--he is having a session with that other, more unattainable "prey"? He caresses their bright, cold scales, his thumbs (huge and knobby) running over them. And does he know (but instinctively, again) that the thumb was an ancient phallic symbol for the teeming member?

And as he enjoys these moments alone, his dreams are not as sexual as you might think. For his needs have indeed been sublimated in this manner. He is envisioning hidden glories...icy, mountain waters, and roaring torrents that are truly "alive". They will carry the dead on their breast, down to the sea, in a fierce triumph, during floodtimes; and bygone natives knew the importance of it, too!--when these flash floods caught any traveller un-awares, it was but the "River God" collecting his due, that the drought might be conquered at last! No sacrificing Aztec or Incaic priest-hoods took away men's lives here... the River did its own collecting!



Indeed, this knowledge never faded in remote Andean haunts. The natives believe it still, as they believe so many other strange things. (Such as offering Pachamama--Mother Earth--a drink offering, by sprinkling chicha (or Khusa-type Kwas) on the ground. And hunters still pay their tribute to Llastay, deity of hunters, who plays a condor-bone flute, and protects game.)

Will Merlo one day be "collected", too, by these shadowy "Fishers of men"--old deities from legendary ages? Surely, no! He is too much a part of Nature's Bright Universe to deserve such a fate. Such is reserved for the unwary--the stumbling city-bred fool!

Then there are the mountains, themselves, which "roar" when strangers try to climb them...or so it is rumored! They will tremble and quake as well, if you persist, and will roll their boulders down on you! But if you escape all this, you may reach the top in a thick mist, and find the rain-water pool where the Mother of the Waters waits to face you...she is golden-fair, and with a fish-tail too, as the legends all relate. Ah, you may see her,..but you will not return to tell the tale, as Mayuc-Maman "collects" her victim, too! (At this time she has her bad aspect, and is somehow phallic...and even serpentine, they say!)

Elsewhere (for example, to the Cheyenne Indians of North America), Maiyun is a term for "spirits". And even further away, as with the Arepesh of New Guinea, mishim there somehow represents the "life or soul".

These spirits could appear as seductive women...you can find a description of one in David Humphreys Miller's Custer's Fall. However, when a young brave lusts for her upon meeting her, a cloud covers them both...and when the cloud clears anew, the other, "good brave", beholds his erstwhile friend lying on the ground, a mere heap of bones, his flesh already eaten away by bloated snakes!

The spiritual maiden then gives to the good brave a magic pipe of red stone, saying: "It is the Earth. Every step you take upon Her should be as a prayer."

Did Merlo know any of this age-old Earth magic, so familiar to bygone Indians, everywhere? Did he perhaps guess that She cherished him, for his virginity?

Even if Merlo never did catch that Grandfather Trout, all the young and foolish trouts that ended up in his wet, burlap bag brought great comfort to him. Yes, on every occasion when he can crawl home with his bag wondrously full, in due course he drinks lustily to celebrate. Bottle after bottle. Be-sotted at last, he then crawls under the rock of his own mountain pool (that stuffy room, in the estancia's former "slave-quarters"), and a waterfall of dismal impossibilities roars over his head.

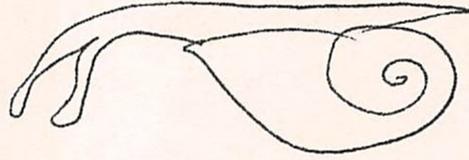
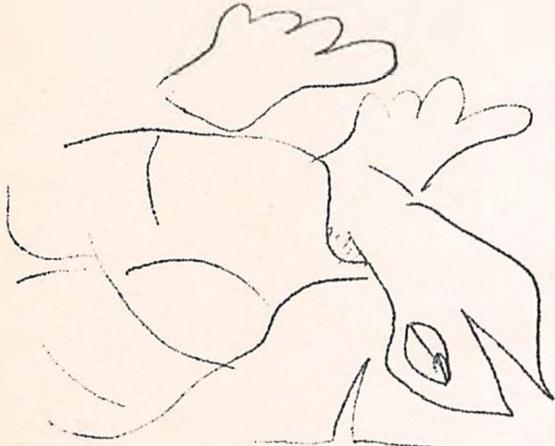
\* \* \* \*

He goes under. Delirium tremens is upon him anew. His last conscious thought is a recollection of a virginal bitch--a golden-red collie, belonging to the estancia's mayordomo and family. She is unravished still, for she barks all her courtiers away.

Staggering to his door in a giddy stupor, he unhooks the chain of his favorite--a greasball dog named "Capitan"--engagingly repulsive and nondescript, but all-male. As it darts away to perform its duty and seduce a virgin it its master's name, poor Merlo falls asleep, feeling he has not lived in vain, nor hunted females uselessly. Capitan will play the role for him!



((The above is the first "viewpoint" from a series of sketches of Merlo sent to us by Mrs. Strelkov. In her accompanying correspondence, Mrs. Strelkov alternately refers to this material as a "character study", an "essay", and as "local color"--but not once as "fiction". However, we are presenting it here in the TWJ fiction section, with the caveat that the reader may take it as he sees fit--as a tale of an almost legendary folk-hero, as a study of a most colorful local character, or what-have-you. It's still a good cuento, whether fact, fiction, of fact mixed with fiction...and we'll be presenting additional sketches of Merlo in succeeding TWJ's. --ed.))



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FANSTATIC  
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FEEDBACK

(Lettercolumn)



I. Re TWJ #78 --

Lin Carter, Queens, NY (3 Nov 71)  
((Extract from letter to Albert Gechter--ed.))

. . . You are right in your assumption that I had forgotten the Prophecy on pp. 67-8 of Flame of Iridar. I fear even I do not take my own work seriously enough.

You might be interested in some news from the Carterian front: all six of my Lemurian Books have now been published in London by Tempo in a matched set, handsomely designed. Three have been sold to a publisher in Japan.

Last month I wrote a novel for Gold Medal called The Man Who Loved Mars, a medley of echoes of Brackett, Merritt, Hamilton and CASmith.

Right now I am putting the final touches on another novel for Dell called Time War, a Van Vogtian pastiche which I immensely enjoyed doing. Next month I will complete the last volume of my Jandar of Callisto trilogy for Dell before turning to a serious book-length non-fiction study of fantasy as a genre of literature for Ballantine--it will be called Imaginary Worlds.

. . . According to my most recent thought, the next novel in the Lemurian Books sequence will be called Thongor Conquers the Underground World. Then I hope to do two books which belong earlier in the series, before Thongor and the Wizard of Lemuria.

Both will be collections of Thongor stories of varying lengths. (Two of these stories you have already seen in Santesson's twin anthologies.) The first of these--chronologically the first of all the Lemurian Books--will be called Thongor of Lost Lemuria. The second will be called Thongor in the Land of Peril.

When these are done, the Thongor books will stand at nine volumes. I shall leave it there, I now think, turning my attention to the adventures of Prince Thar.

You will be amused to hear that right now a sort of rock opera version of Thongor in the City of Magicians is being performed on the London stage. I'd tell you more about it, but I really don't know much about what they're doing. No money is involved.

I have just received the screen treatment of Thongor at the End of Time. It was written on speculation by a free-lance screen-writer who fell madly in love with the book and wrote begging permission to try his hand at it. I was amused, but said okay; it's a faithful version, and captures the essential color and pace and gusto of my story; however, I have little faith in his abilities to find a film producer willing and able to make the movie.

. . . Perhaps the time is about ripe for some brave soul to found a Thongorian Legion and a Lemurian equivalent of AMRA.

((We published the above excerpts--even though the letter is already a year old (it was several months old when Al forwarded it to us--and aged even more during the time our mimeo was ill and publication of TWJ had to be suspended)--in the hope that some of the information therein may still be of interest and use.--ed.))

James Blish, Harpsden, (Henley), Oxon, United Kingdom

(29 Feb 72)

((Actually, commentary on a review in SOTWJ #35, which was mailed to Jim along with TWJ #78. --ed.))

In SOTWJ, Michael T. Shoemaker wonders implicitly how much the Doubleday ...And All the Stars a Stage was changed from the 1960 serial in AMAZING. The answer is, hardly at all--I added a few thousand words--but nevertheless the novel had previously been through a dizzying series of changes, the like of which I hope I never encounter again. It all started some time in 1958 when Truman M. ("Mac") Talley, then editor of Signet Books, took me to lunch and proposed to me a great idea for a science fiction novel which he wanted me to write: essentially, the story of refugees from a nova (eventually revealed to be what is now the Crab Nebula, which was to supply the novel's title) who colonize Earth--but with the story apparently starting on a place very much like Earth and the twist produced as a surprise at the end.

I hadn't read One in Three Hundred, only pieces of it that had previously appeared in the magazines (Damon Knight's review of the book decided me not to try the whole course), but the notion didn't strike me as great. I was about to say, "It's really a pretty old idea" when Mac went on: "The advance will be \$3000". That was the biggest advance I'd ever been offered up to that time, so I accepted, with certain cavils. For one, the Crab nova had been seen in historic times, and it isn't really very far away as sidereal distances go; the actual time of the explosion was roughly contemporaneous with the Ubaid occupation of southern Mesopotamia. Secondly, I had anthropological objections to the notion that man might not have evolved on Earth; I argued that it would be enough of a miracle if the two races could interbreed.

Mac accepted these reservations and asked me to send him an outline. I did so, the contract was signed, and I wrote the book. To the best of my knowledge, the manuscript followed the agreed-upon outline faithfully, but Mac was not satisfied with it and asked for a rewrite, suggesting some additional ideas which were even older-hat than the main one. This time, feeling myself pinned to the ground by what I knew to be a mass of clichés, I tried to give the book at least a little Blishness by introducing a lot of odd little biological critters, a penchant of mine to which, I had long ago discovered, readers almost always responded with approval.

Mac didn't like this version either, and suggested that he send the manuscript out "for a third opinion". Months went by, and finally, after an inquiry from me, I got the manuscript back--but it hadn't been subjected simply to a third opinion, it was a completely new manuscript. What had apparently happened was that Mac had sent the novel to some Bennington ponytail who was so eager to prove her worth as an editor (creative type) that she had rewritten the whole thing. I have mercifully blanked out on most of the details, but I do recall that she had taken out all of my little critters, and had added a love story of such pulpy sopiness (not to say irrelevance) that only a revival of the vomitorium would do justice to it.

I had had enough at this point. I notified Mac that I would consent to the publication of this version only if it were titled "Crab Nebula, by Truman M. Talley and Bennington Ponytail, as told to James Blish". Barring that, I would return NAL's \$3000 (though necessarily in installments).

Mac had the good grace to recognize an impasse when he saw one. He not only released me from the contract, but soaked up the advance by re-issuing another of my books (The Seedling Stars) instead.

I sold the carbon of the second (pre-Ponytail) draft as a serial to AMAZING, and then as a hardcover to Doubleday. It's my hypothesis that DDay wasn't really enthusiastic about the novel, but bought it to get me on their list; certainly they sat on it for years and years, until I finally insisted that they publish it. By this time, of course, I hadn't the faintest idea myself whether the surviving version was any good, but I did think that I ought at least to be given the chance to earn some royalties on it.

Then followed a further comedy of errors. DDay also had a story collection of mine, Anywhen, and I discovered (through an announcement in PUBLISHER'S WEEKLY which Dean McLaughlin sent me) that they were just about to release this under the title of the novel. What had happened was that DDay had changed SF editors in the interim, the manuscript of ...And All the Stars a Stage had been lost, and the collection had been put into the folder which bore the title of the novel. This would further louse me up with Faber & Faber, my British publishers, who had bought the collection but not the novel (they now have)--and F&F prints such things by offset from DDay pages. Eventually, after many exchanges of cables, letters, and even a meeting in London, this too got straightened out--but the story did not end even there: as Shoemaker notes, the blurb writer for the novel never did notice that the novel does not start on Earth, though I had taken great pains at the beginning to show that the solar system involved could not possibly be ours; moreover, she also got the name of one of the major characters wrong. (The manuscript never was found; DDay had to get a copy of the AMAZING serial, I think through Sam Moskowitz, to whom thanks.)

This all was followed by a subsequent louse-up on Anywhen, but that's another story which is still too recent for me to have the heart to tell. After all these vicissitudes, I no longer have any idea whether ...And All the Stars a Stage contains anything worth reading, and to find Tom Claeson and Mr. Shoemaker declaring that it does is more than I could possibly have hoped for. Its history to me is that of an initially bad idea progressively trampled to death by ducks.

((Quite a horror story! Would be interested to hear from other writers on this subject--was Jim's experience an isolated case, or is such confusion more the rule than the exception? --ed.))

\* \* \* \* \*

II. Re TWJ #79 --

Mark Owings, 2486 Elm Place, Bronx, NY 10458

(5 May 72)

Dennis Lien: The third edition of Tuck has only book (collection/novel) coverage and a list of "noted stories", plus some series info. (A long series listing in in Vol. III.)

Lafferty I did for PHANTASMICOM #3 (now out of print, I think). Quinn I did, in the back of Is the Devil a Gentleman? Doc Smith was done by Al Lewis in The Universes of E.E. Smith. Del Rey I did for the 1971 Marcon Program book. Delany was done by somebody in a New Jersey fanzine about 1970. (I also covered him for Janet Kagan once, it being about five minutes' work.) Ellison I, at least, will never do. I know enough of the men's magazines reprints of his stories to know it's not worth tracking down the rest.

((Maybe someday, if Mark doesn't get a biblio done for a particular issue of TWJ, we'll try and get permission to reprint one of the now-out-of-print biblios from one of the other 'zines--possibly updated by Mark if he has the time. --ed.))

Mark Owings (address above)

(14 May 1972)

I would suggest that much of the difference between Blackwood's "The Doll" and the episode in The House That Dripped Blood stems from the fact that the episode is an adaptation of Bloch's "Sweets to the Sweet". Also one might wonder at the reference to the Blackwood story as "classic". The reason Arkham House published it rather than something else of his is that Derleth wanted something new. When you talk about a man with (to my knowledge) 14 novels and a couple of hundred short stories (many uncollected), one should reserve the term classic for his better stories.

The Silverberg biblio Tuck refers to was, I think, done by Walt Cole.  
 ## Main reason for not providing series info is that I mostly haven't had it.  
 ## Incredibly complete bibliographies of Clark Ashton Smith and Robert E. Howard have been on the verge of publication for years.

## Mainstream people:

AIKEN, CONRAD -- Conrad Aiken, by Reuel Denney (Univ. of Minn. Press: Minneapolis, 1964, wpps 48).

ASTURIAS, MIGUEL ANGEL -- Migel Anhel Asturias, by Aleksandrovich Pevtsov Yury (Moscow, 1960); in Russian.

BAIN, F.W. -- Fr William Bain, by Keshav Mutalik (Univ. of Bombay, 1963); includes a biblio.

BECKFORD -- A Bibliography of Wm. Beckford of Fonthill, by Guy Chapman & John Hodgkin (Bibliographia, Vol. II: London, 1930); 500-copy edition.

BIERCE -- Ambrose Gwinnett Bierce, by Joseph Gaer (California Literary Research, Pamphlet #4, 1935).

BUCHAN -- John Buchan, 1875-1940, a Bibliography, by Archibald Hanna (Shoe String Press: Hamden, Conn., 1953).

CABELL -- At least two, the larger from Univ. of Virginia Press, 1957, by Frances Joan Brewer, plus a bibliography of books about Poictesme.

CAPEK -- Three, one in Russian, one in Polish, one in Czech, plus Karel Capek, by Wm. Edward Harkins (Columbia U. Press: NY, 1962); includes a biblio.

DODGSON, C.L. -- A Bibliography of the Writings of Lewis Carroll, by Sidney Herbert Williams (Bookman's Journal: London, 1924).

CHESTERTON, G.K. -- G K Chesterton (univ. of London, 1958) and Chesterton Continued (Univ. of London, 1968), by John Sullivan.

COPPARD, A.E. -- The Writings of Alfred Edgar Coppard, by Jacob Schwartz (Ulysses Bookshop: London, 1931).

CORELLI -- Marie Corelli, the Life and Death of a Best-seller, by George Bullock (Constable: London, 1940); includes a biblio.

CRAWFORD -- Francis Marion Crawford, by John Pilkington (Twayne: NY, 1964); includes a biblio.

DE LA MARE -- Walter de la Mare /anonymous/ (National Book League: London, 1956).

DOYLE -- A Bibliographical Catalogue of the Writings of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, by Harold Locke (D. Webster: Tunbridge Wells, 1928).

FAUST, FREDERICK -- Max Brand: the Man and His Works, by Darrell C. Richardson (FPCI: Los Angeles, 1952).

GRAVES -- A Bibliography of the Work of Robert Graves, by Fred H. Higginson (N. Vane: London/Archon Books: Hamden, Conn., 1966).

HAGGARD -- A Bibliography of the Works of Sir Henry Rider Haggard, by J.E. Scott (E. Matthews: Herts., 1947); 500-copy edition.



SCIENCE FICTION IS  
AN ACQUIRED TASTE.

I'll try to send some more some other day.

Nolan's thing was called THE RAY BRADBURY REVIEW.

Dave Hulvey, I am curious. Why do you think of the late '50's-early '60's as the greatest era of fanzine publishing? About all they had that we don't was Guy Terwilliger. And there were then abroad several people with considerable power and a fierce hatred of anything they themselves did not originate. (Some have now dropped out, some have--maybe--mellowed, some are too busy to do much in fandom.)

A standard issue of any fanzine now (discounting six-page apazines or letter-substitutes) would have been quite notable seven years ago. And the same applies to all I've seen from the forties or early fifties: FANTASTIC WORLDS, FANTASY ADVERTISER, NEW FUTURLAN, FANSCIENT, INSIDE (which lasted to 1958, but with only three issues after '56).

((The Amateur Press Associations reached their heights during the period to which Dave refers--and perhaps, in sheer quantity of fanzines published, this period was also exceptional. But, outside of FAPA mailings, our fanzine collection contains very little of note from subject years. # And Mark, don't forget to add to your list of "Mainstream People" biblios.... --ed.))

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Dave Hulvey, Rt. 1, Box 198, Harrisonburg, VA 22801

(6 Jun 1972)

I'd hate to sound slightly miffed, but Shoemaker isn't much of a fanzine reviewer. No, better said, Shoemaker shore ain't no zine reporter. Merely cataloging individual prejudices isn't reviewing, much less reporting. I don't think a good reviewer needs to be Objective--whatever that is--but he should have some objective basis on which to found his essentially subjective views.

Actually, I don't think the "most important function of fandom is the inter-communication of individual likes and dislikes regarding sf". Why does Shoemaker think so? For me, the most important function of fandom is to have fun. I prefer good friends to fandom's ego-wars and SF's pompous serconners and mere books any ol' day.

I regard Shoemaker's view of fandom to be immoral. If he thinks SF is more important than people that shows the terrible shape his own head must be in. Anyone with an inhumane and inhuman view such as that could not be very filled with humanity himself. I felt pity for Shoemaker when I briefly met him at Disclave because he seemed so shy and wrapped up inside himself. But now I feel only contempt, because he doesn't even try to understand fandom, except in his own narrow and warped parameters.

I'm flattered he didn't seem to like my zine. After all, his own horrible crudzine reflects what he thinks is good. How utterly perverted his own standards must be! I can't get over the cover with the astronaut standing very self-importantly on the moon--WITHOUT A HELMET ON! If it weren't for the attempts of Bruce Townley, his zine would be one of the worst of the year.

Why the hyphen between "genuinely-humorous" in the report? I must nitpick properly because I want Redd Boggs to be proud of me.

I won't attempt to review Mike's zine, or the rest of his report. It's not worth the trouble. But I would add one thing: don't try to censor me--I don't take kindly to that. However, I know not to send you my zine from now on, because you might see a BAD WORD or a Leftwing Political Rap, and be utterly freaked. I respect your freedom to be a bigoted, reactionary, naive fugghead. Yazz, the first BRNF is born. Well, not the first, but my first.

Harry Harrison reserves the kiss of death for Newton. Anyone whom Harrison likes gets a bad connotation in my book. Well, not really, but there are few

writers for whom I have less respect than Harrison. I'll never forget that time he made a scene at the '71 Balticon by maliciously attacking Ted White. Incredible.

Gack! I tried to read Newton's review of Asimov's The Stars in Their Courses. It was awful. Jerry, let's go.

Very nice Canfield cover.

Nice try from Harry Warner to make the classical raps current. The Fire-sign Theater reference roped me in, and I was able to read through the whole thing with undivided attention. I'm rarely able to do that with any writing these days.

Was glad to see the Ted Pauls/Alexis Gilliland debate on the merits of The World Inside. Personally, I enjoyed the book very much, but I still liked Alexis' articulate musing about it.

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Sandra Miesel, 8744 N. Pennsylvania St., Indianapolis, IN 46240 (14 Jun 1972)

. . . How delightful that Alexis Gilliland is using his access to the Oral Tradition of the Platypus People to draw cartoons. (Crude human chauvinism for me to specify "Platypus People"--to the platys, they are "The People".) Written records are scant. Perfect race memory obviates the necessity for them. Alexis insists he's not a wereplaty like my husband, but I have my suspicions.

A few comments on Dennis Lien's bibliography data: an exhaustive Tolkien bibliography has been prepared by Richard West and published piecemeal in his fanzine, ORCRIST. It covers everything, even fanzine articles and LoC's on Tolkien. The Anderson bibliography in F&SF (April, 1971) was prepared by the author himself. The format was doubtlessly stipulated by editor Ferman. This listing contains at least one error: the 1958 Ace doublebook edition of The Snows of Ganymede is missing from the novel roll.

Addendum to Ted Pauls' review of ANALOG 8: the "irrelevant two-page essay" he noticed attached to the Steve Chapman story got there by a printer's error. The typesetter failed to notice that the magazine version came to an end on the left-hand page and tacked on the contents of the right-hand page--something to do with phosgene gas, I believe. Can you imagine the reaction if it had been one of Harlan's stories?

It's wonderfully kind of Dave Hulvey to urge the extension of tolerance to James Newton's reviews, but I feel his benignity is misplaced. In the thundering tones of the Inquisition, "Error has no right to exist!" Newton's deficiencies are not mere infelicity of style or coarseness of taste (which we could expect to improve with time) but basic questions of accuracy and approach. He knows neither his material nor the expectations of his audience. One distressing example of Newton's ineptitude is his review of Operation Chaos in #79. Is it necessary to beg SF fans not to "scoff" at the magical talents of the book's protagonists? The paragraphs devoted to this non-issue could have been better used in describing the alternate-universe setting of OC accurately: a set of alternate universes of which our real world is one, the world of OC another, and apparently, the world of Three Hearts and Three Lions another. The whole set is linked to the same High and Low continua, Heaven and Hell. OC's hero meets Hitler in Hell but can't understand who he is. Newton's declaration: . . . "To the best of my knowledge, no author has developed such a logical framework to explain . . . the reality of what we term magic . . ." is an admission of inexcusable ignorance. Hasn't he at least heard of Heinlein's Magic, Inc. (OC is dedicated to Heinlein and his wife, noting that the heroine's name and red hair are in Mrs. Heinlein's honor), de Camp & Pratt, Garrett, Niven,

Boucher's "Compleat Werewolf" (a direct influence on OC), or even Anderson's own Three Hearts and Three Lions? These are just a few titles in the sturdy sub-genre that describes magic rationally. Newton's thin plot summary deals only with the fourth section of the book. He fails to mention that OC is a paste-up of four F&SF stories, "Operation Afreet" ('56), "Operation Salamander" ('57), "Operation Incubus" ('59), and "Operation Changeling" ('69), information fans would find useful. There are many things Newton could have said about the book, but he didn't. He's too incapable. . . .

I myself do not enjoy routine reviewing. I tried it once and found my reading pleasure dulled. But when I attempted short reviews in the past, care was taken to make them thorough and accurate, e.g. reading the Mabinogion to evaluate Evangeline Walton's Island of the Mighty.

Just why does Dave Hulvey cite Operation Chaos as extreme right-wing propaganda? Because it contains one scene of student demonstrators being routed from a factory which makes police equipment? But the students were ultimately pawns of Satan; it was altogether fitting that they be defeated (none that none was injured). Can it be that Dave thinks the Gnostic Johannine Church is Marxism in thin disguise? By no means. Marxism is in part a Judeo-Christian heresy but it has not the slightest trace of Gnosticism about it. (If anything Marxism is Pelagian--i.e., holding that man is inately good and self-perfectable.) The Gnosticism in OC is precisely that and nothing more, a singularly revolting cluster of beliefs which is showing signs of resurgence (the Satanist fad, etc.). If Dave really wants to feel outraged, he might look at The Star Fox, in which the Militants for Peace kidnap and threaten to kill the hero's daughter. Of course, we take political murders and kidnappings more for granted now than in 1965.

OZ IS LOCATED  
BETWEEN NEW  
YORK AND PENN-  
SYLVANIA. THUS:

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AH KIN TELL RAHT  
WING PROPAGANDA BY  
TAKIN' MUH  
BLOOD  
PRESSURE  
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READING



((We debated long and hard with ourself on whether to respond to the comments in Sandra's and Dave's letters re James Newton and Mike Shoemaker, and finally decided against it. Instead, we invite Jim and Mike to respond themselves in the next TWJ. ##### One of the problems we have--both as an editor and as a bibliographer (particularly in evaluating the reviews in the prozines and fanzines for our forthcoming Index to the Reviews of Science Fiction and Fantasy Books, 1926-1970 (may be extended to include current years))--is in defining what a review really is (and in determining what the criteria are for a review to be "good"). Some reviews are nothing more than plot summaries; others say in one short paragraph considerably more about a book than many reviews say in several pages; some are merely notices; others are statements of personal likes and dislikes, and nothing more. Some confine the review to a discussion of the merits and faults of the book at hand; others compare the book with numerous other works, or discuss it in terms of the author's development. What do you look for in a review? And what do you feel constitutes a good review? --ed.))

Mike Glicksohn, 32 Maynard Ave., Apt. 205, Toronto 156, Ontario, Canada (19/6/72)

Superb cover on #79, and the usual less-said-the-better about your interior art, repro, and layout.

It's the lettercolumn that amuses me mostly this issue. I see Newton has finally found a fan, or perhaps a soul brother is a better description. The arrogance of Harry Harrison is really something to be marvelled at. A critic who doesn't like his writing has no taste at all, but a young neophyte who draws consistent criticism for the juvenile and amateurish approach he brings to his "reviews" gets a rave notice from Harrison because said "critic" praised a Harrison work. Harrison has consistently made himself look idiotic in print by his fanatical in-groupishness and mutual back-patting, and it appears as if he plans to continue to do so. The worst part of it is that he may convince Newton to continue in his somewhat less than admirable style. And that would be a shame, because Newton's review of the Asimov book in this issue shows a considerable improvement. It is better written, less deliberately provocative and shows greater insight than his earlier attempts. I found it a thoroughly enjoyable review; more of this, Jim, and you'll soon silence your critics, but by your performance and not by vitriolic verbal self-defense.

I note that Dave Hulvey recommends tolerance for Jim Newton but won't extend it to "pompous assholes like Leon Taylor and Mike Glycer"--but then perhaps he's merely being his usual facetious self. Who could possibly take the rest of his statement seriously? Then again, that letter was penned back in November, and probably Dave himself no longer feels that way, so I guess it's a waste of time to argue the point.

((Although we said on the previous page we weren't going to respond to the comments re Jim Newton's reviews, we feel it necessary to provide a bit of background at this point. The reviews of Jim's that we have been publishing in TWJ and SOTWJ were written for a large-circulation daily newspaper, THE EVENING STAR. It is our understanding that their content and length was largely determined by the likes and dislikes of the former STAR Book Review Editor. They were thus written for an audience which was assumed to be completely ignorant of science fiction--and not for the book-wise audience of TWJ. The Asimov review was written specifically for TWJ at our request. We are hoping to get Jim to do more "specials" for TWJ in the future--although the STAR has a new Book Editor now whose tastes seem to be an improvement over his predecessor, and who has recently been using more "meaty" reviews from Jim (which are also being sent to us for use in TWJ/SOTWJ.--ed.))

Dennis Lien, 1102 E. 24th St., Minneapolis, MN 55404

(4 Sep 72)

Re my letter in #79: For "a bibliography of SF stories and their reprints in the now-defunct Lowndes mags (which did reprint most of them). . ." read "a bibliography of ST /i.e., STRANGE TALES/ stories . . ." Makes quite a difference. Lowndes did nice work, but he didn't reprint "most SF stories". No way.

Michael Ward's "Complete Index to FANCIFUL TALES . . ." was mildly amusing, and might have been more so if the indexed-to-death one-shot gag hadn't been done in DYNATRON with UNCANNY STORIES about five years ago. Anybody remember it?

Re Lapidus on The Gladiators: don't know if the distributors subsequently "found" the prints, but I saw it at the U. of Arizona about 1½ years ago as a standard \$1-a-head Friday night flick--hardly a "film festival showing".

As usual, Bob Jones' "Pulp Scene" was greatly enjoyed, and Mark Owings greatly missed. For future Bob Jones installments, perhaps GOLDEN FLEECE, ORIENTAL STORIES/MAGIC CARPET, and TALES OF MAGIC AND MYSTERY?

Enclosed is a copy of the only feedback I received on my piece in TWJ #79. (I had forgotten about the EESmith book; the other info is new to me.):

Robert E. Briney, 245 Lafayette St., Apt. 3G, Salem, MA 01970 (28 May 72)

I have just received TWJ #79, with your checklist of single-author SF bibliographies. This is something that has needed doing for a long time, and I hope it stimulates further investigation.

You might be interested in a similar project which will soon see the light. In September . . . Advent will publish a booklet called SF Bibliographies, An Annotated Bibliography of Bibliographies on Science Fiction and Fantasy Fiction, compiled by myself and Ed Wood. This lists and describes 107 SF bibliographical works. However, we deliberately restricted ourselves to bibliographies which had been published and distributed as separate entities--books, pamphlets, etc. The many checklists and bibliographies published as parts of fanzines, or incorporated in biographical or critical volumes, were excluded. At least as far as this first edition is concerned; if enough information can be gathered, an expanded second edition may include this additional material.

Incidentally, of the authors listed in your letter in TWJ 79, only Robert Bloch has been the subject of an extensive bibliography (a mimeographed pamphlet published in England a few years ago). The others have so far been neglected. This is surprising for such a popular author as de Camp. There was a biographical sketch and bibliography on him in Don Day's FANSCIENT twenty years ago, but I don't know of any coverage since then.

The first volume of Tuck's Encyclopedia of Science Fiction and Fantasy is planned for early Spring 1973; it will contain the alphabetical entries A-L, including bibliographies for the authors in that range.

Soon to be published by Don Grant is The Last Cult by Glenn Lord, a biographical study of Robert E. Howard, which will contain revised and augmented versions of the Howard bibliographies from THE HOWARD COLLECTOR.

The Heinlein introduction to de Camp's The Glory That Was was written for the paperback, and had not yet been published when Panshin compiled his bibliography for Heinlein in Dimension.

A bibliography of Doc Smith does exist--compiled by Al Lewis and included in The Universes of E.E. Smith (Ellik/Evans), published by Advent.

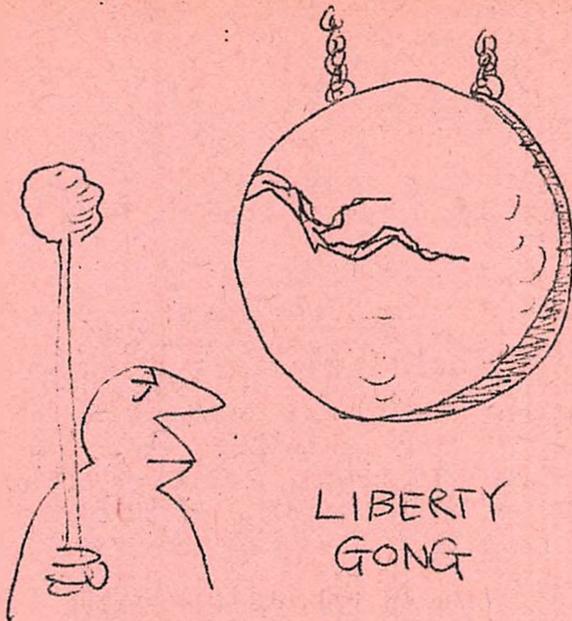
The first thing that impressed me, during the compilation of SF Bibliographies, was the large amount of work that had been done in this area. Then, at second glance, it showed strange gaps and one-sidedness. Perhaps checklists like yours (and ours) can point bibliographers in the right direction, so that some of the hitherto-overlooked authors will get their due.

((The Briney/Wood SF Bibliographies is avail. from F&SF Book Co., POB 415, Staten Island, NY 10302, paperbound, \$1.95. #### Sorry about the typo, Dennis. #### Don't remember the DYNATRON item, but Mike's index has been in our files for so long it probably pre-dated the DYNATRON index. #### Don't know when (or if) Bob Jones will do another column, but Mark Owings is back with us. --ed.))

Cy Chauvin, 17829 Peters, Roseville, MI 48066

(14 Sep 72)

In many ways, TWJ is a strange fanzine--a combination of both good and bad, side by side. Take your covers. Both are extremely good, and easily rank with those on any top fanzine. The art (and layout) of the interior of the fanzine is something else again. It's not that I'm expecting TWJ to be another GRAN-FALLOON, but the contrast with the covers is quite obvious, as I'm sure you'll agree. (Personally, I'd prefer no artwork to bad, handtraced artwork, but I suppose few fans would agree with me.)



Dennis Lien's checklist is somewhat interesting, but too often this tendency towards bibliography gets out of hand, such as in the piece by Michael Ward facing Dennis' article. There is no point in indexing every obscure magazine, or fanzine, or author; I wouldn't have minded reading an article about FANCIFUL TALES OF TIME & SPACE, but the dry distillation that Michael gave was simply boring. But regarding Dennis' piece...There was a bibliography of Zelazny in PROCRASTINATION recently, compiled by Darrell Schweitzer, and it included some fanzine appearances. Probably out of print, however. Leon Taylor had compiled a bibliography of Delany's works at the end of an article he had in DYNACENCE #2, also out of print. But I wonder if a bibliography of Delany would really be necessary at this time, since all of the short stories he has

written are included in his recent collection, Driftglass. And everyone is familiar with the five or six novels he has written--The Ballad of Beta 2, the "Towers" trilogy (his first three novels collected together), The Einstein Intersection, Nova, and...ah...the title of the other work escapes me, but I'm sure one of your other readers will point it out. I heard rumors that someone was putting out an Ellison bibliography, and were having problems collecting fmz information (i.e., which zines Ellison has appeared in throughout the years). James Goddard, a British fan, published a bibliography of Ballard, which included introductory material by John Carnell and Ballard himself. It's gone out of print, but he's planning on producing another edition in the near future.

Ted Paul's comment that mainstream writers are unaware that certain assumptions in SF are "assumed", and thus they over-explain them, seems true, but I'm not really sure if that's why most of them fail to handle SF in a very interesting fashion. It seems more likely to me that they aren't aware of the basic SF clichés, and thus reuse them and think them marvelous, fantastic inventions. Most SF novels written by authors who normally work in the mainstream have struck me as rather bland and uninventive. Even such an excellent novel as Earth Abides did not strike me as particularly adventurous or imaginative in the type of future it portrayed (as opposed to The Left Hand of Darkness), even though it was extremely well written. I think there is a particular imaginative area in which SF (and fantasy) writers work almost exclusively, and it is precisely this area that most writers outside the field who turn to SF neglect.

But actually I shouldn't be so hard on writers outside the field--since Sturgeon's "Slow Sculpture" lacks in this same respect, and so does a lot of other SF being written by "insiders".

James R. Newton does not strike me as a bad reviewer--certainly no worse than Pauls or Delap. Possible he does not ask that vital question, "WHY?", enough times while reviewing a book, but that's all. He might try reading Bruce Gillespie's or Jeff Clark's reviews--those far surpass anything Pauls or Delap has written, in my opinion. But I agree with Dave Hulvey that he should be allowed to keep on writing, since that's the only way anyone can develop any skill....

I wish Dave Hulvey had not called Leon Taylor a "pompous asshole". (I'll let Mike Glyer defend himself.) Dave, I know Leon--I've known him for several years--

and he has always been extremely kind and helpful to me (and I'm sure to others). Perhaps at times what he wrote came out pompous--but I think we've all made that mistake occasionally. And in most of his material (even his serious stuff) Leon has tried to inject some humor; perhaps it never has come out well, but at least Leon has tried. He certainly hasn't meant to be "pompous". I don't know if I could regard Arnie Katz as a particularly "perceptive" individual, either--he's written some good material at times, but can be rather cruel when someone doesn't meet his own tastes. Fandom could be a lot nicer if people would resist the temptation to name-call.

Ted Paul's comments on "A Happy Day in 2381" (from The World Inside) are sort of interesting. I agree that it's a "They-have-made-a-hell-and-called-it-utopia" story, but I think Silverberg might also have been attempting to write a different type of story, and a much more original one. There are hints in the story (and in the whole series, really, but most vividly in this story) that while a person's physical environment in URban Monad 116 is less comforting, the mental and emotional environment is much freer, happier, etc.; the bonds between the people are more open because they have less material things to interfere. It's similar to the familiar idea of a well-to-do family that doesn't get along well despite all their material wealth--there're constant fights, divorce, etc.--while a poor family out in the country seems to get along well, despite its poverty. It doesn't have material wealth--its members only have themselves. Anyway, this is the idea that Silverberg's story provoked, although I doubt it's what he intended--the other stories all contradict this idea. But somehow it struck me as interesting; and certainly the story would have been more radical if it implied that somehow this seemingly awful environment that the characters were living in was actually good--simply because the people in it were warm and human.

When I look at Ted Pauls' (and Alexis Gilliland's) review closely, I see that there really isn't that much too it--it would be awfully hard to come to grips with Pauls' opinion. While basically I agree that "there are no new stunning insights" in the book, Silverberg does introduce the concept of nightwalking, which I can't recall reading about elsewhere. Alexis says that "There is nobody in the whole book taking a hand in shaping his environment." I can't see how that can be considered a valid criticism of the book. Nor does Alexis say why he thinks that's so bad.

I don't think that "The Region Between" was "unintelligible to the average reader", but on the other hand, I think Ellison's typographical experiments failed. Turning a book upside down, to one side, or twisting it around in a circle does not enhance the meaning of a story, but rather tends to disrupt the reader's concentration. I also felt that most of the passages which contained the typographical trickery/experimentation were completely irrelevant to the meaning of the story, and could have been left out entirely. Yet, nearly all the controversy and discussion concerning the story has centered around the typographical experiments. I wonder why? You don't suppose, do you, that it could be because there's nothing else of any merit worth talking about in the story?

I wish you wouldn't publish book reviews of obscure titles by obscure authors. I see no point in it, unless the books are good. I never buy books by authors I don't know, and don't see any point in talking about them if they're bad. If the book is good, on the other hand, I'd like to hear about it. Also wish you would publish some sort of editorial in TWJ, and reply to some of the letters in the lettercol. . . .

P.S. I wonder if you're aware of a new SF magazine called ETERNITY. Not distributed, for the most part, via news-stand. Has fiction, poetry, articles, artwork, interviews, with: Roger Zelazny, Thomas M. Disch, Greg Benford, Phil

Dick, Jack Gaughan, Mike Gilbert, L. Sprague de Camp, and many others. Has regular features on books, records, films, as well. \$1 or 4/\$3.50 from ETERNITY SF, POBox 193, Sandy Springs, SC 12397. (In England, 40p or 4/160p from UKagent Roger Waddington, 4 Commercial St., Norton, Malton, Yorkshire.) I think it's a worthy effort, well deserving of support--it still has its faults, but I know the editor is trying to correct them. I'm sure he would appreciate it if you mentioned ETERNITY in your 'zine.

((Done. Actually, we commented on the first issue in SOTWJ #59, and loaned it to someone at a WSFA meeting for an in-depth review (which we'll probably never see, along with the 'zine...don't even remember any more who the person was... we lose more books and fanzines this way...)). Has issue #2 come out yet? ##### Let's see, now--proceeding backwards thru your letter: We don't comment more on the letters in TWJ for three reasons: (1) When we do, we get fewer letters for the nextish, as what we say often is what the potential letter-writer would have said; we'd rather let the readers carry on the discussion between themselves, with only an occasional prod from us; (2) For the past several issues, we have planned to append an editorial in the form of a "letter of comment", usually on the preceding issue; but, for some reason (usually lack of time and/or space), this has never materialized; (3) Lack of time and space, particularly the latter. ##### We like to read about obscure books by obscure authors--although you're right that such are probably of little value unless the book is good and deserves to be better known. (On the other hand, they're a lot of obscure books by obscure authors being published today as science fiction--and we'd like very much to read--and to publish--some sort of reviews of them so we, as well as our readers, will know more about both the books and the authors (particularly as some of the great writers of tomorrow may be among them...)). ##### We'd especially like to include a couple of pages of short commentary/notices/etc. of books, similar to the "Recommended Reading" section in early F&SF--and we urge our readers who lack the time and/or inclination to write "proper" reviews (whatever they may be) to jot down a sentence or three concerning all the books they read of possible interest to TWJ readers, and send them to us for such a column. A goodly number of gems may be unearthed in this way.... ##### We regret the relatively poor repro on interior art, but we lack the money to produce a fancy offset 'zine, or to go overboard with electro-stencils at \$3-\$4 each (wish we could get them for 50¢ ea., like Mike Glicksohn...). It may very well come down to a smaller TWJ, with no interior artwork (save for occasional full-page offset illos and folios)...the artwork (or lack of same) is one of our biggest problems. And as for layout, we'd appreciate any suggestions in this area... we generally are very cramped for space, and usually assume our readers would prefer more material than a fancy layout and lots of unused/uneconomical space. Perhaps we're wrong? (If we get it ready in time, we'll include a reader feedback questionnaire with this--and, if past experience is any indicator, will get two or three back....) --ed.))

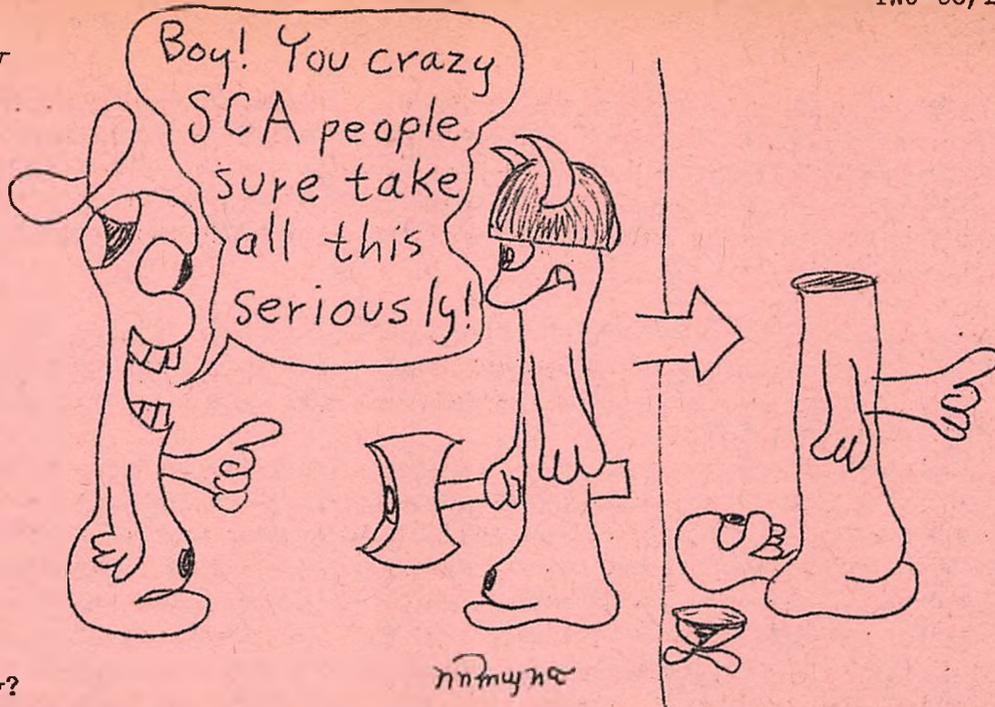
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Lafcadio Miroku, 1406 Tomi Lee Apt. 2, San Jose, CA 95122

(undated)

. . . I am particularly interested in Cordwainer Smith and would like to get the biblio mentioned by Dennis Lien; does anyone have the address of RENAISSANCE? Also, has anyone done a timechart for the Instrumentality series?

The Alien by L.P. Davies is being made into a movie with a big-name cast, although I've heard that there have been production problems. If it comes out it will probably be more of a thriller than an SF film. And whatever is happening with Stranger in a Strange Land? I've been hearing about a proposed movie version for several years now, but nothing definite about production date, or screenplay. Perhaps the Hollywood types were reacting to Manson's publicity by announcing Stranger (I can see the ads now: "See the story that made Manson murder; A story of Love that sowed Death"; Warner Bros. was probably trying to sign

Charlie to play the lead.)  
Stranger could be made into a good movie far more representative of SF than was 2001. It could even start a trend for using SF novels instead of paranoid dreams for SF movies (have you seen any of the 1950's SF films lately? Ugh!).



The Harry Warner article on music was great--more of the same, please. After all, what is a fanzine without Harry Warner, Jr?

About Isaac Asimov's latest book--when will it all end? Will the good Doctor ever suffer writer's block? I work in a public library, and we actually have students doing term papers come up to us and ask, "Do you have a book by Isaac Asimov on.....?" Oddly enough, we usually do. We may be forced into opening a special Isaac Asimov branch to hold all his books. How does that man acquire all his information?--it would seem that he must be spending at least twenty-four hours a day on the typewriter--when does he find time to read?

((Actually, Isaac Asimov is twenty people--ten of them reading, five of them typing, and the other five attending banquets, giving talks/lectures, eating, debating with Harlan Ellison, and chasing pretty girls.... --ed.))

\* \* \* \* \*

III. We Also Heard From --

Scott Kurtz (4017 Clinton Ave., Richmond, VA 23227), who is re-entering fandom after four years' gaffiation, and thinking of moving to N.Y. City (he wants info from fans living in N.Y.--on the housing situation, the crime situation, the employment situation, as well as particulars on the N.Y. fannish scene). He is also considering starting a fanzine, and is seeking articles about the works of Olaf Stapledon (he states, "There will be considerable delay before publication (tentatively as URANUS #3, June 1973) but I'd like to start collecting material right away."). About his fanzine, he further states:

"I hope to put out a fanzine to be titled URANUS--projected contents and emphasis: serious literary criticism (chiefly but not exclusively related to s-f), poetry, a story robin patterned after Last and First Men, book reviews, letters, Socratic dialogues of dual authorship, and (possibly) translations. I hope to put out three (minimum, two) issues while living in New York. . . . I'd also like to let URANUS act as a vehicle for the interchange of ideas between contemporary poets and science fiction writers. . . . What do poets think of s.f.? What is the nature of the misconceptions about the genre which they may or may not hold? And vice versa: what do s.f. writers think of contemporary poetry? How can technocrats be enlightened about the value of radical personalism? Is it possible in turn for young disciples of Allen Ginsberg and the late

Frank O'Hara to come to relish the visions of Disch and Spinrad...or even of Hal Clement? Could Ben Bova and other apostles following in the wake of John Campbell be persuaded to accept the world of Kenneth Patchen and Robert Duncan? If such communion is not possible, then might it not be possible to rationally and systematically elucidate the precise reasons as to why such communion is in fact impossible? etc. etc. etc."

John W. Andrews (2301 E. Foothill Drive, Santa Roas, Ca 95404), who is desperately searching for a listing of a computer program for Space War (any version). His letter was printed in full in THE GAMESLETTER #38, and may also appear in SOTWJ shortly; an excerpt follows:

"Recently, I volunteered to help a group newly-formed in San Francisco. They plan to work on many projects, helping the youth and disadvantaged of San Francisco and immediate Bay Area. Helping people to help themselves, as a popular rather than governmental program. A number of such groups seems to have sprung up in recent years, and, like many of these, the S.F. group is building a computer center, using various odd units of (good) equipment donated or sold at auction. ##### "After the first few weeks, I was suddenly struck by the excess of computing power and peripherals over the knowledge and enthusiasm of the youths hanging around. So I feel that if I got Space War working and let them take it over, it would 'prime the pump' and get them involved; we really need this for an on-going, volunteer community program. Would be very good for these teen-agers to have access to modern technology, etc. . . . ##### "People don't understand the nature of what I'm requesting, or think I should do all the work from scratch, or think I'm trying to steal some great business, industrial secret. . . . ##### "Right now I have time to decipher and debug and have a few volunteers to help me. But soon all that is liable to change, and I'll be on a 70-hour-a-week job again; so without a working version, it's liable to remain a dream and never reach these youths. ##### ". . . I don't care WHAT machine the version was designed for, since it needs plenty of re-programming and we want something the learners can tinker with, etc. So any old machine--though some would be nicer than others. ##### "And if anybody has the wit to make and save PLANS, that would be a bonanza. Of course they may not be well-written. No one knows the dire possibilities of faulty documentation better than I . . . ##### "I will pay postage and reasonable copying costs for such a listing...."

And we heard from Franz Rottensteiner, Mike Ward, and probably lots of others whose letters have gotten buried somewhere in our files because of the long delay since the last TWJ.

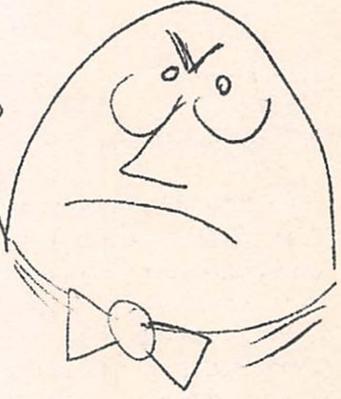
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Re Thish -- Better say what we can now--may lack the space/time elsewhere. Very sorry for long delay in publication of thish (7 months--it was due out May '72!). Caused by many factors--"resignation" of our former publisher, Gary Labowitz, and our inability to find someone else able to run off the many (70) Gestetner stencils we had already typed by that time; the "loss" of the artwork we gave to Jack Chalker back in April to be electro-stencilled (it's still missing, as this is written, so some material had to be pulled out of thish, and some retyped--so artwork is not as varied as it would have been with the missing material); the breakdown of our own mimeo and continuation of our eye problem, which prevented us from running it off earlier (hopefully, the equipment will last long enough for us to complete thish....otherwise, you may not be reading this until 1974....); and a very heavy schedule which seems to be getting worse rather than better....  
##### Something must give; we're down to four 'zines (TWJ and SOTWJ, and their games counterparts TG and TGL), and that's still too many. We don't want to combine TWJ and SOTWJ (and TG and TGL), but TWJ and TG are getting harder and harder to get out, while SOTWJ and TGL are picking up steam, with issues coming out closer and closer together. Comments/suggestions, anyone? -- DLM

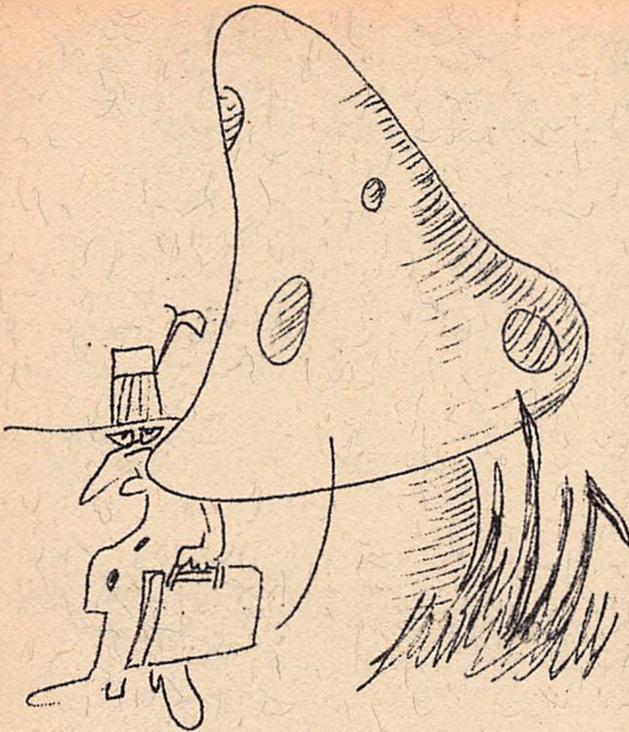
# ARS CRITICA

ISN'T THAT AWFULY  
PRETENTIOUS FOR BOOK  
REVIEWS OF  $\Rightarrow$ YUCK $\Leftarrow$   
SCIENCE-FICTION?

THAT SHOULD  
BE "ARS GRATIA  
CRITICUS"

ARE YOU A  
CRITIC OR AN  
ARS?





I'M TELLING YOU, USHER, THAT MAN  
ISN'T ASLEEP -- HE'S DEAD!

(a review of science fiction,  
fantasy & horror films: 1971)

by Richard Delap

To my mind the most superior film of 1971 was John Schlesinger's Sunday Bloody Sunday, featuring an extraordinarily good cast bringing meaningful life to Penelope Gilliatt's superb study of a bisexual triangle, and dealing with love's frustrations

from every conceivable angle. It heads my list of the year's best films--a list that is always frustrating for me to compile because I live in a part of the country where major films are often delayed for months (this year the delay has kept me from seeing two of the most highly-praised films, The Last Picture Show and A Clockwork Orange)--and months later I cry at not including films which turn out to be among my favorites. For those who want to know, my choices for 1971 (of those I have seen) are as follows:

1. Sunday Bloody Sunday (United Artists)
2. The Panic in Needle Park (20th Century Fox)
3. Walkabout (20th Century Fox)
4. The French Connection (20th Century Fox)
5. Little Murders (20th Century Fox)
6. Death in Venice (Warner Bros.)
7. Carnal Knowledge (Avco Embassy)
8. Drive, He Said (Columbia)
9. McCabo & Mrs. Miller (Warner Bros.)
10. Klute (Warner Bros.)

In regard to this review, it is interesting to note that not a single sf or fantasy film made the final tally (though one sf film came up to the final running, of which more later). Science fiction, in fact, seems to have taken what I hope is only a temporary backslide, while fantasy is surging ahead in graceless form in an alarming stockpile of schlock movies dealing with the supernatural and various forms of grotesque horror, heavily laded with tasteless dollops of sex. Sadism, tortures and unbridled bloodletting seem to be the "in" thing on screens this year, hitting hard in top-notch productions like Get Carter and Straw Dogs, but degenerating all the way down to a disturbing increase of shock items geared only to appeal to the least discriminating audiences.

I've no real objection to violence in films when it seems to be used to a purpose, but I begin to worry a bit when audiences laugh with glee (as they did locally) during Oliver Reed's unsavory torture scenes in Ken Russell's The Devils; and a movie currently making the rounds, Mark of the Devil, is packing them in in

New England with an ad campaign featuring a woman whose tongue is about to be torn out of her head. A little honest "pornographic" sex comes as a pleasurable relief after such as this, and it seems to me there's a lot less harm in watching some robust lovemaking than in watching people being smashed into pulp. However, it is proving very difficult to pin down the reasons for the popularity of violence. The liberalization of sexual material in films was thought by some to be the way to decrease violence; sadly, the opposite seems to be happening. I still strongly oppose censorship, in any form and of any form, but I am deeply troubled when I see audiences queuing up in long lines to see horror-filled films, then reacting with delight to things which should have them shuddering in horror and disgust. Undoubtedly, as is said, these are troubled times....

But enough of this lecture! I believe it sets the tone for much of the discussion that follows, but now it's time to get down to specifics and see what our special genre has offered in 1971.

As if to give audiences a taste of what to expect in the coming months, Cine-mation started the year off with an aptly-titled duo, I Drink Your Blood and I Eat Your Skin. Never quite as horrendous as the titles imply--could anything be?--both films were cheap exploitation programmers of the kind that rack up a few profitable weeks on the drive-in grind and then are immediately forgotten by everyone but the happy producers. And for those who found the titles of the above duo a bit too much for their queasy stomachs, Crown International had Blood Mania, a slightly quieter title for a film of about the same artistic level--i.e., that of the sewer. Quieter yet in name was UMC's The Night Visitor, a suspense item featuring Max von Sydow as an asylum escapee who seems to have some nasty revenge murders in mind. It wasn't too well done, considering the excellent talent involved in its making, and failed to spark any box office excitement.

Warner Bros. gave some colorful promotion to the newest Hammer film, When Dinosaurs Ruled the Earth, and it seemed to do adequately well--what with the great beasts to lure the kids, and a scantily-clad blonde with breasts quivering to escape the binding animal skins to lure their poppas. The film was not meant to appeal to anyone with even a smidgen of sense, and it certainly didn't; but, for those who dig the blonde or the dinosaurs or the sight of the creation of the moon--all crammed into one impossible era--I suppose this kind of nonsense was enough to keep them out of the harried housewives' hair for a couple of hours.

There could have been a lot of confusion between American International's The House That Screamed and Cinerama's The House That Dripped Blood, as both reached the market at about the same time. "Blood" seemed to be the magic word, however, for the former dropped into the bottom half of double-bills with hardly a whisper (fortunately for star Lilli Palmer, a good actress who has been in several too many of these nitwit items lately), while the latter rode the red flow straight to the bank. Blood was not that much better a picture, being a careless compilation scripted (and adapted from stories) by Robert Bloch--who received his just desserts by getting his name misspelled in all the film's advertising, ha ha--but audiences seemed to find some fun in the ill-balanced blend of humor and horror, and obviously weren't too fussy about the artistry of it all.

For those with no interest in screaming and/or dripping houses, New World Pictures offered a color-full double-bill, Beast of the Yellow Night and Creature with the Blue Hand, both of which I feel I was probably fortunate in avoiding. I wasn't so lucky with American International's Blood and Lace. This one marked a return to the screen of Gloria Grahame after an absence of several years, and she would have been well-advised to stay away rather than reappear in this poorly-written and even more poorly-produced drivel about a mad schoolmistress with a

houseful of imprisoned youngsters and a cellarful of bodies in cold storage. As a climactic shock, the script absently throws in a plot twist about incest, as disgustingly inept as the rest of the film.

Late winter premiered the first "class" item of the year, Robert Wise's adaptation of Michael Crichton's bestseller, The Andromeda Strain. The plot dealt with an alien bacteriological form brought to Earth on a crashed space capsule, a strain so deadly that it wipes out an entire town in a matter of hours and reproduces at such a rapid rate that it seems even the most careful control and isolation can keep it checked for only a limited period. The scientists work desperately to isolate, identify and destroy the strain; the director has a lot of fun showing off the breathtaking technological paraphernalia of a huge underground laboratory, while the cast plods through the sometimes weary paces of finding the key to the virulence of the alien organism (involving the pH level of the blood). The film does a reasonable job of keeping technical jargon at a minimum and giving the non-technical audience enough basic laboratory science to keep them from getting completely lost. Of course, while slipping in the science here, and building the suspense there, something is bound to suffer--in this case it happens to be the characters, most of whom are indistinguishable from one another (with the exception of Beryl Reid, whose portrayal of an acid-tongued, crusty lady scientist with epilepsy--which is smoothly and believably plotted into the final suspense-laden moments--is a real delight). The film is immeasurably aided by exceptionally good production values, including a fine electronic music score by Gil Melle, and while the story is never very engaging on a human level, it does manage a loosely-constructed but moderately good sustainment of suspense, and is an entertaining if not outstanding film.

The Andromeda Strain had a lot of publicity and made a substantial profit for Universal, while at the same time Warner Bros. had a small jewel on their hands that made them nervous enough to slip it on and off the market so fast that no one even seemed to know it was around. THX 1138 was a remarkably clever and ingenious work from a young student, George Lucas, who with the backing of well-known scripter/director Francis Ford Coppola expanded it from a short film he made while in college. The basics of the film are yet another variation of the 1984 theme--in this instance, a rigidly-structured technological society in which every person is kept under close surveillance by electronic eyes, computerized data, and a robot police force; where children are bottle-bred and child-birth is a crime; where people are mere cogs in a giant machine, pacified with drugs and labeled with numbers. The title character revolts, is captured and punished, and escapes to find his world has been driven to such stringent controls because it has no room for expansion. It is completely enclosed under ground, because above ground the earth has been rendered unfit for human life--as THX 1138 finds when he finally emerges from the labyrinth to the surface.

Familiar material, perhaps, but Lucas polishes it up impressively with a tight, unpatronizing script, excellent production values (equal to Andromeda's and at only a fraction of the cost) and a fine--albeit mostly unknown--cast. Loaded with imaginative and logical touches (such as the chillingly dehumanized survival of religion and the "humane" robot police), the film manages to satirize while involving the viewer on a dramatic level, dazzling the eye as well with bizarre white-on-white sets and snazzy editing that keeps the story from rambling where it so often could. The film is really outstanding in so many ways that one only wishes its plot weren't quite so familiar; but it's a close runner-up to the year's best and should easily make the Hugo list if only enough fans caught up with it before it disappeared completely. Lucas gets a B+, while Warners gets an F for fumbling the distribution end of it.

If spring is a time for fresh greens, one wonders why the film industry keeps coming up with wilted salads. The small distributors were out in force, with more tasteless dishes than one could shake a bloody steak knife at. Cannon Films served up Blood on Satan's Claw and Beast in the Cellar, which didn't do much business, and with good reason. Fanfare uncovered Simon, King of the Witches and Columbia Loosed The Brotherhood of Satan, both of which were hyped to display a link with the headlining Charles Manson (though not as strongly or as tastelessly as a later Troy Donahue vehicle, Sweet Savior, which may take the prize as one of the most vile films of the year). Neither film was of much interest, though both managed to do a moderate business.

Fanfare released an item imported from Italy and titled War Between the Planets, and if the atrocious dubbing didn't send you fleeing from the theatre, the moronic comic-book plot and crude special effects were sure to do so. Maron had something titled The Cult, about which I know nothing at all; Columbia had a programmer titled Fragment of Fear, a routine suspense yarn; Boxoffice International, a distributor specializing in sexploitation products, did some last-minute cutting to get an R rating for Wilbur and the Baby Factory, an awesomely awful fantasy-sex farce in which a group of scientists tries to create the ultimate stud; and MGM's Percy was a tawdry and wearisome fantasy about a penis transplant, surprisingly uninteresting despite the racy subject.

The company with a good track record for getting the most cash out of cheaply-made, second-rate horror and SF flicks, American International, gave a fast playoff to some junk called The Incredible 2-Headed Transplant, which I assume was turned out on a low enough budget to make a profit from an obviously limited appeal. The company made some fine profits, however, on a Vincent Price vehicle filmed in England as "Dr. Phibes", released with an added adjective as The Abominable Dr. Phibes and backed with ads spoofing the then-popular Love Story. Unfortunately, the film was too silly to be scary and much too strained to be very funny--but with Mr. Price camping it up as a mad doctor seeking revenge for his wife's death by killing off those he holds responsible with his own twisted version of the Plagues of Egypt, audiences responded to it very warmly and shelled out enough money so that the sequel is now scheduled for 1972. One can only hope the second film will show a bit more finesse and a bit less camp.



TURKISH BAT

20th Century Fox promoted the black magic angle of The Mephisto Waltz but never did manage to make a go of it. The subtleties of Fred Mustard Stewart's novel got lost in the film version, and what was left was a confused and confusing muddle which was forever missing the mark of true terror--mostly because of director Paul Wendkos' preference for cheap visual tricks over sustained suspense. While there was no fantasy element to MGM's The Night Digger, the screenplay was penned by famed fantasist Roald Dahl expressly as a vehicle for his wife, Patricia Neal. Yet the suspense element of this murder story was so diffused that neither Neal nor the picture managed to survive it with much dignity.

Straightforward SF turned up in two pictures, but in Columbia's Brother John one would hardly know it, as the version that finally reached the screen was drastically edited from the original. (Leo P. Kelley wrote a novelization for Avon that is reputed to explain away the vagueness of the film.) Sidney Poitier gave a satisfactory performance as the title character, a man who returns to his home town after an absence of several years, imbued with strange powers and mouth-  
ing even stranger (and rather ominous) portents of things to come. The original idea was that he had been in contact with an alien race, but the final film cut discards all the SF-nal aspects of the story, and leaves the man merely mystical. 20th Century Fox sent out the latest in its popular series, Escape from the Planet of the Apes, and if anyone was glad to see everybody die at the end of the horrid (but money Money Money!-making) preceding picture, they simply didn't realize that people--or, in this case, apes--don't really die in serials, they just do a good imitation of it. Escape wasn't quite as bad as Beneath, but it was still a far cry from the vigor and exciting drive of the first film. This time around everybody dies again, as if to prove that modern America is no place for intelligent apes to find happiness, leaving behind one small ape-child to find a place in a world of hostile humans. I suppose next year, about this time...  
\*sigh\*

Summer opened with a couple of fantasy offerings for the "whole family"--i.e., "G" ratings, which spell almost instantaneous death for anything but a Disney film. (And even Disney products sometimes die of it--like how many people went to see Scandalous John, which even a genuine Rod McKuen musical score couldn't save from disaster?)

Paramount's Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory got a mixed reception from the critics, but the ones who liked it seemed to like it very much, and the film did seem to offer plenty to keep family audiences happy. But a good cast, plush production and even plusher promotion from sponsor Quaker Oats did little to interest filmgoers, who avoided this fantasy like the plague. And if Willy Wonka was a plague, MGM's Peter Rabbit and Tales of Beatrix Potter had to be the Black Death. The Potter stories provided a base for what was supposed to be a family "cultural" experience, as dancers in elaborate animal masks pranced and leaped and cavorted for a couple of hours--until one began to wonder just how much sweat those obviously heavy costumes could soak up. Fantasy fans who did manage to catch either of these films during its brief run likely found its entertainment value very much a matter of individual taste.

For those interested in more standard fare, Levitt-Pickman released four features during the summer--The Man Who Haunted Himself, Horror of Frankenstein, Scars of Dracula, and Lust for a Vampire--none of which I managed to catch, but none of which I will grieve over unduly. Columbia had the British-made Creatures the World Forgot, and pushed it out as a supporting item for double-bills--exactly the right spot for such a mediocrity. Maron made a nice showing in New York and the New England areas with Daughters of Darkness, in which Delphine Seyrig left behind the ambiguities of Last Year at Marienbad and progressed (regressed?) to some very definite grapplings with sadism, vampirism and Lesbianism, splashed generously with lots and lots of blood. Ok, I suppose, if you really dig that sort of artsy-craftsy excuse for the same thing Hammer's been doling out for years....

On the borderline were National General's The Light at the Edge of the World and United Artists' What's the Matter with Helen? The former was a violent (rated GP, naturally) unpleasant and plodding adaptation of a Jules Verne story. It moved so slowly that I left to go to the john, smoke a cigarette and buy some refreshments, then returned to find the same scene still going with the dialogue

seemingly worrying the same subject--Lord knows what the rest of the audience endured while I was out. The latter film was a fairly good horror-suspense item starring Debbie Reynolds and Shelley Winters as the mothers of boys convicted of murder, who leave together for the golden California of the early '30's to find a new life, but instead find only agony from an unseen terrorist who threatens them with revenge for their sons' sins. The script by Henry (What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?) Farrell was a little too easily unravelled to be completely successful as a mystery story, but the period setting was nicely handled and director Curtis Harrington, who's had an on-again/off-again success with this type of film, coaxed an excellent performance out of Miss Reynolds. She even managed to walk away with the film in spite of a spirited performance by Miss Winters, who's a pro at this sort of thing by now.

American International imported Yog--Monster From Space from Japan, suitably dubbed and edited for the American market--the kind of thing one suspects that little country of shipping out as continued punishment for Hiroshima. Boxoffice International's Roseland received a lot of ballyhoo in PLAYBOY and other magazines which make note of films specializing in skin display, but for all its supposed titillation in a fantasy-dream world where the inhabitants cavort around a giant phallic symbol, the film was a poorly conceived and entirely worthless piece of junk. And speaking of skin flicks, New World's Scream of the Demon Lover, an import from Italy, may have cribbed a lot of its plot from Shelley and Lovecraft, but the naked flesh of the blonde and beautiful leading lady was a very 1970's touch, guaranteed to keep the voyeurs watching...while everyone else goes quietly to sleep. As co-feature, The Velvet Vampire displayed even more skin--two leading ladies and a leading man who kept trying to show even more than the women--but somehow a female vampire secluded on a desert ranch in the American Southwest would be difficult enough even for an experienced cast to handle, much less the poseur amateurs gracing (or disgracing) this film. A woman directed this one, which may explain the prominence of male nakedness, but only seems to prove that women assess the lecher audience in the same light as male directors--and who can blame them?

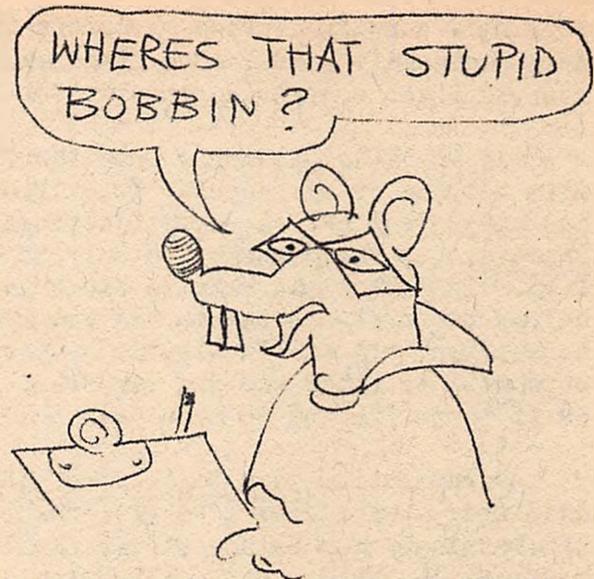
American International came up with a highly stylized Murders in the Rue Morgue--one more film made to cash in on the drawing power of the Edgar Allan Poe name, but having no more than a peripheral relation to anything Poe wrote. This one was made in Germany and featured a cast of impressive names--Jason Robards, Lilli Palmer, Herbert Lom--but in the end it proved to be merely one more treadmill epic in the tradition of most filmed Poe. Lots of color, lots of melodrama, lots of time wasted.

During the summer three films managed an impressive box office showing. Cinema 5's The Hellstrom Chronicle was a quasi-fictional documentary which turned a high-power lens on the insect world, a world which has survived since the beginning and seems likely to outlive any other life on Earth. The photography was remarkable, the subject matter interestingly offbeat, and the film held the attention in all but some ludicrously clumsy scenes in which an actor portrays a scientist who predicts the eventual supremacy of the insects.

Warner Bros. could almost forget the failure of THX 1138 when their next SF effort, The Omega Man, rang up dollar signs all across the country. It was the second film version of Richard Matheson's classic "I Am Legend" (the first being a low-budget black-and-whiter made in Italy, a complete failure starring Vincent Price, which also rejected the fine Matheson title and died as The Last Man on Earth). Charlton Heston had the title role this time and didn't come off any better than Price. At least in the Price film one could recognize the plot, but this new version discards the vampire theme entirely and substitutes a race of mutants sensitive to light, the product of a catastrophic bacteriological war.

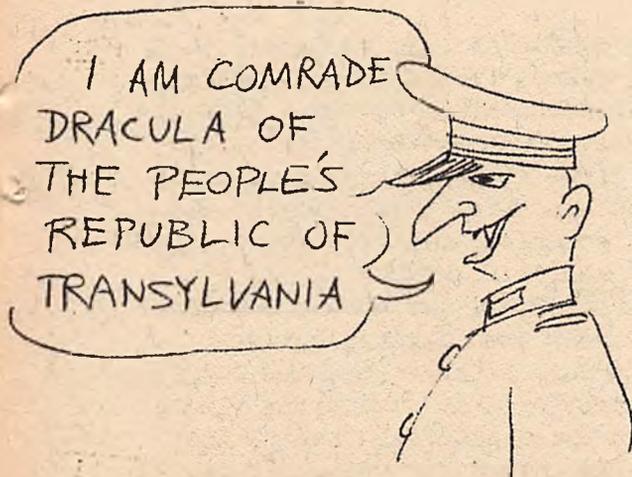
The only thing worse than the pervading silliness of it all was the sight of Heston striking martyr poses for the benefit of those too dense to see the simplistic parallels of the plot. At best the film was merely forgettable; at worse, offensive.

Cinerama tested various advertising campaigns in testruns around the country, finally deciding that a picture of a rat wouldn't frighten away too many potential customers, and emerging with the surprise "sleeper" of the year: Willard. No one could have been more surprised than I, as I had seen the film months earlier at a sneak preview and had decided that this adaptation of Stephen Gilbert's "Ratman's Notebooks" was an erratic, minimally suspenseful and probably doomed item in which the only actors deserving of praise were (literally) a couple of rats. But audiences were unconcerned with the stereotyped humans, and found plenty to delight them as Willard used his army of beasties to frighten his enemies, disrupt a garden party, and, finally, commit gruesome murder. The picture was an absolute smash, and 1972 will bring a sequel, Ben--and any humans foolish enough to pit their talents against those scene-stealing animals deserve to go unnoticed.



There was yet another rash of cheapies, a few of which were lucky enough to be used by major theatre chains to fill empty slots in their schedules when they suffer from a lack of major product. I managed to catch Boxoffice International's Mantis in Lace, a very poor horror-sex flic about a girl with a hangup on murder; and the rest, judging from the titles, will surely come and go with the brevity of a match in the night--but nowhere near the brightness: Guess What Happened to Count Dracula?, Super Argo and the Faceless Giants, The Wizard of Gore, The Corpse Grinders, Flesh Feast, Dr. Frankenstein on Campus, Frankenstein's Bloody Terror, The Body Beneath, Guru the Mad Monk, The Reincarnate, Night of the Witches. And for those with a real taste for the red stuff: Brain of Blood, Horror of the Blood Monsters, Nightmare Blood Bath, Blood of Ghastly Horror...obvious, isn't it, the intense time and trouble a producer will take to insure his picture stands out by title alone?....

Last year's abominable Count Yorga, Vampire made so much money for American International that they decided to finance a sequel--and the result, The Return of Count Yorga, is that rarity in filmmaking, a sequel far superior to the film which spawned it. This sequel had the advantage of an increased budget (which shows in every frame), a much tighter story construction, a cast with the ability to inject some tongue-in-cheek humor without destroying their characterizations entirely, and some of the finest horror scenes to come along all year--including a marvelously photographed and edited scene in which an entire family falls prey to ravenous vampires, and a slick conclusion that



ends on a sustained pitch of paralyzing shock. The film isn't a classic, but as even reasonably good horror films are in such short supply these days, this one must be given a high recommendation.

If anything was worse than the first Yorga film, it could only have been the film version of the popular television series, House of Dark Shadows. This, too, had a good box office reception around the country, but its sequel, Night of Dark Shadows, has the distinction only of being as insultingly stupid as the first film. This time the vampire theme is discarded--what is it this year that impelled two pictures to put the vampires out to grave pasture?--in favor of spirit possession, yet the film gains nothing in quality and was likely a great disappointment to those who dig vampires. The film went under very fast, and it looks as if there will be no more Dark Shadows...much to my delight.

Paramount's Let's Scare Jessica to Death, a psychological suspenser, returned a tidy profit from a small investment, but this was surely more likely because of the spooky and rather clever advertising campaign than the content of this mediocre and bothersomely illogical melodrama. Crown International's Point of Terror had a very few playdates in the northeast, but has yet to enter a very wide release pattern. The same fate seems to have befallen UMC's Glen and Randa, which received quite a bit of publicity but a very divided critical reception, and apparently is having a hard time getting playdates (possibly because of the limiting "X" rating). Two more double-bills, Cannon's Cauldron of Blood and Crucible of Horror, and Maron's Godzilla's Revenge and Island of the Burning Damned, were slipping in and out of theatres about this time. The lucky ones missed them all.

Clint Eastwood, voted the most popular male star of the year in a recent poll of the nation's exhibitors, both directed and starred in Universal's Play Misty for Me (1971's answer to Psycho, the number one and as yet unbeaten classic of psychological horror). Even without the comparison, though, Eastwood's film is not very good. It has too much of the wrong things--endless and boring panoramic views of Southern California, a script which is relevant to the plot in only about one scene out of ten, a performance by Eastwood which shows he can't even direct himself--which negates the few good things--a very nicely-sustained performance by Jessica Walter, an acceptable excuse for introducing a wide variety of music (Eastwood is a disc jockey), and several well-done scenes of key suspense. The film would be aided immeasurably by shearing the running time of 20 or more minutes, for as it stands now it plays out much too slowly and only stutters its way into its erratic moments of terror.

Walt Disney Productions, hoping to once more snare the huge audiences that lined up in enchantment for the fantasy of Mary Poppins, traded in Julie Andrews for Angela Lansbury in their latest live-action-plus-animation feature, Bedknobs and Broomsticks. The Sherman Brothers didn't duplicate their successful score for the Poppins picture, and while the film was braced with some lovely special effects, the unmemorable music and plodding script succeeded in slowing it all down to an unlively crawl. In a more adult vein, Columbia presented Henry Jaglom's time-fragmented puzzle of fantasy, A Safe Place, a film which I haven't had a chance to see and am still awaiting anxiously. There are also a few elements of fantasy laced throughout United Artists' zany extravaganza by Frank Zappa, 200 Motels, most of which are strictly from surrealism--sometimes funny, sometimes not. It's difficult to describe since nothing ever stands still long enough to give the viewer much of a look. And for those who feel they're too sophisticated for Disney but not quite sophisticated enough for Jaglom or Zappa, Fanfare crossed the horror and motorcycle genres to come up with Werewolves on Wheels--and anyone who will go to a picture with a title like that may even like

it, although the combination may confuse those who are more comfortable with hairy faces in one film and cycles in another.

Perhaps it was inadvertant, but Sherpix's re-release of an old Warner Bros. film, House of Wax, was a good example to the modern filmmakers (who go for excess that often sickens rather than terrifies) of how to make a fun horror picture. Vincent Price skulked around the dark corners of a morgue and wax museum, murdering one here and one there and finally trapping the heroine, Phyllis Kirk, in a basement where he planned to preserve her beauty in scalding wax. One can imagine how the film would turn out today--Miss Kirk's implied nudity in the climactic scene would have been more than implied (and surely far less impressive), and Price's horribly disfigured face would surely get more exposure (and thereby become too familiar to frighten an audience). This was one of the first films in 3-Dimension, and though the new single-filmstrip 3-D process lessens technical problems, the glasses are definitely still an eyestrain. The film should be a treat for young audiences who have never seen it...and a lesson to producers that real terror comes from understatement and the audience's imagination.

Closing out the year we had a British version of Hansel and Gretel in modern dress, American International's Whoever Slew Auntie Roo?--shortened to "Who Slew..." in the ads--in which Shelley Winters ravenously chews the scenery under Curtis Harrington's indulgent direction. Mark Lester is much too old now for his counterpart role of Hansel, but Chloe Franks makes an appealing Gretel; and Miss Winters, as a dotty and dangerous old lady who stuffs the children with goodies and mourns over the mouldering corpse of her long-dead daughter, seems to feel no guilt over stealing scenes from young babes. It's an awfully silly picture, and it loses most of its suspense in a too leisurely buildup and annoyingly simplistic fairytale parallels. But watching Winters wail from pantry to attic of her "gingerbread house" is entertaining enough to make it almost watchable.

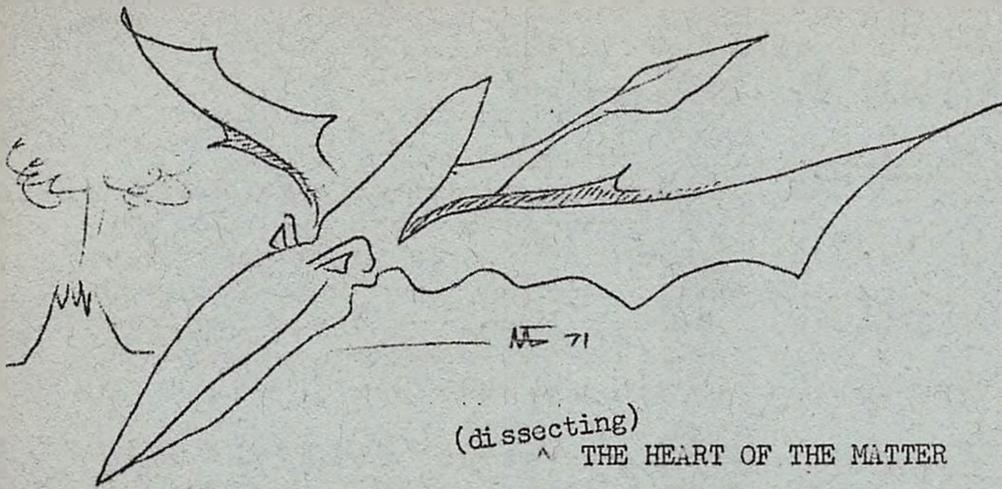
And at last came the widely-publicized new work from Stanley Kubrick, A Clockwork Orange, adapted from Anthony Burgess' much-praised novel, and Kubrick's first film since the runaway success of 2001: A Space Odyssey. The distributor, Warner Bros., is giving this film a very slow and careful playoff, however, since Kubrick has a contractual stipulation to make the final cut, and forced Warners to accept the "X" rating for both nudity and violence. The film opened just in time to qualify it for Oscar nominations, is opening in the larger cities during the late winter and spring, and will not reach really wide distribution until late spring or early summer. For this reason I have yet to see it, though most of the critics have found it a brilliant work and I am very much inclined to accept their word simply on my confidence in Kubrick. As with 2001, there will be lots of controversy, but little doubt that the money is going to roll in thick and fast.

1971 wasn't a distinctive year for SF/fantasy films, but there are few years which ever offered more than two or three memorable movies, so I suppose there's not much room for complaint. But I remember the day when I honestly looked forward to a new film from Hammer ('member those days?), and the days when quiet little programmers turned out to have flashes of brilliance, and the days when some people in the film world presumed that audiences had at least some common sense and a little bit of ability to use it. I think those people were right--the question is: are they still right? Am I paranoid to think that someone is chopping away at my optimism with a bloodstained kitchen cleaver? Those groans and gurgles--are they just in my imagination? Oh, my, I hope so....

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I Eat Your Skin (Cinematic) -- 2  
The Incredible 2-Headed Transplant  
(American-International) -- 4  
Island of the Burning Damned (Maron)  
Klute (Warner Bros) -- 1 / 7 -- 8  
Let's Scare Jessica to Death (Para-  
mount) -- 8  
The Light at the End of the World  
(National General) -- 5-6  
Little Murders (20th Cent. Fox) -- 1  
The Last Picture Show (?) -- 1
- Lust for a Vampire (L-P) -- 5  
Mantis in Lace (Boxoffice Int'l) -- 7  
The Man Who Haunted Himself (L-P) -- 5  
Mark of the Devil (Hallmark) -- 1-2  
McCabe & Mrs. Miller (WB) -- 1  
The Mephisto Waltz (Fox) -- 4  
Murders in the Rue Morgue (AI) -- 6  
The Night Digger (MGM) -- 4  
Nightmare Blood Bath (II) -- 7  
Night of Dark Shadows (MGM) -- 8  
Night of the Witches (Medford) -- 7  
The Night Visitor (UMC) -- 2  
The Omega Man (Warner Bros) -- 6-7  
The Panic in Needle Park (Fox) -- 1  
Percy (MGM) -- 4  
Peter Rabbit and the Tales of Beatrix  
Potter (MGM) -- 5  
Play Misty for Me (Universal) -- 8  
Point of Terror (Crown Int'l) -- 8  
The Reincarnate (?) -- 7  
The Return of Count Yorga (AI) -- 7-8
- Roseland (Boxoffice Int'l) -- 6  
A Safe Place (Columbia) -- 8  
Scandalous John (Walt Disney) -- 5  
Scars of Dracula (L-P) -- 5  
Scream of the Demon Lover (NW) -- 6  
Simon, King of the Witches (Fanfare) -- 4  
Straw Dogs (?) -- 1  
Sunday Bloody Sunday (United Artists) -- 1  
Super Argo and the Faceless Giants  
(?) -- 7  
Sweet Savior (?) -- 5  
THX 1138 (Warner Bros) -- 3  
200 Motels (United Artists) -- 8  
The Velvet Vampire (New World) -- 6  
Walkabout (20th Century Fox) -- 1  
Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory  
(Paramount) -- 5  
War Between the Planets (Fanfare) -- 4  
Werewolves on Wheels (Fanfare) -- 8-9  
What's the Matter with Helen? (United  
Artists) -- 5-6
- When Dinosaurs Ruled the Earth (WB) -- 2  
Whoever Slew Auntie Roo? (AI) -- 9  
Wilbur and the Baby Factory (BI) -- 4  
Willard (Cinerama) -- 7  
The Wizard of Gore (?) -- 7  
Yog--Monster from Space (AI) -- 6
- Earlier releases mentioned: Beneath the  
Planet of the Apes, 5; Count Yorga, Vam-  
pire, 7; House of Dark Shadows, 9; The  
Last Man on Earth, 6; Last Year at Mari-  
anbad, 5; Love Story, 4; Mary Poppins, 8;  
Psycho, 8; 2001: A Space Opera, 9.



Prozine  
Reviews

(dissecting)  
^ THE HEART OF THE MATTER

Operational Procedures  
Supervised by  
Richard Delap

Magazines for NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1971

AMAZING STORIES and FANTASTIC:

AMAZING STORIES -- NOVEMBER:

Serial:

The Wrong End of Time (part one) -- John Brunner.

Short Stories:

To End All Wars -- Gordon Eklund.

An Earthman ignores the local curfew and is imprisoned by the natives of a planet where an endless, mysterious war rages on and on. The man soon finds himself representing "the Enemy" in peace negotiations that seem no more than baffling games of time consumption. Eklund's basic puzzle is not a bad idea, really, but his treatment is much too abrupt to give either his characters or the situation any development in which the author's string-pulling is not painfully obvious. Fair.

Road Factory -- W. Macfarlane.

One of the things I've always liked about Macfarlane's better stories is his ability to handle dialogue, from the witty farce of his WBY series to the subtle intensity of stories like this one of a farmer from Earth who is hired to turn an alien world from barrenness to production. A farmer, however, must know more than simply coaxing plants from the ground, and this one finds his all-around knowledge coming in very handy indeed. It's a very slick story, with major concerns appearing at odd angles, and though it doesn't offer much literal action it offers a lot of action for the brain. Interesting.

In Man's Image -- Terry Carr.

Carr takes three of sf's hoariest clichés--the end of the world (pollution, again), the last man on Earth, and robots presiding over the wasted world left by humans--tosses them together like a mad chef, and in a few minutes turns out a main dish which surprisingly and pleasingly surpasses the routine ingredients. And even at its most profane, the story supports the theory that whatever is created "in man's image" must necessarily reflect more than just the errors and ugliness. Even at its most irrelevant or unsuccessful, beauty must peek through now and again. Very good.

Article:

John W. Campbell: The Writing Years (reprint: 1963) -- Sam Moskowitz.

Science:

Man's Best Friend -- Greg Benford & David Book.

FANTASTIC -- DECEMBER:

Serial:

The Dramaturges of Yan (conclusion) -- John Brunner.

Short Stories:

The Awesome Menace of the Polarizer -- Geo. Alec Effinger.

Effinger tries valiantly to make his spoof of the comicbook "superhero" fulfill a double purpose--first, to set a firm tongue in cheek and detail the adventures of Rod Marquand (alias The Iguana) in his battle with an evil villain who seeks world domination, and second, to inject some off-the-cuff mocking of nostalgia and childish, simple pleasure. The effort is rather reckless, however, and decidedly out of control, so in the end he produces a lump of gray matter which isn't anything at all. Good try, kid, but....

Things Are Tough All Over -- Ted White.

Pay no attention to the title--it's as empty as most of White's attempts at irony. The story, however, isn't empty, not in the sense that it displays exactly what is most bothersome about White's recent series of speculations on a bleak future. There is no plot, but instead a clumsy effort to impress the reader with the horrors of prejudice and self-deception, here with an America winning a war against the "Chinks" and now saddled with two billion refugees. You can't feed them all, but you can let them feed you, if you work it right. Written strictly for shock, it fails even that. Poor.

Cartoon -- Jack M. Dann.

This story lacks what its title implies, clarity, color and sharpness, and bitterly offers a contrast of doom and inexplicit emotion. It concerns the plight of an old man whose delusions center on a television cartoon, a brick wall being built over the exit from his room, and mysterious suggestions from an unknown source about the best escape from reality. It's all very sinister but lacks the definition which could give it clarity and impact.

Garden of Eden -- Jack C. Haldeman, II.

This seems to be the issue for ironic titles, as well as their misapplication. This one features an unfoundedly grim and pessimistic alternative to the promises of freedom from constraint propounded by the "youth movement", a future in which the youth ideals melt away in a drug-induced haze. It's simply a contemporary but poorly thought-out variation of 1984, touched occasionally with sharp phrases--"Nothing rolls so slow as a nation in its death throes"--but nevertheless extremely shallow and silly.

Wires -- Gardner R. Dozois.

Dozois repeats himself with this story in which the situation parallels that in his "A Dream at Noonday" (in Orbit 7), but the tack is different and I think this story is the superior one. Both concern the thoughts of a man up to and at (and beyond?) the moment of death; but here Dozois makes no use of the mawkish nostalgia which marred the first story and lines his sights up on a delicate balance between philosophy and reality, a taut wire of satirical sanity pulled through a flux of conflicting polarities. Good.

Reprint:

Mademoiselle Butterfly (1942) -- Don Wilcox.

Article:

SF in Dimension: SF and Academia -- Alexei Panshin.

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ANALOG:

NOVEMBER:

Serial:

Hierarchies (conclusion) -- John T. Phillifent.

Novelettes:

And Silently Vanish Away -- Glen Bever.

Bever's story of the re-emergence of psi talents in man, through the use of a new chemical discovery, suffers from a severe schizophrenia. On the one hand it ladles out its scientific speculations in unwieldy bunches of technological jargon, while on the other it tries to convey the dilemma of the involved lab personnel (vs. the nosy interest by and eventual force from world governments determined to obtain the formula) with a low humor that consistently takes advantage of the scientific end. The reader, never quite knowing whether to laugh with or at the author, can expect to finish either confused or annoyed--or worst of all, both.

The Old Man of Ondine -- Terrence MacKann.

In settling new worlds, technological mishaps are bound to occur, with the possibilities of future "legends" spring from their mysterious results a good probability. At least, that's the method MacKann uses to plant some bigger-than-life mythology in what is otherwise a slow-stepping journey through a poorly-interlaced group of trite old ideas. Josun Pace, a busy executive on the waterworld Ondine, finds a series of current disasters--a threat of sudden pollution, an old schizophrenic (in a society which vaccinates against mental disorders) rescued from isolation and who then disappears, and a young pilot involved in an air disaster--are somehow linked. And while the author tries to keep the mystery engaging by switching viewpoints back and forth, he only succeeds in giving away too much too soon, and never explains the mechanics of his play with time and space with anything better than vague analogy. As speculative science, it's ridiculous; as drama, it's contrived; as entertainment, it's null and void.

Short Stories:

Compulsion Worse Confounded -- Robert Chilson.

A food production company finds itself backed into a corner when its supercomputer, Archimage, reveals its actions are not entirely within the concept of its programming. Combing out the bugs turns up a secretary stealing computer time to assess romantic interests, a rival company unknowingly creating a public health hazard, and a tedious run through the usual predictabilities.

Holding Action -- Andrew M. Stephenson.

Alternate tracks for alternate worlds--but how do you protect your own when it's discovered the variations are minor and catastrophe for one heralds catastrophe for the others? One world has found a way through Time Gates, but even then it demands a constant watch for breakthrough time travelers who unwittingly bring destruction with them. The concluding tangle of self-preservation tactics and humanitarianism proves much too complicated for the easy resolution offered here. Routine.

The Nothing Venireman One -- W. Macfarlane.

"Chinoiserie was a glorious world"--so begins the description of a planet where everyone is happy and content, where nothing ever goes wrong. But there's something wrong with such perfection, and saboteur Roslyn Martin finds herself deep in Earth's attempts to change this world, even though she can't figure out how or exactly why. Her confusion is as intense as the reader's--both are dragged willy-nilly through devious trails that have lots of action but not much sense. Dull.

Science:

In Quest of a Humanlike Robot -- Margaret L. Silbar.

DECEMBER:

Serial:

A Spaceship for the King (part one) -- Jerry Pournelle.

Novelettes:

Foundlings Father -- Jack Wodhams.

Early in the story, ostensibly referring to space travel, Wodhams capsulizes his theme simply: "There was an odd element of seeming to do things back-

wards to arrive at what was to become familiar process." A puritan group from Earth has established the sort of society they cherish on a distant planet, and react with much displeasure when forced to share their world with another splinter group. This new settlement of naked, uninhibited people provides a cultural clash that progressively builds until both groups are scrambling to make use of the technology they had hoped to abandon in this new paradise. The sad thing here is that Wodhams eschews the opportunities for subtle humor and plays for pratfalls, none of it spontaneous and most of it misguided. Disappointing.

Just Peace -- William Rupp & Vernor Vinge.

Chente, a representative of Earth, arrives on New Canada in a "duplicate transport" body--a form of cloning, I gather, since the authors never clarify--a second arrival for him, as his first duplicate has been murdered. His objective is to bring about an alliance between the warring peoples of this planet, each catering to different social ideals and both anxious to make use of the technology of Earth for their own victory. To complicate matters, New Canada is doomed to a "core collapse" which will bring widespread destruction and death for all unless the people unify to build safeguards against the coming cataclysm. Chente's solution is simple--it's implementing it that proves to be a struggle. There's a lot of action-adventure to make the social philosophy palatable, culminating in a blood-and-thunder sea battle that is preposterous but lots of fun and leaves an open end for sequels.

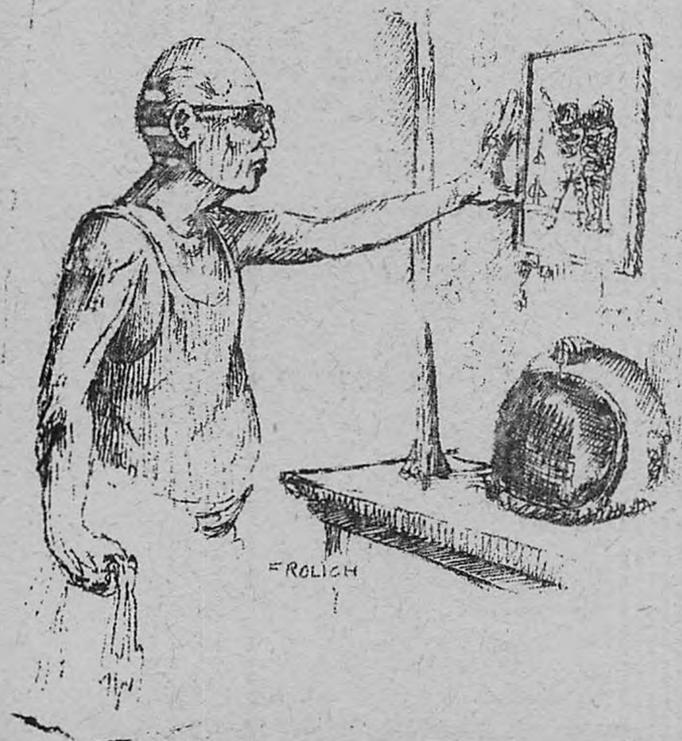
Short Stories:

The Incompetent -- Chris Butler.

Shortly after the arrival of the 21st century, the U.S. and Russia are battling a war in which the casualties are few (mostly freak accidents), actual fighting non-existent, and spies number in the hundreds of thousands. Prosperous economy seems to be the only purpose to this pseudo-war, and everything runs smoothly until the U.S. introduces an unexpected element--the most incompetent spy in existence. Geared for bellylaughs, the story works moderately well until the ending comes face to face with an arbitrarily serious stumbling block. Fair.

Ecology Now! -- Wade Curtis.

Not only does Mr. Curtis make full use of ideas presented by Campbell in varied editorials, he even uses Campbell's phraseology in this story of a nuclear power plant used to produce protein food in a successful undersea farm. But then politics rears its ugly head as a stubborn senator, uninterested in facts but very interested in votes, makes a tour of the planet. The story is boring, and made worse by Curtis' mawkish patronization: the director of the plant is a middle-aged, well-to-do Chicano; the senator is pig-headed and ignorant for all his "hip" attitudes; and, finally, the company big-wig is an expert at doling out (ugh!) folk medicine philosophy. Of course, it all ends happily, with straw men responding well to some pleasantly condoned blackmail. Blah!



Priorities -- Ben Bova.

When probable proof ("intense microwave radiation") of life on other worlds is found to be in existence, the investigative program falls by the wayside when government declares it of minor importance compared to pollution, population crush, etc., and cuts off funds. Bova keeps it short, but the "twist" ending is so stale that only the very newest of sf readers will not catch on after a few paragraphs. Routine.

Science:

A Matter of Perspective -- Gordon R. Dickson & Kelly Freas.

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FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION:NOVEMBER:

Novelettes:

Bind Your Hair -- Robert Aickman.

Aickman, likely the most memorable writer of horror stories since Lovecraft's heyday, is sadly not getting the recognition he deserves. (Why is it that such writers seldom gain fame until they themselves are not around to appreciate it?) He avoids the clumsy obviousness of desperate gore and grue, yet seldom strays from the traditional path of the popular horror story into unfathomable abstract terrors, and in the main combines the best of physical and psychological horror into complex and completely terrifying wholes. This tale is a prime example of that fine art of building slowly and steadily to a culmination of terror, and then intensifying that terror by describing just enough to make the reader's imagination take over and stand the hair on end. No more will I say, but read it, and when you've finished you'll be hooked on Aickman, I guarantee.

That Boy -- Zenna Henderson.

Henderson's newest addition to her series of "The People" tells of a small religious group that settles in a desolate area and begins a losing battle against a land which drains them of energy and finally threatens to crumble the good ideals by which they strive to live. They will not listen to a small boy who tells of miraculous things wrought by their nearest neighbors (the People), and even when death hangs heavy over their heads turn their backs on what they fear is "evil" influence. The characters are vital and this is what makes these stories so readable, even when they tend to become repetitious with time. Good of kind.

Short Stories:

A Feast for the Gods -- Poul & Karen Anderson.

The authors have certainly packed a lot of ideas and stylistic methods into this short tale of the Greek God, Hermes, who seeks to renew his dulled appetite on the modern American scene. Yet somehow all that emerges are stale generalities laced with mythological history and silly puns. There is a smart moment when Hermes greets the new god, the computer, and seeks to guide it into the glory which might be missed in temporary reign; but the rest of the story is trite, with harried trimmings that add little but gaudiness. Fair.

Only Who Can Make a Tree?, A Papabolic Paramyth -- Philip José Farmer.

If you can't reach the readers with intellectual farce (which Farmer has tried with only limited success), take it down a notch? Two notches? All the way? It's not that I think Three Stooges comedy--elbows in the ribs, pulling hair, punches to the nose, etc.--is bad because it is low, but it is inevitably visual humor, and Farmer's effort to pull it off with prose about three wacky scientists is simply misguided, no matter how many serious issues he tries to shoehorn into it. Back to the sex novels, I guess....

Whom the Gods Love -- Lloyd Biggle, Jr.

Here's a snappy little detective story which successfully works out its clever mystery angle without lapsing into boring explanations that kill off so

many of this type. It takes place on the planet Gmorff, where the terrifying monsters of the sea are "gods" to various religious cults who practice human sacrifice--and it's up to visitor Jan Darzek to halt the sacrifices if he can. This one's fun.

The Price of Pain Ease -- Fritz Leiber.

A direct sequel to the award-winning Fafhrd/Gray Mouser episode, "Ill Met in Lankhmar", this one relates how these sometimes intrepid but always loveable rogue-heroes regain their composure after the death of their ladies. There are some details about their initial encounters with Sheelba and Ningauble, the two most delightful god-wizards in all of s&s, which help enliven a slow pace and a plot which doesn't always seem to have much direction. As sequels go, it doesn't live up to the original, but Mouser fans still won't want to miss it.

How We Pass the Time in Hell -- Gary Jennings.

The editor terms this a "many-layered piece of grisly humor", and I can think of no description more apt. The narrator--named Jennings, and likely the author's way of saying there are some very personable insights herein--tells of a visit to an old-age home of less than reputable standing, where the inmates are funny-horrible in their senility and where he surprisingly accepts an idea that refutes the usual tie made between hedonism and Hell. It is Jennings' ability to cross the laugh with a strangled scream which makes this thoughtful and disquieting story so infectious. Very good.

Science:

The Left Hand of the Electron -- Isaac Asimov.

DECEMBER:

Novelettes:

The Wreck of the "Kissing Bitch" -- Keith Roberts.

This reads as if it is a segment of an actual or proposed series, set in a future Ice Age which combines technological remnants (fiberglass ships, nylon ropes, etc.) with manners and social constructs reminiscent of an adventuresome historical tale. For all its fine detail about ships and whaling in the icy wastes, the plot remains a stunted thing, with a lily-white hero and coal-black villain battling to the finish and a pretty woman whose voluptuous body waits on the sideline as prize. Roberts has an ability to create memorable characters (as in his excellent novel, Pavane)--it seems a shame that he finds little time anymore to do so. Fair.

World Abounding -- R. A. Lafferty.

"But even horror is a subject of comedy on World Abounding"--so capsualizes Lafferty near the end of his story of the planet Aphthonia, where life is lived to the hilt by visiting Terrans and the planet itself becomes a member of the community. Slowly they come to realize (if not really understand) why previous expeditions returned with only one comment: "You'd never believe it", as they see their children reach maturity with frightening speed, budding into a rich and full but very small civilization. Lafferty succeeds in tying together his big and small themes, a flourishing and decay of both societal and individual structures (which big, which small, you must decide yourself); yet somehow all of the author's usually pleasant, mad, and merry dialogue grates against what is, truly, a "horror" story. I can't really pin down closely why I didn't like this story, but I didn't and can only wonder if others will react likewise.

Short Stories:

Grand Design -- George C. Chesbro.

Revived after 37 centuries in deep-freeze, John Wallach is astounded and understandably interested by his young, beautiful and very naked female "tutor". But it doesn't take long to find out that Wallach is out for all he can get--and so is his tutor, though in a different way. I agree with the editor that Chesbro had done well by a pretty stale plot, for he brings it off with brief but clever characterizations and professionally avoids overstating the obvious. Good.

Accuracy -- John Morressy.

There's a lot of false-sounding detail explaining the presence of a man whose existence is unrecorded by DOMSEC, the data-complex which records and stores life histories of every person in this totalitarian future. The man, along with unrecorded wife and child, seeks to escape to freedom in another country, a near-impossible journey through mines, traps and guards; but without the room to develop a convincing backdrop, the tale never becomes more than a paranoid and rather silly fright story.

Causation -- Barry N. Malzberg.

I would like to report that Malzberg carried off this grim irony with the kind of brittle logic that has made several of his stories quite memorable. Alas, this one falls into that other group where the irony is as cliché as the double-edge of it is dull. This one's about commercialism and the public taste, the blind leading the blind, with a nasty mess the result.

The Sorrowful Host -- William Walling.

Three Earth scientists, stranded during an investigation of the planet Nile, must deal with two cultures--the native Nilians are a primitive, docile people, but the Corvu are invading aliens who force the natives to endure hard labor, who beat, torture and often kill them. A standard sf plot, to be sure, but one Walling manages to turn into one of the most offensive and stupid pieces of junk I've ever read, with a climax revealing an entire civilization has hidden all its accomplishments for no valid reason except Walling's utter lack of imagination. Bloody awful.



HIDE EVERY SINE OF  
CIVILIZATION!

Black Sabbatical -- Josephine Saxton.

Saxton makes it difficult to distinguish between pure fantasy and pure psychology--but then that is likely her point, that there is no purity in either form--they are inextricably intertwined. The sabbatical of the title takes place in Morocco, where a British teacher loses his wife in the desert and calls on the aid of a local magician to bring her back. His mental anguish is confused and convulsive, as his friendship with a precocious child, El Frieda, eventually concludes the tale in a disturbing manner (not quite as terrifying as it should be, but nonetheless disturbing). Interesting.

Supernovas and Chrysanthemums -- Patrick Meadows.

Meadows is one of the newer writers (Raylyn Moore, B. L. Keller, Michael Bishop, and a few others) who, with work limited so far to shorts, is not gaining a deserved recognition but is producing what will in time surely be noted as often quite superior stories. This one is an excellent item about a small boy bitten by an unknown animal and the man who (as a rabies precaution) searches for the beast and finds a metaphysical experience which changes his life. It is pure, "classic" science fiction, with superb characters and clean, astute, expertly-written prose. Read it.

Aunt Jennie's Tonic -- Leonard Tushnet.

Although this story about an old lady whose tonic produces miracles of rejuvenation and healing is fairly standard genre fare, Tushnet provides some engaging twists by tracking down the science of "folk medicine", salting with some fine Jewish humor, and combining the two to produce a fun and very fanciful game of alternating realism and fantasy. The windup seems a trifle rushed, as if the author wanted to do something a little different from the familiar

"someday I'll find an answer" stance, yet couldn't quite find it; but the overall effect is very good, and the story generally is quite successful.

Science:

Seeing Double -- Isaac Asimov.

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GALAXY and IF:

GALAXY -- NOVEMBER-DECEMBER:

Serial:

The Moon Children (conclusion) -- Jack Williamson.

Novelettes:

Birds Fly South in Winter -- Stephen Tall.

Discovering a ship in space with its alien pilot dead, an exploration group from Earth lands on the planet which launched the ship and finds the bear-like aliens friendly and existing in harmony with their environment. There are two other intelligent species as well, an all-tempered underwater group and tiny, winged humanoids, both of whom are less advanced than the bear creatures and serve as occasional food. There is a fairy-tale quality to the story, and science comes to the fore only as Tall wants to use it, so that the total effect is an uncertain combination of little conviction. The characters, especially the Earthmen, are nicely handled, and some of the situations they encounter are amusing; but in the end the nice moments add up to only a brief respite from a pervading tedium. Routine.

Rammer -- Larry Niven.

A new entry in Niven's popular "known space" series, this one is dated 2190 and concerns a man revived from deep-freeze (in which he had placed himself because of impending death from cancer) to a world which transfers his mind to a new body and gives him only a short time to prove his worth to the State or to have himself "erased" and the body passed along to another revived mind. Niven scatters his factual info well and takes care never to let it slow the pace, while his reanimated "corpsicle" works to prove himself worthy of survival. Like all Niven's plots, there's nothing much unexpected about it, but the thing bounced right along and should please those incurable Niven fans. Ok of kind.

Starcult -- Eileen Kernaghan.

The reminiscences of an old woman, writing from an urge to disclose an historical truth lost in a cult movement, begin with her recalling a fascination with and eventual revulsion to a strange young man with an ability to control others and a basic drive to obtain unlimited power. The first half of the story is a good study in human relationships and attitudes, and the reader is easily driven to discover exactly how the man will use his unique power. Then Kernaghan shifts the characters to another world, and obviously at a loss to resolve her drama realistically drags in that old menace, horrible conquering aliens, to make her final point. The melodrama even infects the heroine as she suddenly turns into one of those standard lovesick beauties loved in the gothics. Oh, well, half-good is better than none....

Short Stories:

Autumntime -- A. Lentini.

You don't have to be a fanatic nature-lover or an ecologist to appreciate the beauty of a tree, but it takes more than a cursory glimpse of a treeless, urbanized future to use it for drama. Lentini not only lacks an original viewpoint (the familiar ending barely produces the excitement of a yawn), but also misses the subtle touches which might lend authenticity to such a brief sketch. Very bad.

I'll Be Judge, I'll Be Jury -- John Taylor.

A look at the mechanized law enforcement of the near future, where every citizen's record is on instant call, where groups of three or more constitute

unlawful assembly, where control and order have grown to a frightful stage of reoression. More of a glib joke than a real story, it ends with a quote from Lewis Carroll and a moment of embarrassment. Its appeal will depend very much on the reader's personal taste, and I can't say I much cared for it.

Bubbles When They Burst -- R. A. Lafferty.

One more adventure at the Institute, this one with the wacky group of unconventional scientists seeking to prove that telepathic transmission does indeed exceed the speed of light and trying to finish the experiments which were the undoing of the late, great Cecil Corn. This group, of course, seldom fails at any task they undertake, but true success forever seems out of their reach, as ephemeral and unprovable as the fine shadings of their endless quests. Very amusing.

IF -- NOVEMBER-DECEMBER:

Short Novel:

The Real People -- J. T. McIntosh.

Two worlds, Earth and Eden, each with a race of humans--Terran and Adamite, seek to prove they are the "real people", the originating race from which the other has sprung sometime in the distant past. Such is the raison d'être behind a spy plot in which four Adamite sisters play a decisive role in the infiltration of varied Terran strongholds. The true ultimate goal of the invasion remains a secret (even from the infiltrators) until matters have reached a point where the intrigue has brought about mass murder and enmity which threatens to set in motion a full-scale spacewar. The basically simple story gets maddingly jumbled as McIntosh jumps back and forth between each sister's adventures, pausing occasionally for brief telepathic communications between them but never once getting his story to flow smoothly together. The plot is pure corn--there's even a scene in which one woman's clothes are ripped from her beautiful young body by an evil alien monster, for Gawd's sake!--but the theme of social integration isn't pointed enough to get any humor out of the deadpan monotone with which the story is told. To make matters worse, it ends with that old song-and-dance about an advanced civilization in Earth's lost early history, this one having reached the stars by "chemical rather than mechanical means", and a slop-ty tidying up of all the motivations (which didn't make any sense in the first place). Dull.

Novelettes:

Time of the Sending -- Richard C. Meredith.

The descendents of the survivors of a crashed spaceship return at regular intervals to the ship's twisted hull, there to indulge in what has become a quasi-religious ceremony involving the attempt to send calls for rescue to the now almost mythic home planet, Earth. Meredith tries to make us believe that these people have reverted to a very primitive cultural existence, while at the same time retaining enough knowledge (from preserved manuals and books) for the transmission and receipt of messages through the ship's communications equipment. But the gap between relative past and present is inadequately explained, and the characters fail to gain much life in the midst of Meredith's ponderous prose. Routine.

Hot World -- C. C. MacApp.

With the hull of its ship still in orbit, the human colonists of New Eden have established their society around the nose cone of the ship, aided by the Brains, the colony's leaders whose minds have been preserved in great computers after their bodily deaths. Those who fail to comply with the laws are exiled to the planet's arid desert regions, where the struggle for daily survival toughens them until they feel ready to launch a raid on the well-protected Nose Cone city. There's just enough plotting to keep the story reasonably active, but I'm getting awfully tired of these petty rebellion stories, which are nearly all interchangeable, oversimplified and unmemorable.

Short Stories:

Habits of the Rigelian Nightfox -- Ed Bianchi.

Alternately sentimental and sadistic, this story attempts to engage the reader by placing him directly into the mind of an alien creature in which burgeoning intelligence is beginning to play as important a part as instinctual habits. The story fails to work because Bianchi cannot offer a convincing picture of such transition and depends too completely on familiarized emotions that make his alien merely a surrogate human.

Ornithanthropus -- B. Alan Burhoe.

In colonizing a new world, some men have adapted by developing into a hollow-boned, winged race--how this improbability is accomplished, the author never bothers to explain--which is dependent for existence on a symbiotic relationship with a native airborne lifeform called the skyhunters. When one group's skyhunter dies, its leader leaves to find and tame a new one, a search which culminates in a wearisome and unimaginative air battle with a group of ornery humans. Fair.

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1971: A SUMMING UP --

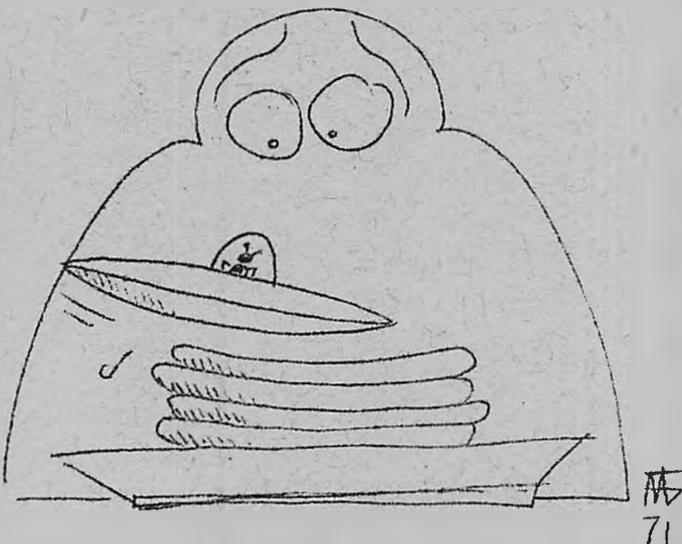
AMAZING STORIES and FANTASTIC:

The biggest improvement in both these magazines was a mid-year switch to a heavier cover-stock, giving both a prolonged "new" look on the stands and a welcome increase in durability for collectors. (That is, if you particularly want to save these issues, which is another matter all together, since only a very few stories this year will have a lifespan longer than news-stand sales time.) Ted White may have made the year's major coup, however, with the publication in AMAZING of Ursula K. Le Guin's superb novel, The Lathe of Heaven, a certain Hugo contender. FANTASTIC was still the most interesting of the two 'zines, what with a fine series of articles by Alexei Panshin and some nicely condensed biographies by L. Sprague de Camp among the year's better non-fiction entries. I must admit that my disappointment in the lack of sustained fiction quality has still not dashed my hopes entirely for White's efforts, and the magazines certainly do look nicer than ever. But White is going to have to shake that "professional-fanzine" aura that still plagues these issues if he wants to see a rise

in circulation, and to do that he'll have to dampen the faannish slant to his editorials and put some extra energy into finding the worthwhile short fictions.

ANALOG:

In the final (December) Campbell-edited issue, Campbell answers a reader's comments with a statement which causes people such as I to pause and review criticism directed at the editor (to which I myself have contributed) in recent years. He says: "My editorials are intended to challenge 'everybody knows' postulates--not particularly to sell mine!" And I have to admit that over and over again I have paused to weigh my own conclusions against Campbell's. That I have usually



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ended up congratulating myself on my own good sense and reviling JWC's narrow-mindedness and biased selection of supportive facts is, in a roundabout way, a credit to the man for goading me into examining my own thoughts and conclusions. One automatically rejects the opinions of obvious crackpots and exploiters, but seldom does this kind impel one to re-examine one's own opinions. Campbell often forced you to look more closely at those things you take for granted, to back up arguments which could demolish his cleverly-worded suppositions. (An aggravating way to do philosophical business, perhaps, but there is a positive element in there somewhere, and I for one will say that JWC had a definite place in cultur-ing my leftish tendencies.)

It's sad to report that Campbell's final year is as unmemorable as the maga-zine's last few years have been, with far too many stories merely a recapitula-tion of JWC's editorial comments, most of them completely lacking the spirit, drama, and fun of good entertainment. ANALOG had been caught in a vicious circle composed of writers' response to the editor's predilections, and fresh, original ideas--once a staple of the magazine--had disappeared in the bottom of a well of repetition. The era did not end with Campbell's death. It ended years before, and the current tragedy--in its way--was an anticlimax. Ben Bova slips into the editor's chair starting in 1972 (though most likely will still be publishing JWC's purchases for the first few months of the new year), and one cannot help but wonder if a new era will be beginning. It will be interesting to watch....

#### FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION:

In a year that has seen many of the better stories finding first publica-tion in anthologies rather than magazines, F&SF has (by my listing) placed over half the stories on the year's-end list of best stories, many of which would stand up to the anthology competition and still place among the top entries. (In fact, F&SF placed a story on the list from every issue except one.) There is little doubt in my mind that F&SF has the Hugo award for another year, despite a paucity of serials and fan-oriented pieces (the latter of which gains a lot of fan publicity but seems to count for less at award time). F&SF still has the best book reviews in the business, the best science column of any genre magazine (or almost any magazine, for that matter), and a continued wide-open editorial policy that embraces everything from hard-line space opera to supernatural hor-ror to various qualities of symbolism and allegory. It's a policy I support and cherish, and one with which others seem to agree, since the magazine has won the Hugo for three years' running.

#### GALAXY and IF:

At the beginning of the year the briefly-revived WORLDS OF TOMORROW and WORLDS OF FANTASY met their end without ever really having got off the ground, while GALAXY reverted to a bi-monthly schedule once again, which--with IF also bi-monthly--gives us twelve issues a year from the UPD group. Both magazines have had ups and downs during the year, but both seemed to be going into a con-tinued decline as the year progressed, reverting to a policy of "that idea's worked for 20 years, so let's try it again"--which doesn't say much for Jakobsson's ability to broaden the scope of either magazine. Algis Budrys retired as book reviewer from GALAXY at the end of the year, and I think he will be missed by many. One can only hope that he will use the time to produce fiction once again--there has been far too little new Budrys in recent years. Jakobsson has bought Asimov's new novel for next year, a sure promotion of sales, but one hopes that something more will happen to boost the overall quality of these magazines in the months to come--one good author or novel isn't enough, not since about 1920 or so.... With the abundance of classless paperbacks catering to an undc-

manding readership, there is no reason for the magazines to waste space with juvenile filler material...is there...?

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And now it's time to make those choices once again. There doesn't seem to be any directional tendency that I can determine in this year's batch of stories. My choices include everything from straight-out horror stories to conventional but well-handled sf. I still think we're in a transition period, exiting from the abundance of popular but often simplistic and preposterous social-consciousness themes of the past few years and, after a brief wallow in nostalgia (via Ring-world) for light relief, now searching for a direction. Transition periods tend to be great periods for someone to do something new--to start a trend for the imitators to follow--so maybe 1972 will find someone known or unknown hitting the mark. All they have to do is convince the publishers that the audience is looking for something really new, not reworkings of the old themes, and some bright publisher is going to take a chance on hitting a goldmine...if we're lucky.

BEST MAGAZINE STORIES: 1971 (listed alphabetically, not by preference) --

- Aickman, Robert -- "Ringing the Changes" (F&SF, May).
- Gunn, James E. -- "The Message" (GALAXY, May).
- Harding, Lee -- "Fallen Spaceman" (IF, May-June).
- Hollis, H. H. -- "Too Many People" (GALAXY, January).
- Keller, B. L. -- "Birdlime" (F&SF, March).
- Keller, B. L. -- "Out of Sight" (F&SF, September).
- Meadows, Patrick -- "Supernovas and Chrysanthemums" (F&SF, December).
- Moore, Raylyn -- "A Different Drummer" (F&SF, February).
- Moore, Raylyn -- "If Something Begins" (F&SF, May).
- Zebrowski, George -- "Heathen God" (F&SF, January).

RUNNERS-UP --

- Aickman, Robert -- "Bind Your Hair" (F&SF, November).
- Bishop, Michael -- "Darktree, Darktide" (F&SF, April).
- Brunner, John -- "Easy Way Out" (IF, May-June).
- Carr, Terry -- "In Man's Image" (AMAZING, November).
- Disch, Thomas M. -- "The Beginning of April or the End of March" (F&SF, February).
- Eisenstein, Phyllis -- "Born to Exile" (F&SF, August).
- Haldeman, Joe W. -- "To Fit the Crime" (GALAXY, April).
- Jennings, Gary -- "How We Pass the Time in Hell" (F&SF, November).
- Lafferty, R. A. -- "Boomer Flats" (IF, July-August).
- Lafferty, R. A. -- "Bubbles When They Burst" (GALAXY, November-December).
- Macfarlane, W. -- "One-Generation New World" (IF, March-April).
- MacLean, Katherine -- "The Missing Man" (ANALOG, March).
- Rogoff, David J. -- "Lot 22A" (GALAXY, January).
- Saxton, Josephine -- "Living Wild" (F&SF, October).
- Tushnet, Leonard -- "Aunt Jennie's Tonic" (F&SF, December).
- Wolfe, Gene -- "Slaves of Silver" (IF, March-April).
- Wolfe, Gene -- "Sweet Forest Maid" (F&SF, July).
- Wyal, Pg -- "Border Town" (AMAZING, July).

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SWIFT PASSAGE

It spoke three gibberish lines,  
 Made three cryptic signs in air,  
 And quick as that! I wasn't there....

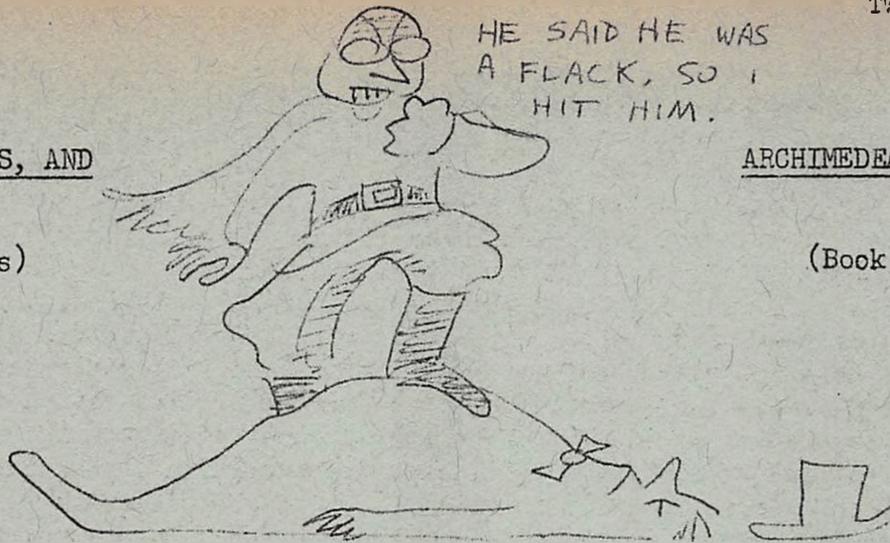
-- JAMES ELLIS

VIEWS, REVIEWS, AND

(Book Reviews)

ARCHIMEDEAN SPIRALS

(Book Reviews)



Shareworld, by Morris Hershman (Walker & Co.; 186 pp.; \$5.95).

Stock market dabblers will no doubt try to evaluate this book by the tenets of their own Wall Street expertise. They may find some semblance of logic, if that's what they also see in the economic patterns which dictate the ordered confusion of the stock-and-bond scene.

But those readers, like myself, to whom the complexities of the financial edifices remain a mystery similar to profitable horse-race betting or the theory of relativity, will doubtless shake their heads in bemused condescension, convinced that the governing of our world, shaky as it may be, will never be delegated to the Big Boards of the Security and Exchange World. We hope.

Yet Hershman has constructed an ingenious world out of just those ingredients. At least to my economically unlettered eye, his construct appears possible, with the same degree of possibility I place in the inevitability of our sun one day growing cold and dying. The remoteness of the conditions necessary to either happenstance bleed away any sense of real immediacy or urgency. Still, Shareworld is hung on a predominately sensible framework, despite some flaws apparent here and there, and despite the lack of enough explicatives to help financial ignoramus like me to understand even a modicum of the arcana peppering economic theory.

The world of 2053, unified under an Earth Government, is run according to the rules of the stock market. Social security takes the form of shares in the so-called industrial and economic enterprise systems that support this futuristic social hive. Brokerage firms assume a stature akin to the old political machines. A central system of stock certificate storage becomes the paper Fort Knox that holds the world's wealth inviolate.

Issuing common stock of various industries to the poor represents a new concept of government. Supposedly it's an auctorial extrapolation of the economic theories of Louis Ortho Kelso, who contends that the American system is failing because of its defective financial and economic framework. Kelso's theories are called in some quarters (by corporate executives, bankers, and even some government officials) "a forward-looking concept designed to preserve our enterprise system". Maybe so, but trying to envision living in a country ruled via market quotations sends shivers down my frugal spine. Thank goodness the 21st-century world according to Hershman isn't any more of a hagiocracy than the dear old USA of today. All is not coupon-clipping in 2053, either.

Issuing stock to the poor, while having all the appearances of a workable new concept of government, impinges on the unwritten but nonetheless jealously guarded prerogatives of the mere five percent of 2053 citizens who own ninety-five percent of Earth's wealth. An organized attempt to topple the Government is launched from within the economically-oriented constitutional directorate. Extremists threaten to wreck the economies of two worlds.

Yes, two worlds. If the tale sounds relatively plausible up to this point, injection of a vaguely defined alien race into the plot really stretches credibility pretty thin. The role of the Rillut in Shareworld's storyline is of glaringly extraneous proportions. Somewhere, somehow, relations have been established between Earth and Rillut. Who they are, where they come from, how homo sapiens met them--none of this is adequately explained. Obviously, they are put there to play the part of an issue by which Earth agitators against sharing the wealth can split the Earth Government, discredit the in-power administration, and seize the reins for themselves. Well, there's little reason to suspect politics will have changed much by the 21st century.

Now--enter good-guy trouble-shooter. Matt Brisbane, drafted from one of the world's most influential brokerage firms (of course), is called in to restore order. Quite predictably, he does so, with no little verve and flair. In fact, he's almost too clever to be really believable at this point.

Matt's regard is commensurate with the success of his sterling efforts to circumvent violence and ultimately deliver the baddies to their just desserts. After single-handedly saving everything, including the economic lex loci of Hershman's world, Matt is chosen to be the first ambassador with the Rillut.

As a sort of accumbent bonus, he even gets to take along his personal secretary, who in the last two pages emerges as the love interest this kind of script had to call for somewhere. The eight-month space voyage to Rillut will provide a period in which their business relationship may develop, it is slyly intimated, into something a little more permanent. Good! I knew all along Matt was human. The book's final paragraph definitely proves this point:

"He laughed joyously now and put an arm around her slim waist as they walked out of Government Headquarters and into the warm September afternoon."

Somehow I suspected in my incurably romantic soul that the story just had to have such a schmaltzy oldtime Hollywood ending. I suppose it's too much to ask that the hero have a horse in the 21st century, but it would have been a nice touch.

I fear that Hershman hasn't included enough violent action or sex to attract the attention of today's movie moguls. Still, I'm old enough to feel a pleasant nostalgia when a story manages to turn out all right in the end.

-- JAMES R. NEWTON

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The Late Great Creature, by Brock Brower (Atheneum, 1972; 300 pp.; \$6.95).

A novel of the macabre outside the overworn paperback gothic formula is a rare bird indeed. Most of the significant creators of the last century called a limit with the short story or novelette; and understandably, since as Brock Brower's hero Simon Moro informs us, we have been liberated from fear as well as from hunger and many of the other unpleasanties of the past.

What price liberation, though? Oldtime horror movie actor Simon Moro flits outrageously into view in his last role as the "Raven" to try to give us an answer. Through the eyes of a writer researching an article on Moro, we see Moro's crypto-Nazi past, his involvement in procuring subjects for dubious psychiatric experiments in Vienna, his outrageous slaps at convention and sham in his censor-riddled horror films, at last his solo attempt to turn "Raven" into a tour de force of forbidden horror-eroticism. Then, through the eyes of the outraged director, the all-too-well-perceived attempt to turn Moro's continued slaps at convention into one of the most grotesque publicity stunts of all time, involving the sham obsequies of the star in New York's Poe cottage and his subsequent staking on stage at the opening of "Raven". Finally, then, Moro's narrative itself, clarifying and tying together the loose ends left by the researcher and the director, outlining step by step the approach to his final apotheosis. All the perverse brilliancy of Moro's previous cinematic creations--Ghoulgantua, the Moth, Gila Man--fades as he outrages all of New York, with small offenses such as the retelling of Mother Goose to Harlem schoolchildren (did country mouse--rather, rat--take the subway to visit his city cousin?--no, the sewer), with larger ones like a sensibility-rattling (and subsequently suppressed) interpretation of Shakespeare's Caliban, and finally with unforgiveable liberties like the brandishing of a putrescent finger (severed in the making of "Raven") during an appearance on the Tonight show. A last shock, and Moro is gone, but we are left wondering: perhaps indeed it is we who are living in the charnel house.

The complex structure of the novel rewards with many different levels of entertainment. There are jabs and rewards for serious devotees of the film (ah, those lost creations of Moro's!), followers of the monster-gore cult, fans of Hapsburgian decadency, and other special people. Altogether, Simon Moro represents much the best revenant to rise from the ashes of our offended sensibilities in a long time.

-- KENNETH W. FAIG, JR.

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A Clockwork Orange, by Anthony Burgess. (A like book review, Oh my brothers)

(COULSON SAID HE DIDN'T LIKE WHAT I THOUGHT ABOUT BOOKS, BUT HE LIKED THE CLEAR AND CONCISE WAY I WROTE. SPOKE TOO SOON AGAIN, EHH BOY?)

So like the book came out in 1962 which is a long time ago to be doing a book review, right? I mean, the book is real starry now so Your Humble Narrator shouldn't be taking up space better spent on more recent books and movies and cal like that. Except that 1971 was a real vonny year for the old Biblio, Oh my brothers, and like Stanley Kubrick is making the book famous on the old sinny right now so I'll itty on a bit about it so that maybe you'll viddie a starry copy of it somewhere and kopat it as much as I did.

Like, the book is choodesney. The book is the most bezoomy vesch I ever viddied, except for Stand On Zanzibar. The book is written in this electric-sounding goloss of the future, which is what everyveck I've slooshied has govorested about, but they miss a lot of the point, Oh my brothers. Like the goloss adds a horrorshow touch to it, but there's a lot behind it besides that.

The raskazz is about a young malchick named Alex, and his three droogs, Georgie, Dim and Pete, and what they do to the state and what the state does back. Alex and his malenky brethren get their smecks peeting the old moloko-plus at the Korova Milk Bar and then going out and shiving chellovecks in bitvas with their britvas, or dratsing some old veck just to watch the red krovvy flow

out of him, and then finding a young devotchka later on for a bit of the old out-and-in.

The state doesn't like kopat this my only brothers and loverts Alex and puts him in the Staja for 14 years. But, two years later, he gets out by being the first veck to try out the Ludivico technique, which like makes him want to sick whenever he thinks of sex or violence. The book itties on from there to a real sarky end where the state has to change him back to like he was because he's become a martyr to the people.

I haven't viddied the sinny version of the raskazz yet, my malenky brothers and only friends, but like Stanley Kubrick is a real horrorshow producer, and even if he was just some vonny bratchny they sobirated off the street, this is such a horrorshow choodesney book, he'd still prod a raskazz in the like height of fashion.

\* \* \* \*

There is a more serious side to this, Oh my brothers. Right now, I'm talking to you once again as Richard Wadholm, Poorman's Boy Wonder and not as Your Humble Narrator and Loyal Droog. A lot of dudes have been going on about what kind of classic this is going to be. A lot of these people are in science fiction too, which is a rare trip indeed, considering that Burgess is a mainline writer. As a matter of fact, when Alexander Malec, who is a science fiction writer, got a Nebula, this is what other science fiction writers compared it to. (Except, as I remember, Malec's short story wasn't much more than a polished goloss, whereas Clockwork is a real and true and very bitter satire--a kind of electric Thoreau on society and civil disobedience.)

Burgess gets in a few potshots on God (or Bog, as Alex calls him in the book. Funny thing, but Alex always seems to hold genuine respect for him too, but not for anyone else.), the Church, revolutionary movements, law and order, freedom of choice, juvenile delinquency, and things I've forgotten about by now. It gets down, too. There are things that I, as a revolutionary head thought I was very much into--until I'd read this. The book's philosophy is thought out more thoroughly than anybody has thought about man versus society since Thoreau--maybe even more so. The ideas on a man's responsibility to himself to be selfish

and bad are startling to read, and even more startling when you see Burgess back this up with real and true logic. And while he sets up this very dreary monolithic state, he doesn't go about destroying it to be poetic. Alex is a total individualist, so when Alex ends the book telling you he's had his victory, he'd done it at the expense of a pathetic movement for democracy that is crushed at the same time. This doesn't matter to Alex, because he has his taste for sex and sadism back. Whatever happens with, or to, the state, or to those fighting for democracy are beyond his sphere of influence and interest. You see, Alex is not just an individualist, he's a back-lash--so much of a clockwork orange that even when he breaks every law of society, he's doing it in response to society, not against it. He is so-



ciety's anti-man, and yet he doesn't know why. He's less than a rebel without a cause because he doesn't even know he's a rebel--things that intellectual don't mean anything to him.

One thing that keeps flashing on my mind is Harlan Ellison's "A Boy and His Dog". The main character is as rowdy and lawless as Alex, and the main idea is as totally violent and as neon-disturbing in execution. However, "A Boy and His Dog" was written six years after A Clockwork Orange. The theme in "A Boy and His Dog" is love--all kinds of love. In Clockwork, the theme is personal freedom, but the similarities are not only startling--they're almost suspicious.

The main characters are both fifteen, and both into taking what they want no matter who stands in the way. They both live in a society of semi-apocalypse where violence is a way of life taken for granted. They both have a mechanical view of sex for one's own personal pleasure alone, like raping a girl is a slightly heightened version of going to the movies. They both have droogs, or close confidants, and parents who are either nonexistent (something that bothered me in Harlan's piece) or very distant and one-dimensional.

The stories are both written first-person, to interest you in the personalities of the characters in a very lay-back way. Both are written in sharp, thick slang. Clockwork's slang is invented and takes a while for people to get into. "A Boy and His Dog" is written in present-day slang, but there's a lot of it, and some of the older fans might have as much trouble with it as with Clockwork's Nadsat.

I'm not saying that Harlan stole anything that didn't belong to him. What I am saying is that Harlan got a large spark on his idea. "A Boy and His Dog" is philosophically diametrically opposed to Clockwork, and Vic is a far deeper, more introspective, generally more appealing--if not as interesting--character than Alex. His nuclear wasteland world makes him more courageous and practical just to survive--while Alex's survival is on a more mental and moral level. He sinks to greater depths to get what he wants, and thinks nothing of it for the simple reason that his real enemy sinks to depths at least as low. An old childhood topic for discussion went along the lines of, "What if the Thing met the Wolfman?", and then we'd sit around and speculate on who had brains enough to win as opposed to who had the strength or radiation or whatever it was that made the other monster a monster. If I can regress to childhood for a moment, the idea intrigues me: Who would win between Alex and Vic? Vic has courage, strength and a knowledge of survival, while Alex has strength and skill as an in-fighter, and a basic blood-lust.

My point is, they are two entirely different characters. Harlan isn't guilty of outright plagiarism, no more than Alexie Panshin is guilty of cannibalizing old star-ship stories for Rite of Passage, or Silverberg for taking ideas out of old time-travel pulpsters. Panshin and Silverberg were influenced by other science fiction stories. Ellison was influenced by somebody completely outside the field. Take it for what it's worth. Is it a trend? A little anecdote with a message on fan tolerance toward the "straights"? Or is it just that Anthony Burgess has written himself a real chezoomey book?

-- RICHARD WADHOLM

This ostensibly is a novel of Machievellian betrayal within a totalitarian socio-political movement based on a new and literally hypnotic music form. In 1979, the counter-culture has become the leisure culture of everyone (everyone in the story, i.e....well, it's possible....). Bored with this recreation, both the young and the old quickly take to "Stiermusic", the compositions of the Canadian, Richard Stier, and to a hallucinogenic white clay. Paul Odeon, a PR man hired by Stier's organization, discovers that his employers are distributing the new drug; that they are planning a new social movement, with religious overtones, based on Stier's Music and the drug; that the Stier group is only a front for a mysterious military-industrial cabal, the "Nine", who wish to rule through Stier--himself a complete schizophrenic of a rather unpleasant sort; and finally that Stier's wife and the rest of his inner circle intend to double-cross the "Nine", make a sacrificial goat of Stier, Diefy him, and rule as his priestesses. Odeon tries to expose the plot(s), fails, dies, and the Nine take over.

With that much with which to work, the author should have produced something better than this borderline pornography. For the first third of the book, the protagonist alternated between getting into bed with various females and getting intoxicated on various substances. This is known as character development. His enthusiasm for the Stier movement is never explained, unless it is intended to reflect the effect of Stiermusic and the narcotic clay. His transformation into a zealous crusader for truth, out to expose the ulterior motives of the Stiersisters and the Nine, is not explained at all, but presumably takes place during his flight from the CIA, through an underground movement based on Indian Reservations. Since this change of heart is essential to the plot, the omission of its development is fatal to the reader's suspension of disbelief.

Basically, this is not science fiction at all, but a sex-ploytation-cum-social-commentary work. Unfortunately, the author's acquaintance with the biological, biochemical, psychological, and social phenomena with which he deals seems superficial at best.

-- BILL MARLOW

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The Wheels of If and Other Science-Fiction, by L. Sprague de Camp (Berkley Medallion Book #S1893, 1970; 191 pp.; 75¢);

The Reluctant Shaman and Other Fantastic Tales, by L. Sprague de Camp (Pyramid Books #T2347, 1970; 190 pp.; 75¢).

Fans who are nostalgic for the famous UNKNOWN WORLDS don't dare miss these two collections. They include six of de Camp's stories for that magazine, plus eight other stories from other magazines of the period, mostly in the same vein. The UNKNOWN stories include one novel, The Wheels of If, and every bit of shorter fiction that de Camp ever had in it, reprinting thw two most minor for the first time ever. (The Reluctant Shaman has a blurb stating that this is the first time any of the stories have appeared in book form, but that's just over-enthusiastic as copy writing. Still, it's true that the stories in it that have been reprinted before have been out of print again for a long time now.) This brings the total amount of fiction reprinted from UNKNOWN's 39 issues between 1939 and 1943 to a still greater percentage--probably the greatest percentage of any pulp fiction magazine.

There's no Significant reading in either of these books, but there's also not a story that isn't good entertainment. Even the most minor pieces of froth are fast-paced and humorous. The most famous of the fourteen is probably The Wheels of If itself, an 81-page Connecticut Yankee romance in which a likeable though slightly tarnished young city policeman on the rise suddenly finds him-

self in an alternate world a bit more primitive than ours, in which a White nation of Scandinavian/Celtic descent on the East Coast is about to be embroiled in war against a confederation of nations grown from the old Indian tribes inland. Park uses his skills as a machine politician to take over first Vinland's inefficient and feuding political structure and then the military administration, staving off defeat in war until he can cobble together a diplomatic solution that will hopefully hold together until he has a chance to introduce some good 20th-century American technological progress that should eliminate the basic causes of the social disputes. The story is still lots of fun, though 30 years' advance in international and racial relations has made the end-justifies-the-means and the American-White-man-knows-what's-best-for-natives themes rather quaint.

Probably the single most funny story is "Nothing in the Rules", in which a swimming meet between two women's athletic clubs is enlivened by the entry of a mermaid on one team. The picture of the two managers screaming rule-book technicalities at each other, echoes rebounding deafingly about the enclosed gym-pool deck, while the harried official is going slowly mad and the mermaid (a scientifically proper mermaid, mind you; not one of your fairy-book fish-women paste-ups) is getting drunk on the pool's fresh water (no chlorination in 1940 when the story was written?) is hilarious. Another story, "The Gnarly Man", about the tribulations of an immortal Cave Man trying to get along unnoticed in modern civilization, was briefly considered recently by Hollywood as a pilot film for a new situation comedy. Two fantasies in the latter volume, "The Reluctant Shaman" and "The Hardwood Pile", are both

set in a lumber community in up-state New York, and the background information around the action tells you much more about the lumber industry than you're likely to want to know. It reads as though de Camp was using personally-gained professional experience to pad his story and bring in a few extra dollars, though it doesn't slow the action too much. (Despite the similarity in setting and a slight overlap of characters, the latter was published in UNKNOWN in 1940 and the former in THRILLING WONDER STORIES in 1947. Was "The Reluctant Shaman" an UNKNOWN reject that didn't find a home for seven years?) "Mr Arson" similarly shows a more-than-casual knowledge of correspondence-school-course peddling, used here in a tale of an injudicious course in arcane magic. (But no story with a salamander can be all bad.)

"The Ghosts of Melvin Pye" postulates that the murder of a man with a split personality would produce two highly dissimilar spirits, neither particularly pleasant. "The Merman" is, I believe, the first use of the sf plot in which a laboratory accident gives a man the power to breathe underwater but makes it impossible for him to breathe normal air as a consequence. (The comic books prompt-



ly seized this plot and gleefully ran away with it.) "Hyperpelosity", dating from early 1938, was one of the first examples of either humor or of social extrapolation in sf. A mutated disease epidemic causes mankind to grow fur, like a gorilla's pelt. While the heroes work to find the cure, de Camp concentrates on picturing the social result of this change--the crisis in the clothing industry, on standards of beauty and modesty, and so on. By the time the cure is found, humanity has decided that it likes its fur and doesn't want to go back to being a naked animal. The last story in the second book, "Ka the Appalling", seems a bit out of place, being one of de Camp's sword-&-sorcery adventures from the late '50's--over ten years older than any of the others here. It reads like Dunsany with less poetic imagery and more earthly action. A separate collection of de Camp's Tritonian short action-fantasies is overdue; most of them are in print, I think, but scattered throughout a dozen or more paperback short-story anthologies of the heroic-fantasy genre.

Despite the fast-paced nature of most of the stories, the plots usually involve a cerebral solution, a battle of wits. How do you get rid of a ghost who's hep on how to nullify the standard exorcism practices? Will the tree-nymph or the lumber-yard owner turn out to be more stubborn than the other? Which legal shenanigans in Park's repertoire will be applicable in Vinland's political structure? Will Gezun realize in time that Ugaph has him slated to be the new god's first human sacrifice? Wherever the stories originally appeared, they all fit into the traditional UNKNOWN pattern of logical fantasy, as much the hocus-pocus of a clever con-man as of a cabalist.

Either or both of the books are worth the price, for enjoyable light entertainment that can be read at one sitting or stretched out a few stories at a time, according to taste. And my librarian's soul applauds Mr. de Camp's meticulous bibliography of copyright statements and citations of first publication (magazine title and issue date) of each story.

-- FRED PATTEN

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Si Mai Avait Gagné (If May Had Been Won), by Frédéric Bon & Michel-Antoine Burnier (Collection Enragee v. 1, Jean-Jacques Pauvert, 1968; \$1.50; 5 fr.; illustrated with graffiti by Wolinski). (In French.)

This little red book is an alternate-world history in the form of a diary by a Parisian journalist. Its rediscovery in 2155 is greeted with joy by historians trying to reconstruct the history of the Revolution, lost in the World Liberation War of 1984-5 by accidental destruction of archives (887 works on the May events were lost in the burning of the Anti-Atomic Library of Annomasse), and "anti-memory weapons" ("...owed to the macabre genius of a colonel of the Nationalist Brigades of Spain"). Here at last is an account of the fall of the Gaullist regime in May-June 1968.

In this scenario, the striking workers maintain a solid front, instead of cracking as they did in reality, and make common cause with the "student revolutionaries", instead of throwing them out as they did in reality. While the government fails to do anything decisive, and the Communists and the Federation of the Left make noises at each other about a "common program", the general strike paralyzes France. At last, the workers are forced to relieve the plight of the population by resuming work themselves under the direction of a net of Action Committees. Finally, De Gaulle and the cabinet resign, being replaced by a government of the Federation under Mitterand. But the legal government is powerless against the vaguely syndicalist government-in-embryo of the Action

Committees. The journal ends with the summary of a newspaper article, "If De Gaulle Had Stayed", recounting events as they actually happened in our world. The journalist dismisses this as utterly unrealistic, and "foolery of a very low order".

The authors are still unable to think out the transition from the "neo-capitalist" state to the future utopia of the "revolutionaries". The revolution is left incomplete; there is still no record of how the revolutionary forces took power in February 1969.

An added dimension of humor is provided by the viewpoint of the 22nd-century historians as revealed in the footnotes. These enragés are not too proud to poke fun at themselves along with everyone else. In the future's reconstruction of our time, Pompidou emerges as a classic strong-man. The "editors" express a childlike delight at finding a mention of Cohn-Bendit's red hair; at last the long dispute about the color of his hair is resolved! The notes comment on flag-burning as a tribal rite, and note that traces of it are still found in the Trobriand Islands. (One note also contains laughable (take that any way you like) parodies of Du Bellay and Racine.)

This book is of great interest to anyone concerned with today's political ferment, since it is the only place I have found any suggestion as to what the Newleftists want to replace the present bourgeois capitalist-militarist-fascist etc. society with. However, it still seems rather utopian. The slogan of the book's revolutionaries is "All power to the Action Committees!"; doesn't that have a familiar ring? And I don't think it worked out so well the last time--there was this fellow named Stalin....

My main quarrel with Bon and Burnier is that their depiction of a solid revolutionary front of workers and pseudo-students unrealistically ignores the last half-century of socio-economic development (thus giving me the chance to go into my big Why-Marx-was-wrong set-piece). It ignores the rise in power of the workers, and in particular of the labor unions. As a result of this, the workers--far from being thrust down into the proletariat as Marx predicted--have been subsumed into the middle class. In fact, the classic proletariat no longer exists as such. In today's affluent society, labor and capital have the same aims at bottom; they only haggle over division of the ~~stag~~ profits. You don't find these affluent, unionized workers howling, "We will not surrender the factories to capital!".

Also, the book is slanted. It ignores the original provocation by the pseudo-students; the passages of the diary dealing with these events are conveniently "lost". In the world of Bon and Burnier, the noble revolutionaries are opposed by no one but "fascists" (a word, by the way, which has lost all meaning, and is now a mere expletive applied to anyone who does not agree with one). The "typical" opponent has a "living room covered with portraits of Petain and Salan". The authors share the common leftist inability to believe that anyone can possibly take a position between two extremes.

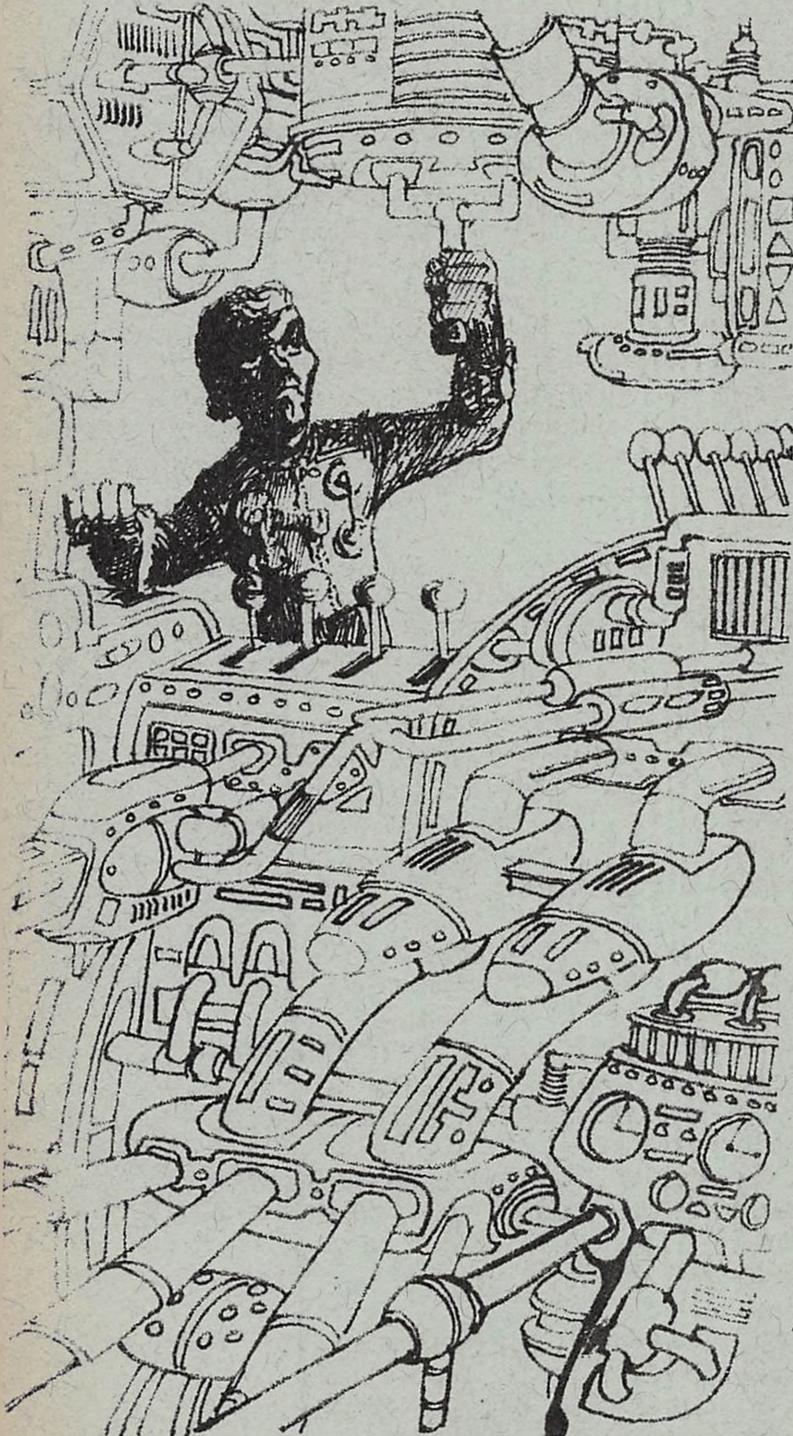
In one passage the fictional diarist laments on just such a theme:

"Is there no middle ground between a Castroist or Maoist revolution and this consumer society? Whither modern man, imprisoned by a progress he can no longer control? Mechanical civilization triumphs both in east and west. Historical materialism here, capitalist materialism there: where is the Spirit? Can man regain himself in a true spiritual revolution?"

The "editors'" comment is: "Here is a very strange philosophy. We ask ourselves where Présigny [the diarist] could have picked all this up." I would like to think that this is meant tongue-in-cheek, but I fear that it is meant seriously--and if so, may God have mercy on us all.

On the grafitti of Wolinski, I must agree with the assessment of the Institute of Revolutionary History: "Sometimes incomprehensible, always inept."

-- WILLIAM LINDEN



This Perfect Day, by Ira Levin  
(Fawcett Crest #P1536; \$1.25).

"Christ, Marx, Wood, and Wei  
Led us to this perfect day.  
Marx, Wood, Wei, and Christ;  
All but Wei were sacrificed.  
Wood, Wei, Christ, and Marx  
Gave us lovely schools and  
parks.  
Wei, Christ, Marx and Wood  
Made us humble, made us good."

The above, a children's rhyme for bouncing a ball, starts off this book, which at first appears to be another anti-utopian novel on the order of 1984, THX 1138, and Brave New World. But this super-computerized world of the future does have its interesting variations. The whole population is overseen by a super-computer, UniComp, which determines who will be born, where you will live and be educated, what you will eat, what job you will have, and when you will die. Your whole life is literally in the hands of the computer. People are taught to be peaceful, passive, accomodating citizens of the world, and become blind, will-less sheep. "Uni" takes care of everything, and you have an "advisor" to go to if you think you or anyone else is thinking outside the norm (and is therefore "sick"). Sex is started at an early age, and given its "proper" slotting of Saturday evening only. Words pertaining to sex which we in our "enlightened" age call "dirty",

are quite common and proper--whereas words like "fight" and "hate" are considered sick and dirty.

Everyone has one of four names (with a number after it to differentiate between "members of the family"): Jesus, Karl, Bob and Li for the men; Mary, Anna, Peace and Yin for women.

The protagonist, Li RM35M26J449988WXYZ--called "Chip" by his family--was, from the beginning, not quite the norm. He had one green eye, and one brown one, which made him very self-conscious of his "difference". He has a grandfather who is of the "old" belief that people should not all be the same, and who teaches Li to think of things--especially his future--and shows him things, which causes Li to grow up an individual, thinking person--which is not in line with the concepts of the Family. So, Li has to hide his thoughts from almost everybody; otherwise, they would inform their advisors that they knew a friend that was sick, and the advisors would schedule a treatment for him, where he would be made to feel that he had been wrong to want a choice in his life! Everyone gets a "treatment" once a month, which keeps them in line, content to live under the benign dictatorship of Uni, the computer.

Chip meets a friend in the training classes for his job, and gets an unusual drawing from the friend. It is considered "queer" to want to draw wild animal pictures, and the artist even draws such "inflammatory, sick" subjects as men and women without their bracelets! (Everyone wears an I.D. bracelet, which they flash to I.D. screens, so Uni will always know where all the members of the Family are.)

There are, in this sterile world, some people who retain the title of human being, and they contact Chip. They are a renegade group, who do such things as have their treatment intensity reduced, have sex as often as they wish (with much more intense reactions), and smoke tobacco! Chip joins them, and meets a beautiful member who calls herself Lilac, in a museum of 20th-century artifacts. Chip discovers, by looking at old maps, that there are some islands which are not on the current maps. He surmises that these islands are the place where the "incurables" live--people who have never had treatments or worn bracelets, because their ancestors left the continents when Uni took over. He imagines that these people are the only really thinking, living beings left. He plans to go to these islands and live a really free life, but his plans are thwarted when his advisor becomes aware of his abnormal activities. He is captured (as are the members of his group), and given a super treatment, which makes him a "model" member for more than five years.

One day, however, something jogs his memory, and he remembers Lilac, the group and everything else. He decides to block the treatment injections so that he will go on remembering. He does this successfully for a few months, and by sneaking and trickery, manages to get to Lilac, who is still a model member, and abducts her against her will. He wants to go with her to Majorca, which is the nearest free island. She resists at first, but after a few weeks without her treatments she remembers, and realizes that she loves him and wants to go with him.

After many trials and tribulations they arrive at Majorca (called "Liberty"), only to find that things are not as they wished. The immigrants are treated as inferiors by the native-born of the island, and live in almost intolerable slum conditions. Still, it is freer than being in the Family, and they try to make a go of it. After some time, Chip learns that some groups in the past attempted to go back to the mainland and destroy Uni to free humanity. All of them failed,

none returning. Chip, also getting the burning desire to destroy the programming of Uni, comes up with a very complicated and expensive plan. With the help of some wealthy native friends, he gets the personnel and equipment needed, and he and the new group set off almost a year later.

Chip and his friends have few problems getting near the computer (except for a stupid blunder which costs the lives of two members, and sends one back to the landing spot). The three survivors proceed to penetrate the inner depths of the mountain housing the computer, only to discover that one of them is a traitor, who leads them to a startling discovery as to the nature of Uni, and the whole structure of the family.

But lest this turn into a synopsis only, let me say that Mr. Levin has written a pretty damn good SF book. The story starts out slowly, and very much like all those mind-controlled people stories you've read, but as you get further into it, the author develops a unique aspect or two in his fictional civilization, which is not only interesting to contemplate, but believable, as well. The story gets better as you go further into it, its only failing being, perhaps, that the climáx comes 36 pages before the end of the book--and if you've understood the character of Chip, it is not hard at all to guess the final outcome.

A condensed version was printed in COSMOPOLITAN magazine, but the expanded version is definitely superior. All in all, an engrossing SF novel from a normally Main Stream writer, and I recommend a reading of it.

-- LEE SMOIRE

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Midsummer Century, by James Blish (Doubleday & Co., Inc.; \$4.95; 106 pp.).

First of all, this is not a science fiction novel. Nor is it a fantasy. It is, basically, a treatise on telepathy. As such it is probably valid in so far as we know and theorize about this phenomenon today.

As any treatise should, it dramatizes its subject, where practical. In the case of telepathy, even a practical demonstration tends to be passive.

Buried in this lecture is the synopsis of what could be a very exciting story. An Astrophysicist's mind is sent forward 25,000 years. Man is a tribal creature with a highly developed telepathic link with his recent ancestors. But the majority creatures, in terms of population and land area controlled, are birds. Where man has retrogressed through four successive upheavals of his civilizations, the birds have evolved. But they have retained their territorial instinct and are bent on the destruction of man.

There are a few holes in Blish's realization of this future condition, but the little space he devotes to describing it is evocative.

There is more, of course--a master computer in Antarctica, another immortal mind living in an ancient museum, and tantalizing glimpses into the actual cultures of the period. Unfortunately, some 75% of the book is spent in involved lecturing on the possibilities of telepathy and the immortality of the consciousness.

I suspect that this is really just an opener to a longer, and hopefully, more fully-developed novel of Blish's conception of the earth 25,000 years hence.

-- CHICK DERRY

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## ODDS AND ENDS AND 65 NEW STORIES

by: Richard Delap

Orbit 9 edited by Damon Knight, Putnam, 1971, \$5.95, 225 pp.  
(paper: Berkley Medallion N2116, 1972, 95¢)

New Dimensions 1 edited by Robert Silverberg, Doubleday, 1971, \$5.95, 246 pp.

New Worlds Quarterly #1 edited by Michael Moorcock, Berkley Medallion N2074,  
1971, 95¢, 192 pp.

Quark/4 edited by Samuel R. Delany and Marilyn Hacker, Paperback Library 66-658,  
1971, \$1.25, 240 pp.

Protostars edited by David Gerrold, Ballantine 02393, 1971, 95¢, 271 pp.

With each new edition, the SF anthologies of original stories edge closer and closer to the "feel" of the monthly magazines — i.e., less collections of outstanding stories deserving of preservation than showcases for one or two remarkably good stories surrounded by page-fillers of a quality varying from passable to poor. I will not be surprised to find that next year the anthologies will be vying for awards in the "best magazine" category of the Hugo — if they survive in quantity, that is. The other side of the coin is that they don't seem to be making much of a dent in the market when issued on a too-frequent basis. The Quark/ series has expired after only one year and four quarterly issues, and Moorcock's paperback incarnation of the British magazine, New Worlds, was also recently announced for cancellation after four issues. It seems the profit margin for these periodical paperbacks depends as much on impulse sales to capture new readers as it does on an already established readership; it may be that the frequency of publication is confusing some readers, who are perhaps not sure if they've already read the current "number" or not. I note that my own reaction to the rather dreary and depressingly similar cover designs, especially of the New Worlds series, does much to dampen my interest in the new books. (Publishers, note! Never, never, underestimate the selling power of an imaginative cover!)

Packaging and promotion may have something to do with the success of a series, but even the best salesmanship is not going to keep an audience buying when the product proves much inferior, especially with the competition as keen as it is now. I think this is proven by the relatively steady quality and obviously satisfactory sales registered by the Orbit volumes, the oldest and by far the best of the continuing anthologies.

Damon Knight's Orbit 9 features fourteen new stories, only two of which I found inferior, and several of which are very good indeed. Knight has done his best to gather a satisfactory cross-section of SF types, the kind of thoughtful editing that has made his volumes exude an appeal to readers of nearly every taste.

ODDS AND ENDS AND. . . (Continued)

The SF element in Leon E. Stover's "What We Have Here Is Too Much Communication" is something called "bionic moviemaking". It is not entirely necessary to Stover's theme, which is an ironic and heartily honest examination of the guises of social custom, But Stover puts it to good use, and never removes it to the point of becoming merely functional. The irony comes in the contrast between Japanese and Western cultures that finds its common base not in the method, but in the madness; the honesty comes with Stover's ability to expose the underlying humanity. Best of all, he never stoops to lecturing — and this in spite of the fact that his story is, in essence, a lecture in humanities — so he has a good chance of reaching much of the diverse SF audience. It's a fine story that should be enjoyed by all.

Robert Thurston, a new writer, has already displayed a noticeable versatility with several fine and remarkably divergent stories. "Stop Me Before I Tell More" is no exception, as strange and captivating as a mind-twisting Chinese puzzle, yet as common as a traveling-salesman dirty joke — which, not incidentally, is the foundation of this story about two farmer's daughters and their yearly sexual interludes. The frustrating but entirely apt climax contains as much fantasy as just about any absurd sexual joke, but it's funny enough to have even the Aunt Minnies laughing behind their disapproving sniffs.

Most of R. A. Lafferty's stories are symbolic, sometimes abstract, sometimes concrete, often both, and trying to hang all those pieces in place is an elitist puzzle for Lafferty fans, a curse and a despair to those who find him incoherent. "When All the Lands Pour Out Again" is about change — pardon, Change! — upon the face of the Earth, its lands and its peoples. It is the story of Revolution at a most basic level, a careful inlay of all the non-realities that make Reality. And if that sounds like a preposterous area of coverage for only 14 pages, then you are obviously new to Lafferty and in for a new experience.

Lee Hoffman and Robert E. Toomey, Jr.'s "Lost In the Marigolds" is strictly for fun, a pleasant bewilderment that catches the protagonist, Mr. Murdock, and the reader in a perplexing net of shifting circumstances. Murdock's problems begin as he tries to get to Punta Gorda, Florida, to clear up a sudden crisis in business negotiations, while his frustrations are mysteriously caught in a communications breakdown on all conceivable levels. And somehow all the difficulties are suggested to be (but not explained as) connected with the unknown object, a pantadodecahedron, found in the marigolds by his children. Brash, bawdy, rashly funny characterizations tenterhook the reader through each episode in Murdock's frantic efforts to make sense of his nonsensical adventures. It builds to a surprisingly subdued conclusion which should seem out of context an depressing yet doesn't. As I said, strictly for fun and well worth the trip.

Of the two stories I found inferior, W. Macfarlane's "The Last Leaf" is a gimmick story about a man who wants to fly a spaceship to "old Earth" and defies his society's objection to the voyage. It doesn't work as a mystery because it's too easily unraveled, and it doesn't work as SF because it is astoundingly trite. Gene Wolfe's "The Toy Theater" reminds me of the superior Sarban novel, The Doll Maker, albeit Wolfe has discarded the gothic-supernatural in favor of science fiction trappings. Why he felt it was necessary to place his marionette master, Stromboli, on another world and deck his art with pseudo-science is beyond me. Underneath it remains as gothic-supernatural as the Sarban book, and much inferior.

ODDS AND ENDS AND . . . (Continued)

The remaining eight stories are all good ones, none of them classic gems, but all of them entertaining, worth both their time and the book's price. The most attention will likely be directed to Kate Wilhelm's "The Infinity Box", a slow but increasingly tense construct about four people caught inextricably in a web of psychological cat-and-mouse. The pivot of the story is a woman with a peculiar mental power which enables her to see all periods of time at once, a power examined and studied and ruthlessly used by her late husband so that the woman, even as a widow, still fears tumbling over the brink into insanity. Complications develop when two inventors become involved in her dilemma, one as a lover and the other as a curious experimenter. (The story is told from the point-of-view of the second man, well done method-wise except for one lapse of logic half-way through the story which makes him suddenly and inexplicably seem like an awful dunce.) Wilhelm's an expert at getting the reader wrapped up tightly in a cocoon of human frailties and emotions, and one becomes so engrossed that it's easy to overlook the fact that the entire thing is basically pretty sticky melodrama. But sticky or not, it remains a damned sight more readable than most efforts of this type, strictly on the author's ability to get the reader involved.

I have come to a tentative conclusion that I will never be able to follow the subtle allusions and illusions of a Josephine Saxton story. On top of which, each one seems to get freakier than the last. Yet in all the (to me) confusion, she's assuredly a most fascinating author, proving again and again that she can keep her head straight, even in a story like "Heads Africa Tails America", about the difficulty of KEEPING YOUR HEAD STRAIGHT! She has potential for doing some great writing, though she will likely never enjoy the huge audiences of less venturesome writers; and while this strange story suggests that that potential is as yet unfulfilled, it shows she's getting closer.

And Joanna Russ, too, keeps writing stranger and stranger stories, odd crossbreeds and mutants that refuse to be categorized. "Gleepsite" is an uncommon view of a common SF staple, our strange offspring who will be conditioned to live in a polluted and wasted world of the future. Russ' approach is what makes this story stand out from its ilk — an oblique, unsettling introduction of necessary background and an up-front first person narrative that is unsparingly direct, a difficult feat which Russ handles with style. But it may annoy those who want their SF "straight", as well as aggravating those "new-wave" dilettantes who want it any way but straight. A mutant, yes, with bulges and bumps in strange places, but somehow still beautiful.

James Sallis is represented with two stories. "Binaries" will have you pulling it apart for hours without knowing exactly what you're doing. There's no point at which to grab hold that doesn't a few moments later dissolve into something which can't be held. Psychological fantasy? Human-relations reality? Sallis seems to know, but he isn't telling, so grab your head in one hand and your crotch with the other (two of Sallis' points of interest) and get set for a weird nightmare ride. And if you're still in one piece after that one, give a try to "Only the Words Are Different" — if ever there were a story written by a frustrated poet, this has got to be it. Vehement, angry, and at odd moments humorous, it has everything going for it but clarity, likely intentional since the lack of clarity is exactly the problem which afflicts his characters. Interesting, if you can dig it.

ODDS AND ENDS AND . . . (Continued)

Two stories play up the emotionalism to make their points. Kris Neville's "Dominant Species" poses the eternal question, what is reality?, difficult enough to answer from the human viewpoint. And from an alien one? — well, let's just say it's an enigma which Neville touches briefly and maybe a bit too cautiously. Kit Reed's "Across the Bar" tells of a 75-year-old poet laureate on a government spaceship, an experiment to test a scientist's theory that "zero gravity could retard the aging process". It's no more believable than Bradbury's early SF (social fulmination) stories, but Reed is every bit as good as Bradbury in investing the plot with tears of revelation.

What begins as a rather ordinary incident of industrial spying on an unnamed world — where science is struggling to prominence in an environment of lava flows, glaciers, and the fogs of their meeting — turns into a thoughtful comment on disaster and change. "The Science Fair" is another of those stories that lends itself to lectures, but Vernor Vinge slips the trap again and again and doesn't let his story bog down in necessary (but smoothly introduced) details.

Orbit still remains top-dog in the original anthologies, and Orbit 9 is a fine addition to the series. You should have it, really.

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Robert Silverberg's entry into the "original" sweepstakes, New Dimensions 1, gets off to a shaky and hesitant start by being so ill-balanced and desperately all-encompassing that one feels Silverberg is simply trying too hard "to negotiate the difficult middle course between the old and the new", as he says in the introduction. The book is such a course of uppers and downers that many readers are likely to get annoyed and put it away unfinished, despite the few fine stories scattered randomly throughout. These good stories make up for some of the overall erratic quality, but how much they make up will be for the individual reader to decide. He may be well-advised to browse through a library copy before he buys.

The book gets off to a slow start with Gardner R. Dozois' "A Special Kind of Morning", in which an aged and crippled man tells his guerilla warfare experiences to a young man who is interested or bored enough to stop and listen. Despite the slick futuristic setting in which Dozois creates a world of "men" vs. the heartless Combine (a technological precision-run nightmare which clones its human cogs), the story follows a tiresome pattern of wartime reminiscences, a first-person narrative of ordered pretention rambling on for twice the necessary length. There are fleetingly glimpsed horrors of clones, semisentients, nulls and zombies, all of which are deftly created then deftly demolished by Dozois' unbearable stylistic failures: contemporary and therefore jarringly misplaced slang ("things were going to get very hairy"); an exhausting plethora of mundane, incongruous or meaningless similes ("mortality like a rubber glove full of ice water slapped across your face". . . "anticipation that's pain, like straddling a fence with a knifeblade for a top rung". . . "snap the bones inside the skin like dry sticks inside oiled cloth"); and finally the concluding "let me tell you, son" lecture which should turn the stomach of anyone who's had the patience to get this far. Silverberg thinks Dozois' development as a writer is "exciting", but I'm beginning to find him a real drag. \*

\* I capitulate — I now am finding Dozois an "exciting" author, too; but his early stories, including this one, are still over-desperate, often clumsy works that do not digest well. (auth.)

ODDS AND ENDS AND. . . (Continued)

Silverberg would have been much wiser to start with the story which ends the book, Thomas M. Disch's look at the first quarter of the next century, a future the editor calls bleak. "Emancipation: A Romance of the Times to Come" is a disturbing extrapolation of liberalism, but I'm not sure I'd call it bleak since Disch's satire puts on quite a funny show while mowing down a dense field of usually elusive objects. Foremost among these is sex (foremost in almost all human relations, admittedly or not) and while bisexuality is currently advocated by many who see such sexual freedom as a release from the tensions of sexual polarity, Disch pinpoints its failings in this projected (as well as our own) social milieu. Technology has its effect on sexuality, too, enabling transsexualism to be more than a pretense or a half-realized physical and/or psychological phenomenon, supporting the changes it has in essence nurtured. While all of this gives vital play to the black (not bleak!) humor of Disch's world-to-come, it never strays so far from realism that it can be dismissed as negligible fantasy. The characters are marvelously human — such as the grandmother who admits being born the year man landed on the moon, 1967 [sic], and remains a staunch conservative, but only by the contemporary standards of the time. Humorous, yes, exaggerated, to an extent, but never, never anything but human, an exposure of our fallacies with a laugh rather than a sour admonition.

Among the better stories in the pages between are Josephine Saxton's "The Power of Time", R. A. Lafferty's "Sky", and Ursula K. Le Guin's "Vaster Than Empires and More Slow". Saxton tells of a young woman's first visit to New York, a woman so captivated by the city that she makes arrangements to have it taken back home with her — literally, down to the last stone and alleycat. Her wheeling and dealing with Flying Spider, the Mohawk who was powerful enough to buy Manhattan Island back, plays on subtle which springs from absurdity and builds to an hilarious final irony. Lafferty juggles the contemporary obsession with psychedelics and drugs, but pulls it out of the realm of the contemporary and puts it into a total and timeless picture of mankind. It's as much a moral tract as most of the drivel we see along this line, and a warning to boot, but it is so very much more — and that's where it counts. It fits into the Lafferty pattern of what I've come to label a sort of group existentialism, and is crammed with the semantic play that makes his work so delightful. Le Guin's survey crew of ten "escapists, misfits, nuts" is sent on a lengthy voyage to explore a distant planet, one member of the crew acting as an empath who seems of the unsoundest mind of all, but in actuality is a conduit for and working picture of the madnnesses surrounding him. Devoid of animal life, the planet is a great mass of vegetation, and in its own way a very special hell. The bare bones of plot are not very original, but Le Guin is refreshingly rational, her prose quick and precise, and her compassionate concern for the beauty in man pervasive, even when her story homes in on that which is not so beautiful.

Doris Pitkin Buck's "The Giberel" shows a world of mutated humans, where it seems humanity still has a tendency to segregate according to physiological characteristics. Briefly she depicts a destruction of barriers, offering no time-traveller to break down the status quo, a la Wells, but suggesting nature's way of righting man's wrongs. And Leonard Tushnet's "A Plague of Cars" is a moderate and mildly amusing piece of fluff featuring a young hippie inventor who has discovered a chemical means of reducing abandoned autos to small and easily disposed spheres.

The remaining stories, sad to report, consistently miss the mark.

ODDS AND ENDS AND. . . (Continued)

"At the Mouse Circus", as with most of Harlan Ellison's message stories, is heavy-handed, and what brief flashes of effectiveness emerge — and he does have a talent for making you see his scenes, in Living Color — are to no avail among muck like: "All moistened saran-wrap was her skin. All thistled gleaming were her teeth." (Yech!) For all his concern with the destruction of dreams and the dissolution of ideals, such patronization of pretentious hypocrisy can only be admired by the devouring guilty, who will undoubtedly never admit that such dishonesty can exist, woe to them.

Alex and Phyllis Eisenstein's "The Trouble with the Past" is a time-travel paradox which loses out to boredom when its repetitious construction kills the cleverness of the basic ploy. Robert C. Malstrom's "The Great A" is a sort of lopsided view of the worth of art; at best, a minor exhibit. And man meets alien in Barry N. Malzberg's "Conquest", a so-so Aesop's fable.

In "The Wicked Flee", Harry Harrison does a fine job depicting the mood of a small Italian town under the hot summer sun, a world of loyal and suspicious natives seen by an outsider seeking a man fleeing from "God's justice". Harrison keeps his readers hooked with revelations of time-travel and alternate futures, all of it engineered efficiently and convincingly, then blows the entire thing with a horridly clumsy ending. On the heels of the Harrison fiasco, Philip José Farmer blunders "The Sliced-Crosswise Only-On-Tuesday World" in just about the same way. He sets up a future where people live only one day out of the week, spending the remaining days in suspended animation, and after introducing a man who falls in love with a woman from the "wrong" day, cops out with a troubled, silly conclusion.

Ugliness abounds in "Love Song of Herself", but it never quite works as insight because Ed Bryant fails to develop it with any depth or gusto. A man with no past and a woman with too much past meet on a sandy beach of an Earth ravaged of all its lifeforms, and after a pseudo-cryptic development it all turns out to be an experiment that doesn't make any sense at all.

After giving his authors praise for their "vigor and freshness", Silverberg mentions that this book "is not quite what I thought it would be when I first began to search for stories." (Perhaps he's telling us that he is not entirely satisfied? . . . of course, he couldn't come right out and say that, you understand.) There are six or seven good stories out of a total of fourteen — so it would seem the book's worthiness is completely dependent on how much the reader is willing to spend for those good stories.

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The British magazine, New Worlds, has surely had the most controversial history of any SF magazine in the world, but with all the attendant publicity regarding its policy of experimental science fiction also loomed the specter of censorship and the power of narrow-mindedness. According to all I've heard, this was the primary reason for the magazine's demise in England, and now we have the question to gnaw over in America: if there were no restrictions on the U. S. paperback editions, why has it failed here as well? I'm sure the answers will be coming thick and fast in no time at all, so I'm not going to bother with it, and will simply go on record as saying that New Worlds Quarterly #1 is a reasonably good anthology-magazine, as good as almost any single issue of a magazine and standing

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up well to most books we see these days. Moorcock's introduction (editorial) and M. John Harrison's essay (book reviews) signify the cross between book and magazine, and in the end, though the cross may please some readers, the fiction is where it really counts.

In "Angouleme", a followup to "Emancipation", Thomas M. Disch sustains the expert tragi-comic tone of this series, and deals with a 21st-century street gang of youngsters, one like no gang you've ever met before. Their time is as much on their hands as it is with youngsters of any age, and Disch seems delighted to mold gang-psychology to a strange breed of intellectualism, combining it with adolescent mischief and violence. Disch's gang, who decide maturity is only to be achieved with murder, find day-to-day experience breaking them apart before their goal is reached, until finally the eleven-year-old "hero", Little Mister Kissy Lips, is left alone to confront the passion of violence in a scene as vivid and disturbing a bit of empathy as you're likely to find in fiction.

An enigmatic background character is eventually brought forward to utter the line: "Perhaps our time-sense is awry. . . perhaps we are too imprecise to survive. . ." — but whether this is clarification or mystification, Brian W. Aldiss does not say, and he ends "The Day We Embarked for Cythera" with a literal question. The plot is ephemeral (if it exists at all!), but this is relatively and surprisingly unimportant as Aldiss conjures up deeply disturbing images that subtly juxtapose the primitive and the mannered, the serene and the horrible. I'm not sure I completely understand the purpose of the many small and puzzling details (the mysterious group of dwarves totally baffled me), but I still shudder with the impact of his brilliant imagery of "a pride of machines. . . by the side of the road, feeding." Such as this makes this tale linger in the mind, whatever its depth or true purpose may be.

There are two stories by J. G. Ballard, both reprinted from poorly-distributed issues of the magazine but never before in book form. In "Journey Across a Crater" Ballard does a swift dissection of the craze of contemporaneity, a short and unsparing evaluation of motives extracted from the sham-reality of modern civilization. Underneath all the flashy technique, however, you'll find a sex-and-murder story that harkens back to the dear, dead pulps. Pulp lovers will hate it should they recognize it, but some may find it an interesting "cultural" experience. Moorcock calls "A Place and a Time to Die" one of Ballard's "more conventional stories", yet the odd thing is that conventional Ballard has little relation to what is usually termed conventional SF. The characters — a confused but nevertheless single-minded rightwinger, a retired police chief of no particular persuasion, and a young radical caught in his own sticky web of failure — are featured making a last stand against an overwhelming throng of invaders (only implied to be Orientals, thus putting the reader in the same boat as the characters, grappling with assumptions). Idealism, the real point of the story, comes not so much under direct scrutiny as does a more removed viewpoint, accessible only from the reader's response to his personal reactions. Those who may want to discard the story as idealistic leftist propaganda are advised to stop and think about their response a moment; and while I don't want to overrate the story, its method is certainly notable for its departure from the "conventional" last-stand story we've seen before, and as such it deserves some attention.

The third reprint story, "Prisoners of Paradise", is by David Redd. Mr. Redd has not produced very much SF since his initial appearance several years ago, but his story, "A

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"Quiet Kin of Madness" gained some attention a while ago in F&SF, a strange and beautiful story of a dying Earth, "Sunbeam Caress", was one of the finest stories of the 60's (though completely and unaccountably ignored by the anthologists). The present story tells of an expiring world where intelligent "veils", creatures of thin, protoplasmic substance, live together in a hive mind, though each has a personality and consciousness of its own. While Redd puts a fine effort into depicting this strange race, he unfortunately lets his plot die of inattention with the chance arrival of a human who endangers the groupmind's future survival. The nice touches here and there in describing this imaginative world make the reader doubly wish that Redd hadn't been quite so mediocre with his plot.

And speaking of writers who ride high on my list for past efforts, I have been expecting much from Keith Roberts since the excellent novel, Pavane, and have been quite disappointed in the meritless work he's done. "The God House" is a longish story set among the primitive tribes of men in an England as it might survive "the last great war", but in all its length it is never convincing, and it consistently hovers on the brink of outright idiocy. It tells the adventures of a young girl, Mata, from her adolescent confusion over the nature of her tribe's Corn Lord to her ascension to the position of God Bride, and finally to a thunderous conclusion of violent bloodshed as she fulfills her psychotic course to self-martyrdom. Mata's simplified motives of petty revenge and self-delusions are boring — in spite of Roberts' heavyhanded introduction to her bisexual affairs and not-so-latent lesbian fixation — and she is much too shallow a character to get the mawkish, senseless adulation she receives. I occasionally suspected that Roberts was being farcical — and he mentions, at a time when Mata is ascending to the Sacred Mound, having inhaled the smoke of magic seeds, that "never before had she been so high." But I more strongly suspect that this is merely the accidental byproduct of the sloppy writing that characterizes this sorry mess of blatant nonsense.

M. John Harrison's "The Lamia and Lord Cromis" is a surprisingly elaborate swords-and-sorcery fantasy. (I hate to categorize it this way, but despite the obvious mythological links, the story has little else to distinguish it from this genre.) On simple terms, it's not really a bad little story, having a careful and cautious construction around a family tradition of a search to kill once and for all the Beast which traditionally has slaughtered Cromis' ancestors. The descriptive passages are gratefully overwritten, but the characters are richly drawn and pleasantly bigger-than-life.

John Sladek's "The Short, Happy Wife of Mansard Eliot" is a sexual, farcical cornucopia of such diverse elements that I can only admit I just don't understand it at all. I feel uneasy and ignorant when I fail to find a link between a rich man's desire to "marry beneath his station" (to a scrubwoman), random sexualisms ("she fingers the bottle's long, graceful neck"), and even more random yet crazily fascinating bits of information ("A lady traveler to Europe should take: four pair of nylon panties, six pairs of nylon stockings, [etc. etc. etc.]"). It almost makes sense, yet it doesn't, but I'll recommend it to anyone who enjoys puzzles and will perhaps be aware of an interpretation I can't find. It's different, anyway. Sladek's second story, "Pemberly's Start-Afresh Calliope or, The New Proteus", is also a farce, this time with a mad inventor who exclaims "Reality is not truth, it is half truth", but hovers over its Victorian time-and-mood like a rubber guillotine — funny only if you know for sure it's not for real. Mixing quiet humor and slapstick is not the easiest thing

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in the world to do if you're working for anything other than confusion, and I really don't think Sladek has succeeded with this one.

Barrington Bayley's "Exit from City 5" is the story of a city which has escaped the coming destruction of the shrinking material universe by breaking through the "barrier" to the non-material echelon of space. Depressing, pointlessly negative, it projects a future of rampantly advanced technology, but foresees not even a smidgen of advance in the social sciences in 3,000 years. The speculations on science may catch some readers — I find them mathematically inaccurate, generally improbable, and clumsily introduced — but the human milieu is so unrelievedly dull that even poking holes in the science can't liven it up.

Not a great collection of literary experiments, I suppose, yet NWQ #1 is a little different from the usual, and when the experiments work they seem to work very well indeed. Worth reading.

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Quark/4 is the concluding issue of this series, and its end is not very distinguished. I found two stories were quite good, a couple mildly interesting, and the rest almost a total waste of printed pages. Perhaps I really am old-fashioned and unconsciously anti-New Wave, but when I read I simply must have something I can relate to, even when I only partially understand that relation and can't always explain it in words. But so much of the contents of this book seems to me to be anti-rules only for the sake of demoralizing the game, and anti-touch only to prove it can be done. We already have plenty of proof, and need no more at this point. Sad to say, I'm not sorry to see this series disappear before it reached the point where I refused to even read it.

The two really good stories are Helen Adam's "The True Reason for the Dreadful Death of Master Rex Arundel" and Thomas M. Disch's "Bodies". In a startling change of pace for the Quark/ series, Adam presents a thoughtful fantasy with a clarity and honesty that once more proves how stories of stark simplicity are molded into impressive drama by the sensitive artist. This story makes good use of that old standby technique, the story within a story, and gives the reader the proper distance at which to examine the characters in their confrontation with the deceptive beauty of evil and the awesome power of hate. Old-fashioned in style, but showing (in philosophy) that such stories are surely the most complex of all. Disch looks to 2022, where the emergence of cryonics seems headed for a similar merry-go-round of mayhem that all Big Business eventually entails, and it's the little people who somehow get involved that capture the reader's interest and draw him quickly into this projected madness. And it's also the little people who at last reflect the true horrors of funhouse-mirror distortions. I'm sure Robert Louis Stevenson would rattle his bones in approval of this funny and frightening black comedy of body-snatching.

Larry Niven has a special talent for frothy concoctions of 90% nonsense mixed with 10% "hard" science. I personally prefer his stories which cut the reagents to 2% and increase the nonsense to 98%, but his really funny stories seldom get the attention they

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deserve, which is a shame. "The Fourth Profession" is about a bartender who becomes the contact man for a visiting group of alien traders and the subject of intense government interest after he swallows some alien RNA pills that give him very special talents. Slowing down at times for some awkward forays into scientific explanations and gratuitous fannish humor, the story overcomes most of its triviality in the sheer drive of Niven's all-for-fun tactics. Certainly not one of Niven's best efforts, but it is amusing and will surely satisfy the incurable Niven fans.

Successful comedies of the absurd are one of the most difficult feats of literature, for both author and reader. The author often seems unsure of when to push forward and when to halt, and the reader is prone to respond poorly when the ridicule becomes personally offensive. Philip José Farmer's "Brass and Gold, or Horse and Zeppelin In Beverly Hills" is sure to offend many since it hits out at some popular (mis)conceptions about Jews, monied ghettos, sexual aberrations, and the weird fantasies which reside in all of us in one way or another. Not everyone will like it, which is to be expected, but I found its funnybone stimulation often well-aimed and well-triggered.

Avram Davidson's "Basileikon: Summer" has some funny lines, but seems too much the author's personal vision for me to appreciate. Michael Moorcock's "Voortrekker, a Tale of Empire" features Jerry Cornelius in the battle of Entropy — if you dig Cornelius, you dig him; if you don't, and I don't, it's a rough go. Gail Madonia's "Acid Soap Opera" is subheaded "Chapter 25, the first in a continuing set of variables", which says a lot about nothing, as does this confusing (and most probably also confused) effort. Stan Persky's "from The Day" (a novel excerpt?) is so dim that it isn't even listed on the contents page, a suitable fate. Marco Cacchioni's verse, "The Song of Passing", passes very slowly, and Charles Platt's "Norman vs. America" is an underground-comix strip (from an idea by John T. Sladek) that should have comix fans muttering into their beers and reaching once again for R. Crumb. And "Twelve Drawings" by Olivier Olivier turns out to be thirteen drawings of elephants and holes, space which could have been much better used to start each story on a new page rather than running them together like paupers in a breadline.

Two young men reared in a totally isolated environment emerge at last to meet the scientist responsible for the experiment and to greet a curious world. The experiment is a failure, of course, and Vonda M. McIntyre's "Cages" chooses an easy out of murder and revenge, much too superficially dramatized to convince even the most naive reader. Marek Obtulowicz's "A Man of Letters" has a man imprisoned in a stable, single-room environment, with the focus on the man's reactions and no concern for the reason behind his dilemma. Vaguely similar to Disch's much superior "The Squirrel Cage" of several years ago, this story reeks of symbolism until it smells of deterioration.

I read somewhere that Hacker was responsible for most of the Quark/ editorship, with Delany credited mainly for the selling power of his name. If this is so, I hope she is willing to accept the responsibility for the series' failure, and in the process has discovered the meaning of the word "story".

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Protostars is an anthology of stories by the new generation of SF writers, some already familiar names (James Tiptree, Jr., Leo P. Kelly, David R. Bunch, Robert Margroff, and Pg Wyal), others appearing in print for the first time. Unlike the earlier Clarion anthology, there was no group of guiding hands to prod and poke and slap the writers around until they produced something acceptable to the group. Editor David Gerrold, with an assist from Stephen Goldin, takes full responsibility for the work presented here. He wanted to present an "entertaining" book, but the quality is so mixed that one can't help feeling that the package was rushed, the pages filled with whatever was handy, and at last embellished with some Ellison-windy hype introductions that are almost as tiresome as the worst of the stories.

The two best stories are by writers who have already made their mark in the SF field with a small but startlingly fine group of short stories, Laurence Yep and Pg Wyal. Yep's "In a Sky of Daemons" is that old saw of a future in which all man's great technological achievements have backed him into a corner from where protest comes like a signal for immediate destruction, here at the hands of SET ("the machine that runs this star system") and the mechanized band of Angels, Archangels and St. Peters. The sarcasm is that destruction, in this case, is life everlasting and continuous, for this is a world where, as Holy Joe (the oldest man alive and the only one who can remember all his previous lives) states: "There is no way to die... You can only endure." But this endless circus of re-births is surely inhuman, and in developing the rebellion Yep looks sardonically at the things which do make us human, including some funny jabs at the differences between the promise of religious and/or utopian ideals and the cultural straight jackets needed in attempting to carry them through. It's a very clever story which demands close attention but in return offers a great deal of amusement and provocation.

Editor Gerrold doesn't leave the reviewer much to say regarding the plot of Pg Wyal's "Side Effect (the monster that devoured Los Angeles)", what with his imitation of the "really slippery blurb-writer" who pegs the story as a combination of "the unlikely elements of 1956 B-picture (The Amazing Colossal Man), scream-of-consciousness, "new-wave", multi-adjectived, sado-masochistic descriptive techniques, and heavy-handed political satire to produce the 1970 model Kong — the psychological fairy tale that pegs our society for where it is and for what it's at." The catch is that Wyal is satirizing none of the above things at all. He's merely using them as certain notorious SF authors have done and is exposing the depthless philosophies which so often pass for relevance with an easily-deluded public. I would almost certainly have bet that no author could render such a grandiose exposé without the method itself blunting the sharp edges, not even Wyal, who is surely one of SF's ablest new satirists. Had he failed, I could have shaken a finger and tut-tutted him about tackling the impossible; that he has succeeded, and so well!, leaves me with an egg on my face and cowering in a corner. Do read this one!

Several more stories have points of interest, and while none of them are completely victorious, they do show the spark of authors working their way out of the anonymous pile.

In "The Naked and the Unashamed", Robert E. Margroff has written a morality test which checks off the individual and collective response to a definition of pornography.

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If humanity's bloodlust is fulfilled by robots and pseudo-blood battles, what will take its place (especially on campuses)? Margroff's speculation is in no way probable or realistic, but it has a valid message about the true nature of man's passion in both violence and sexuality. That it is also quite funny should make any potentially hostile readers respond to it in spite of themselves.

Pamela Sargent's "Oasis", about a man who has isolated himself in the desert, is SF in the strangest way. The man has a power of feeling within himself the physical and mental well-being or ills of others, and in his isolation can respond to the good "vibes" of the nearby plantlife while avoiding contact with the painful emanations from men. Yet the story is not specifically concerned with this strange power, but deploys it as a means to examine the mental aberrations which may lie behind the depressing newspaper headlines about mass murders. One may reject Sargent's social-sickness allusions as inaccurate, but whatever conclusions one reaches the story does have a mood that grabs hold and won't let go.

Could an invention be made and be a financial success, even when it has no purpose and no real use? There are sure to be some who will interpret David R. Bunch's "Holdholtzer's Box" as specific criticisms (Vietnam, monolithic business, etc.), which can be misleading unless one keeps touch with the human pulse that binds them — i.e., the tendency which molds a "nation of sheep". This one may creep up your back in an involuntary shudder.

Edward Bryant's "Eyes of Onyx" is a religious story — sort of in the way Rosemary's Baby was a religious story — and will likely be dismissed as either offensive or derivative and unoriginal. But while the parallels to Christ's birth (here in a Chicano auto-mechanic's shop by a superhighway of the near future) may be negligible as allegory, Bryant displays his increasing (if unsteady) ability at effective writing. He manages a first-person narrative with skill, and conveys depthful characterization in a few well-chosen words. The story is ordinary, but it vibrates with stylistic intensity and sharpness.

Stephen Goldin's "The World Where Wishes Worked" is a caustic and amusing little fable of a world whose people delight in the fact that nothing can be denied them. But even the unlimited has its relative limits, and it takes a fool to find them, much to the discomfort of all. Goldin's second story, "The Last Ghost", heads the list of remaining stories which simply don't make the grade. The immortality of men whose minds have been lodged in undying computers brings up the question of the millions who have already died: were they in fact doomed, or did they move on to a different sort of immortality? The implications in technology vs. theology seem to be something of no concern to Goldin, who opts for tears-in-the-beer in a thin, overindulgent and basically evasive story unable to support its emotional burden.

"What Makes a Cage, Jamie Knows" by Scott Bradfield tells of a baby whose selfish parents keep him locked in crib and out of their hair, and how salvation (of a sort) and an accidental revenge (of a sort) comes through alien intervention (of a sort). The story is naive, and as trite as Gerrold's mention that the author is only 14 years old. I mean,

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who cares, especially when the story is lousy.

James Tiptree, Jr. introduces a "nice Terran boy" and his adventures in giving a helping hand to the peoples of Gondolphus Four, who will kill and slaughter with stunningly enthusiastic abandon. Tiptree occasionally does well with this type of quasi-symbolism, but "I'll Be Waiting For You When the Swimming Pool Is Empty" leaves one more with a handful of ambiguities than anything concrete or thought-provoking. And speaking of symbols, David Gerrold's own "Afternoon with a Dead Bus" depicts an ancient, battered, half-blind bus falling prey to a vicious and "cannibalistic" group of cars, penned in at a street corner and devoured in an orgy of mechanical lust. Gerrold attempts to convey a sense of African animism, and works at it so hard that the reader is goaded into wondering why he didn't just write about animals and let it go at that. I think it's a nonsensical and pretentious story, one to be ignored.

Roger Deeley's "The Five Dimensional Sugar Cube" supposes that the fifth dimension is a groovy place to meet a chick for a quick ball, but the author's tacked-on moral clause sounds puritanical and cowardly rather than innocuous. Gerrold indulges in a long and lumbering introduction about the synthesis of "old" and "new" wave SF, then gives us Alice Laurence's "Chances Are" as one of the "tentative explorations in that direction". Following a tentative death, the story's heroine takes a journey down a long roadway, all the while musing over the tentative possibilities tentatively resulting from her tentative choices at each road junction. It's never more than tentatively interesting as it winds its way downhill to a definite dead end.

A satire of socio-political polarities, Andrew J. Offut's "My Country, Right or Wrong" is a time-travel story with its hero traveling backwards and forwards, murdering first one pivotal world figure and then another (including Lenin and Hitler), but always frustrated by finding the results ever-culminating in an imperfect Amerika. It suffers the fate of most time-travel stories, a concept so familiar that the author is forever one step behind the reader.

It's hard enough to accept the bleakness and emotional sterility of many of the futures postulated in recent SF if one wants to keep even a shred of hope going; harder still when the author begins to weave it into a commentary disfigured with amorphisms of words. For example, in Leo P. Kelley's "Cold, the Fire of the Phoenix" we find this: "ALI NS (fill in blank completely). Unseen and totally energized entities. . . They find it as Tonely here as there — as where they come from, came from, on their nonlinear expedition through the valley of night on their climb up the mountain of light that (they hope) will spell an end to their loneliness and their former now-evoluted-out-of-existence-multicellular-matter-and-failed-fortitude-from-beyond-far-stars." The plot, such as it is, is smothered in carbuncle sentences, and the message, if there really is one, certainly won't survive such competition.

Barry Weissman's "And Watch the Smog Roll In. . ." has a sharp satire about pollution struggling to emerge from this tale of a family saddled with a dead body and no way to get

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rid of it because the "proper forms" have not been (and can not be) completely filled out. It takes a child to come up with a solution so simple and straightforward that it is, of course, illegal. While the idea is amusing and in a way frighteningly relative to the world today, it is disappointing that Weissman's execution is so inept, marred by stale prose and lacking in real wit.

One is glad that Gerrold managed to uncover a few good stories, but the reader is left feeling ungraciously like an ordinary hobo, digging through the trash to find something of value. I resent being put in this position, and doubly resent Gerrold trying to convince me that this is the best the "new theology" of SF can do. Any more downers like this, and I'll be driven in desperation to singing Old Christian Hymns for amusement.

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## SIC ET NON: Fanzine Reviews

by Sandra Miesel

When I first volunteered to try fanzine reviews, it looked like a simple way to contribute to TWJ. Alas, I have found it a singularly uncongenial occupation. Lacking Doll Gilliland's stamina, this installment is likely to be my one and only venture into the field. But for the nonce, procedamus!

AWRY #1 (Dave Locke, 915 Mt. Olive Dr., Duarte, CA 91010; 2/\$1 or the usual; mimeo; 25 pp.) This is a neat, relaxed personalzine consisting of humorous columns by the editor, Ed Cox, and Tina Hensel. It came as lagniappe with YANDRO #213.

\*CIPHER #5 (Chris Couch, 402 John Jay, Columbia University, NY, NY 10027; .35 or 3/\$1, contributions preferred; mimeo; 22 pp.) To my mind this is the most enjoyable of the current faanish zines. Regular columns by the editor, Alice Sanvito, piece by Ray Nelson, "The Then People"--are fans backward-looking types? Art by Stiles and Lovenstein.

#6 -- In addition to the above contributors, Greg Shaw describes his first junket as a rock critic.

CITADEL #5 (George & Lana Proctor, 406 NE 19th St., Grand Prairie, TX 75050; .25 or the usual; offset; 24 pp.) Columns by the editors, articles by offutt, di Fate, Williamson, Shaver (yes, that Shaver!), poem by de Camp, fanzine reviews by Cy Chauvin, and a piece of author-illustrated fan fiction most mercifully left unidentified. With this lineup and good repro the finished product ought to be more interesting than it actually is. The layout seems cramped and the articles end too abruptly.

COR SERPENTIS #2 (Carey Hanfield, 2 Bannoon Rd., South Eltham, Victoria 3095, Australia; no price given; mimeo; 29 pp.) Organ of the Monash University SF Assn. Features "The Velikovsky Affair" by R. Symons, parody-review of Report on Probability A by John Bangsund, and tran-



scripts of three speeches on the state of the field made in 1968 by Brian Aldiss, Brian Richards, and Buck Coulson: veritable time-capsules.

COZINE #1 (Larry Smith, 216 East Tibet Rd., Columbus, OH 43202; no price; offset; 12 pp.) Clubzine of CØSFS, with reviews, puzzles, comic strip, Marcon data.

THE DIPPLE CHRONICLE #6 (Richard Benyo, 207 Center St., Jim Thorpe, PA 18229; .50; offset; 26 pp.) Mostly editor-written, on topics ranging from the Super Bowl to Andre Norton, plus fiction by Earl Evers and Roger Zelazny. Illos by Joe Staton augmented by stills from 2001. The editor has a strong personality but this fanzine gives the odd feeling of being produced in total isolation from the rest of fandom.

#7 -- This issue concentrates--with hostility--on No Blade of Grass, featuring stills and promotional material from the movie.

DYNATRON #28 (Roy Tackett, 915 Green Valley Rd., NW, Albuquerque, NM 87107; .25 or the usual; mimeo; 19 pp.) With this issue DYNATRON metamorphoses into a genzine but is still mostly editor-written--Tackett is cut from the same bolt of cloth as Buck Coulson.

\*ENERGUMEN #10 (Michael & Susan Glicksohn, 32 Maynard Ave., #205,

Toronto 156, Canada; .50 in cash or the usual; mimeo; 50 pp.) Offset covers by Fabian & Davidson. A balanced issue of a genzine that prided itself on balance. Columns by the editors, Ted Pauls, Rosemary Ulllyot, spoof guide to book reviewing by Rick Stooker, serious discussion of fanzines by Jerry Lapidus, Ginjer Buchanan's Boskone odyssey, an unusual Entrophy Reprint (E. Hoffman Price remembering Robert Howard), and a Jabberwitch portfolio by Derek Carter. The issue is united by four entirely different con reports, most notably Walt Liebscher's tender look at Noreascon.

#11 (note price increase to .75; 52 pp.) This Hugo-nominated fanzine is headlined by part I of Hugo-nominee Susan Glicksohn's feminist assault on Marvel Comics, an essay certain to generate intense controversy. Also on hand: Angus Taylor examines Sheckley, Greg Benford shares impressions of Bonestell, and Jack Gaughan remembers the Goon Show in hilarious fashion. There are columns by Hugo-nominee Rosemary Ulllyot, Bob Toomey, Jerry Lapidus, a Rotsler portfolio, and a fine Austin cover. NERG is my own Hugo choice on the basis of consistent enjoyability.

ENTROPY NEGATIVE #4 (Daniel Say, Box 5583 Station E, Vancouver, B.C., Canada; .75 or 4/\$2, cash only, not available for LoC's; mimeo; 39 pp.) The material deserves better than the cramped layout: Bradbury interview, Freudian analysis of Lovecraft, survey of SF films during the Cold War, report on a Japanese SF convention, book reviews, fiction, poetry.

\*GRANDFALLOON #14 (Linda Bushyager, 111 MacDade Blvd., Apt. B-211, Sutton Arms Apts., Folsom, PA 19033; .60, 4/\$2 or the usual; mimeo; 52 pp.) Neatness, attractive artwork and layout, and an enormous lettercol mark this issue of Hugo-nominated GF. This is your only chance to read a chapter edited out of Ted White's Trouble on Project Ceres. Also Don D'Amassa's tribulations in a small town library (hilariously illustrated by Tim Kirk), "Jeff Glencannon's" fanzine reviews, and a column by Arnie Katz. There are two lively Grant Canfield covers and a Ron Miller portfolio on Lovecraft.

\*THE HOG ON ICE #1 (Creath Thorne, 1022 College Ave., Columbia, MO 65201; .25 or the usual; mimeo; 16 pp.) An unusually intelligent and reflective personalzine.

\*JOURNAL OF OMPHALISTIC EPISTEMOLOGY #4 (John Foyster, % 6 Clowes St., South Yarra, Victoria 3141, Australia; mimeo; 20 pp. apazine, availability not indicated.) One of fandom's best--and tartest--reviewers takes on 16 books including such important titles as Dangerous Visions, The Stars My Destination, Fourth Mansions, And Chaos Died. These were originally intended for publication in VISION OF TOMORROW.

\*KRATOPHANY #1 (Eli Cohen, 417 W. 118th St., Apt. 63, NY, NY 10027; .50 or the usual; mime; 30 pp.) Eli's previous experience with AKCS helps make this a smooth first issue: a Randall Garrett parody by John Boardman, serious technological speculations and a PgHLANGE report by Eli, a Judy Mitchell comic strip--too pretty to be called "underground"--and cover.

MOTA #3 (Terry Hughes, 407 College Ave., Columbia, MO 65201; .25 or the usual; mimeo; 31 pp.) Yet another product of burgeoning MO fandom, here covering: Noreascon fandom, dishwashing fandom, old fanzine fandom, Freddy-the-Pig fandom (?!).

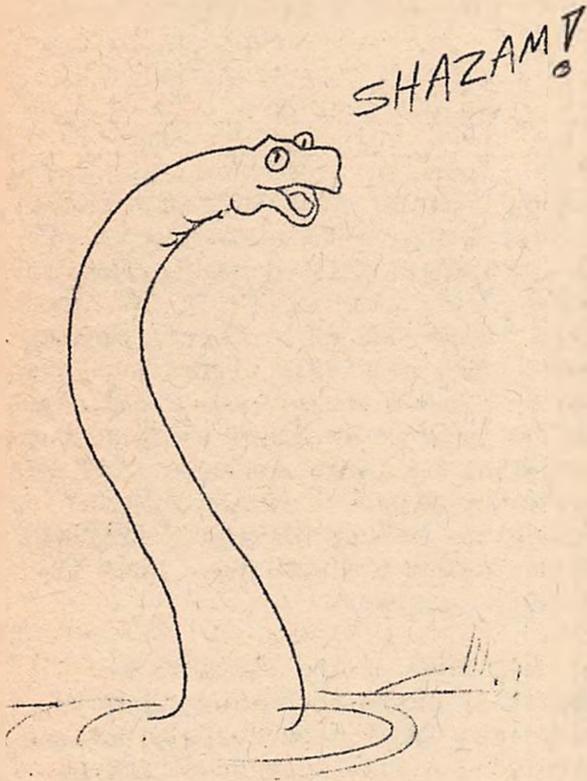
\*MYTHLORE #7 (Mythopoetic Society, PO Box 24150, Los Angeles, CA 90024; \$1 or \$4/4; offset; 27 pp.) An earnest, scholarly--certainly not dry--publication devoted to Tolkien, Lewis, and Williams. Columns by Glen GoodKnight and Bernie Zuber. Tim Kirk artwork appears regularly. This issue features essays on Tom Bombadil by Keith Masson, Till We Have Faces by Margaret Hamnay (especially good), hobbit names by Pauline Marmor, Narnian geography by J.R. Christopher (with Kirk foldout map), a critical defense of Tolkien by Claire Howard, and an unpublished fragment by Charles Williams.

#8 (31 pp.) Essays: "Wielders of the Three" by Paula Marmor, "The Unity of the Word" by Brian Bond, "The Company of Logres" by Glen GoodKnight, "Introduction to Narnia, part III" by

J.R. Christopher, "The C.S. Lewis Collection at Wheaton College", by Margaret Hannay.

\*ORCRIST #5 (combining TOLKIEN JOURNAL #14) (Richard West, 614 Langdon St., Madison, WI 53703; \$1 ea.; offset; 31 pp.) This Bulletin of the Univ. of Wisconsin Tolkien Society is now a

general academic journal of fantasy in the arts, with contents listed in the annual PMLA bibliography. Most of this issue is editor-written: a survey of recent publications on Tolkien and Lewis and the third installment of his comprehensive bibliography of Tolkien criticism.



ARFSET?: Fanzine Reviews  
by Mike Glycer

Thish: CITADEL 6  
ALGOL 18  
NYCTALOPS 6

The use of photography to obtain good repro has been a concern for years. Counterfeiters after the Civil War freely used the camera to help guide the engraving of bonus plates. The only difference between yesterday's paperhangers and today's offset fanziners is that the latter aren't making any money--in fact, they usually get soaked for a whopping printer's bill. "Last issue I wrote that the cost of publishing that issue was over \$300...many felt that it was too great a cost...My counter to that, of course, was that if something is worth doing, it is worth doing well." Also sprach Andy Porter, editor of ALGOL.

Editor's Notes --

The preceding marks the first and last appearance in TWJ for Sandra Miesel as a fanzine reviewer. (She tried it and didn't like it.) Doll Gilliland, for a long time TWJ's only fmz-reviewer, and one of the best, is tired of it all and will only appear infrequently, if at all. ##### Besides Ye Old Edde, who is currently doing short fmz reviews for SOTWJ, current TWJ Fanzine Reviewers are: Mike Glycer, 14974 Osceola St., Sylmar, CA 91342; Mike Shoemaker, 2123 N.Early St., Alexandria, VA 22302; and Barry Smotroff, 147-53 71st Rd., Flushing, NY 11367. The two Mike's appear in both TWJ and SOTWJ; we have yet to hear from Barry.

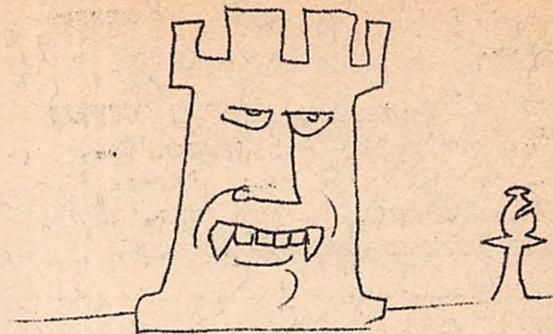
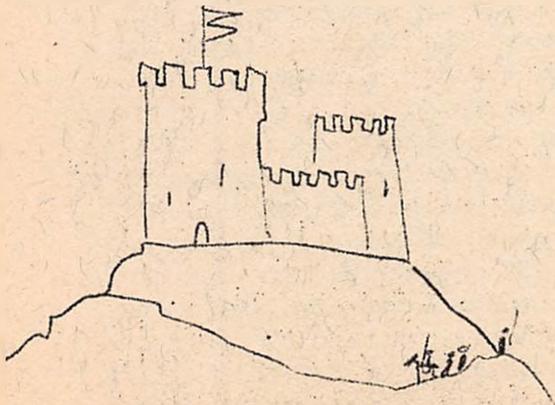
But offset is not an end in itself; it is a tool whose successful use relies on editorial imagination, large varieties of good artwork, and well-written contributions (else why use a high-quality package?). The benefits accrue in the form of reliable repro, the opportunity to free artists a little bit more from the restrictions of black-and-white line drawing, and the liberation of the editor from simplifying his package design down to whatever typer, lettering guides, and electrostencils can handle. Occasionally an editor using offset will strike out, producing a doubly-damned offset crudzine. But the lasting 'zines rival one another for superlatives.

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GOOD -- CITADEL 6, editors Geo. & Lana Proctor, 406 NE 19th St., Grand Prairie, TX 75050; contributions (art, articles), trades, LoC's, 25¢ ea., \$1 per year.

The improvements made between CITADELs 5 and 6 are striking. Number five had the standard Offutt "how-I-sold-my-story" piece, a good but editorially overplayed poem by de Camp, columns by both editors, Vincent di Fate's finely analytic essay on SF art, a Jack Williamson scholyawnly speech on collegiate SF, a cracked pot by Richard Shaver, Cy Chauvin's effective fmz review column, D. Bruce Berry's intractably dull continuing story "Futillis", and an anemic lettercol. Number five had adequate art, but lack of editorial control over the layout. It was long on the Beeg Names, short on thematic organization. De Camp's and di Fate's entries were successfully laid out; elsewhere the pages seemed imbalanced, too many illos disintegrating the flow of an article, or, as with the lettercol, stacked aisles of type reeled off unbroken.

CITADEL 6 is marked by an accomplished layout, possesses fine art and articles (not missing the pros), and a stronger lettercol. The first three visuals are admirably synergistic. Which, while a stodgy way to say it, sums up my reaction. There is Mike Presley's violent cover, superb in its composition, distribution of light and dark (and leaving room for the 'zine's logo, a rare bird in today's fanzines).



I would like to know whether this is the black-and-white rendering of an oil painting. (I'll probably never hear.) Then, immediately inside appears SNAFU--George Proctor's column, headed by a soldierly figure standing out of a black background. Following, the ToC page is designed to distribute type around a large Anderson illo of a reverse nature--a bright figure negatively defined through a minimal use of shadow and outline. Both illos work together.

The rest of the issue is as skillfully designed, using about 30 illos (and front & bacovers), not one of which was done by a Hugo nominee. No Rotsler. Or Canfield. Or anybody else. Proctor recruits his own art and does well. But the written material he picks up does not seem to be selected with more than casual screening. There are two principal flaws in CIT 6, and the first is the overall organization of the material. While most of it is good, its placement is careless. Leading off comes Darrell Schweitzer's protest over the lack of attention given Judgment Night, C.L. Moore's 1943 ASF serial. It is strongly written, but basically it's two columns of a plea to read the story, something Schweitzer believes you will agree is a neglected classic. But it does not keynote the theme of the issue, it is not an intrinsically powerful essay, it is too short to demand a leadoff spot; it's just there. (Nor is Proctor's idea to present the weakest piece first and move back to the strongest.) The other main flaw

is the absence of a guiding hand from the editors. Geo. Proctor has only his column, and does not comment a great deal about the LoC's. Lana Proctor did not even do a column for this issue. Elsewhere in CIT 6:

Mike Glicksohn takes Alter-Ego out for some exercise, battens down the hatches on comic fandom in an atypically serious discussion, and pulls Alexei Panshin's leg by claiming ENERGUMEN is slipsheeted with original Panshin art. It's a wonderful column; apparently Glicksohn produced several component essays, and these three were plugged into the layout as an installment. That's one way to do it--and well. Stephen R. Miller writes what purports to be an informal but serious essay on why Zelazny's style aids him in continuing as a good writer. Regrettably, to my eyes all Miller did was prove that Z is a writer with weaknesses--repetitive characterization, and limited though exotic vocabulary. Neither of these is a deadly flaw. Yet Miller does not think his descriptions show weakness, but rather strength. Comment?

Is there a fan whose childhood is so dead he will not read a column on comics? Maybe; read Steve Utley's AMAZE! AMAZE! anyway. Utley has mastered the art of making a reader intimately familiar with the material under discussion, and making his point at the same time. Who was Rocket Kelly? "Just one of the greatest arguments ever against science fiction comic books."

Winding up this issue is D. Bruce Berry's monotonously illustrated and antiquated-styled FUTILIS, and a lively lettercolumn where comic fans Shreck and Napier attempt to recoup their reputations against the big guns of Ted White, Mike Glicksohn and others. Too many illos, but at least they're all good.

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BETTER -- ALGOL 18, editor Andy Porter, POBox 4175, New York, NY 10017; ar-

ticles and artwork, LoC's, 4/83, arranged trades.

Andy Porter, scavenger editor, has assembled a 'zine written almost entirely by pros. (If Jaques Sadoul qualifies as a p\*r\*o, being a French publisher, remove the "almost".)

And not unlike that other pro-printing 'zine, SFR, this one has writers talking about writing. But not always. Alfred Bester's "Writing and the Demolished Man" (picked up from the Instituto Nacional do Cinema, Rio de Janeiro) covers decisions and emotional conditions during the writing of a novel. Thomas Burnett Swann philosophizes on the dolphin, his article bookended by Freff's two attractive, if not particularly lifelike, dolphin scenarios. Dick Lupoff, resident reviewer, is not above recycling intros to his reviews, though he seems in a rut when he discusses Christian Science by Mark Twain and quotes the corollary to Sturgeon's Law ("Any book is new if you haven't read it before") which I just read last week in one of his APA-L/F 'zines from 1964. Lupoff can turn a phrase that evokes an entire book's spirit. But the reader can go through lines and lines of chaff before hitting the grain. Following is a photo section, none very clear, but worth having to see Mike Glicksohn making an ornithological gesture at a photog. The photos are so vague that the only difference from fan to fan is the repair of the men's beards.

MY COLUMN, BY TED WHITE is a pro-zine editor railing the statistics of stfnal poverty on the heads of his readers. It is a man who gets \$150 a month for editing two prozines reporting on the SF economic system where even the most prolific authors qualify for food stamps, while the publishers rake in the dough. (Of this column Bjo Trimble commented that White ought to stand up on his hind legs and demand more money; or quit; or shut up. She has other corrosive opinions irrelevant here, but that one is just what White begs. White engenders a credibility chasm.)

Richard Wilson does an excellent job discussing America's first sfantasy author, Charles Brockden Brown. Robert Silverberg in "Travelling Giant" hits the highlights of his Surinam trip (reprinted from FAPA). The lettercol is warmed by polite friction between personalities Shaw and Lupoff. Porter edits a lettercol studded with acrimony, but scattered and probably not the hot-blooded intellectual kind he wants. Perhaps this kind of half-hearted combat an editor can avoid by taking Dan Goodman's advice on lettercol editing: "You ask yourself 'Would Dick Geis use this?'--and if the answer is yes, throw it out."

\* \* \*

BEST -- NYCTALOPS 6, 500 Wellesley SE, Albuquerque, NM 87106; published LoC's, trades, art & articles, 50¢ ea., poems, fiction.

In ALGOL, Andy Porter creates a layout design as varied and modern as he and Letraset can manage. The result is a neat package, but a repressed magazine personality. Mechanics are not the same as editorial imagination. In NYCTALOPS, Harry O. Morris, although a retiring kind of person, seems to have enough charismatic pull to unite the talents that give NYCT an overwhelming individual spirit. NYCT is a subgeneric magazine concerned with Lovecraft and authors in his tradition. The material is informally serious, though much mixed with Mythos poetry and sometimes fiction. While my reaction may not be intended by the editor, NYCT has always come across as individual meals of ideas presented in a dining hall of artwork. And while contributing artists begin with the advantage of having a subject with ready-made visual associations (darkness, decrepit housing, decaying people, monsters, et al) most usually get new insights on old Hollywood visual stereotypes.

Lovecraft fanziners have gone untouched by the fannish revolution, but what may be a simple shortage of serious material has caused Morris to unravel the knot binding his 'zine to

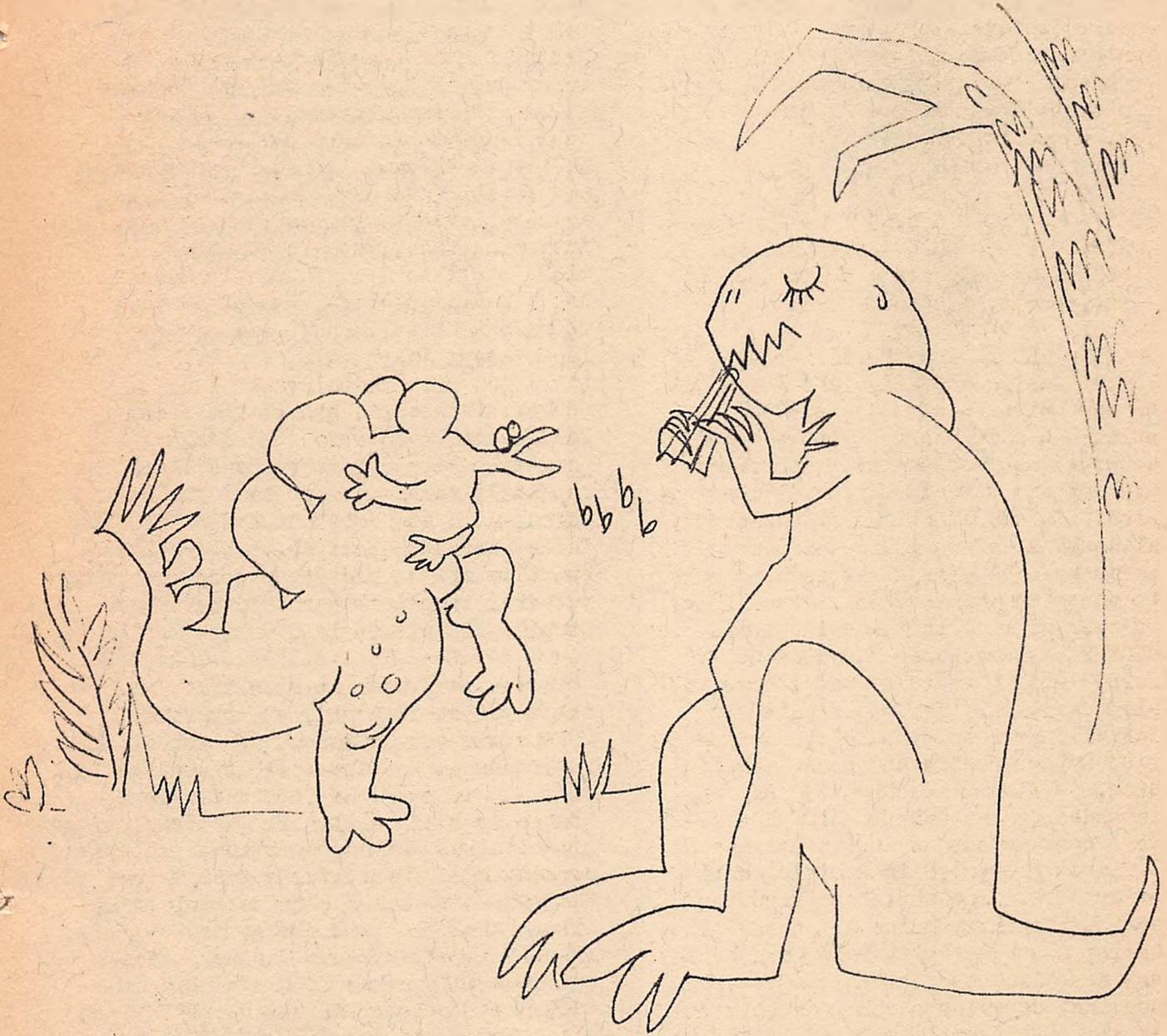
the sercon archetype, and set adrift. Unfortunately, that comment is not borne out as much this issue, since he has come into a spate of mostly-good serious stuff.

THE (BASTARD) CHILDREN OF HASTUR, by Marion Zimmer Bradley, is a semi-historical analysis of her own fantasy work which midway through expands upward through the entire concept of Lovecraftian horrific writing. COLOR OUT OF CYGNUS is Alan Gullette's attempt to give some scientific background to the Lovecraft story, "The Color Out of Space". Darrell Schweitzer sneaks in to present LOVECRAFT ON TELEVISION, chiefly a review of Night Gallery's "Pickman's Model" presentation. THE SIGN OF THE DRAGON-FLY is about a Lovecraftian publishing house including checklist--low-interest quotient stuff to me. Naturally Morris has a review section, RAMBLINGS FROM THE MISKATONIC LIBRARY, and his own ideas about the kind of review he wants to run. Where Frank Lunney now prints zero-length reviews, or Dick Lupoff gropes for the summary phrase, Morris prints reviews which relaxedly ramble on for two or three pages and tremendous numbers of words. There are only eight pages of reviews, but they are packed with type, and material like Bryant's discussion of Cthulhuoid anthologies.

The genuine claims to the crown happen to come in places where the editor exerted no conscious control, yet where the offset tool is utilized to the maximum. The first case is a single page of calligraphy and background illustration, by Stephen Riley, presenting to beautiful effect George Laking's poem. The chief example was illustrated and laid out by Denis Tiani. Though Richard Tierney's sonnets get left naked in the center of each page while Tiani's masterful black-and-white productions whirl in constant ingenuity around the edge, separate viewings of the sonnets and the art prove that each justifies the efforts of the other. There are minor things the artists do which contribute to NYCT's presence of personality; Stephen Riley's logo, with its aged

eye and wooden letters, and his press masthead (as well as his department logos); individual illos that are specifically drawn for use with an article, and others inserted that simply carry along the tone

Morris seeks. While the editor himself seems virtually absent, what he prints and how it is presented speaks ably for him. I commend NYCT to your attention.



CONTRIBUTORS' NOTES

Only one this issue, from Mike Glycer, about the "SYLMAR in '84" full-pager elsewhere in this issue (in B or C):

"Included is my art satire of Alicia Austin's Toronto propaganda, SYLMAR in '84. There actually is a farcial Sylmar in '84 worldcon bid being staged, and Alpajpuri and Coulson are running the written version of the first advertisement. The effort is completely satirical (until we win--which would be no disaster, the SF Valley being filled with suitable convention sites), and after Fellini is entitled "Satyricon". The Pro GoH will be somebody like Offutt, or some other unlikely worldcon honoree, and the fan GoH will be somebody who has already gafiated by 1984. "John Braziman" is co-chairman. Big Brother is Chief Enforcer.

". . . The following paragraph will detail my approach /to the picture/ and explain the jokes.

"Most of the art, except the wheels, is fairly competent. But it is (with two exceptions) completely lifted from Austin's work. The Turkish background comes from the sheet in LOCUS 89. The characters and designs in the central portion of the picture are also parodies of that sheet; rather than having romantic and elegantly dressed people, we have overdesigned, sloppy drunks and bums. The driver is drinking. His left sleeve is ripped at the elbow. His knees are patched. The man in the carriage is wearing a ripped-up top hat. His tie is awry. He has a flask of booze in his pocket. He is brandishing the classic hobo's cigar-on-a-toothpick. A potato is being thrown at him from the street. The broad next to him, rather than being the sensuous Austin nymphet, is a Victorian-visaged, Granny Yokum pipe-smoking, cane-wielding bag. Her flapper's chapeau has an arrow through it. She is thoroughly overdressed. Lohengrin is a street vendor below her, and his goose is being stolen by Donald Duck (a figure à la Grant Canfield). Aubrey Beardsley is talking to a penguin, à la Oliphant. The SYLMAR in '84 is undersigned 'Ellis A San Antonio'."

