



# VANDRO ZBB

NOVEMBER 75 XXII:4

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Note: "Death And Dr. Ballard" copyright 1975 by Michael Coney

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Cover by Dave Piper

Cover Logo by Leah Fisher

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At present, I have no intention of publishing further episodes of the Elwood-Miesel-Sapiro embroglio. Leland and I exchanged several letters, neither convinced the other, and in his last letter Leland mentioned that there is no reason for me to publish the correspondence unless I want to. (Except for fanzine reviews, I have never in my life published anything I didn't want to, but it's nice to have an agreement.) There's no point in carrying any more dirt to add to this particular molehill.

Since this issue is being finished in a rush just before we go to an ISFA meeting, we'll just fill up the rest of this with various newspaper oddities. The Thompsons send one about the swearing-in ceremonies (with free pizza to attendees) of Cleveland City Hall's new custodian. They seem to be looking hard for ways to spend the public's money in Cleveland. The Thompsons also sent the affirmation of the power of tv; the perpetrators of the largest U.S. burglary (\$4.3 million) at one point postponed a planning session so they could watch "All In The Family". A charming picture of togetherness. (Then, after the robbery, one of the getaway cars went up the wrong tollway ramp, headed for Wisconsin, and eventually had to charter a plane to reach their meeting point in Florida on time.) Also from the Thompsons; airline mechanics have had to give up using milk of magnesia as a jet engine lubricant; the peppermint and chocolate syrups used today for flavoring produce corrosion. More problems caused by the American sweet tooth.

RSC



Been a long haul here, and don't think we have been idle in the interim. In large part, the hiatus is a confirmation of the old plaint of neo-pros -- once one starts selling copy one has the money to support the fannish hobby but little time to indulge it, sigh. But the rush to meet deadlines seems at a (temporary, I hope!) end, so perhaps we can get out another issue in quick order.

Buck and Bruce remark in their columns on the cons attended during rare breaks in deadline-meeting. Generally, I'm in full agreement, but I'd like to add my personal plaudits to Rivercon's ConCom. It wasn't just the splendid treatment they

accorded us and the superb cuisine and appointments Stouffers' Inn offered -- but it was plainly one of the most smoothly organized cons of recent memory. (I mean, when the comember in charge of the huckster's room consults you at Midwestcon -- with a detailed, precise layout of the proposed hucksters hq -- to see if the placement of your table is satisfactory...! And the double-square arrangement of the tables was an ingenious fillip, too.) Magnificent con, long may Louisville fandom wave.

Deadlines. Well, when we last left our heroine, she had just finished and had accepted a ms for Harlequin-Laser and could breathe a sigh of relief and relax at the upcoming Midwestcon. At that time I was in the sending-in-outlines for approval stage for an upcoming '76 gothic series from Ballantine. Two were eventually okayed and contracted for -- with a minor, heartstopping confusion on deadline dates which had everything due one week after I'd received the contracts, a problem since solved. One novel is completed, had some revisions done, and has been signed, sealed and paid for. Title will be FEAR STALKS THE BAYOU (ehhh), and it'll be the Aries segment of Ballantine's astrology-gothic series next year. I've contracted to do a second in the series, but there's a recent change; the setting was Hammurabi's Babylon -- still is -- but powers-that-be have decided after agreeing to that premise that it's stretching the readership's credulity too far to combine gothic/astrology/ancient Babylon in one schmear. So the present deal appears to be the book will go ahead, but as a historical romance style gothic sans astrology elements. When it will appear or if and so on I have no idea, but I'll try to keep you posted. It's certainly an intriguing setting to work with, astrology gimmick or not.

DeWeese (Gene-Jean) will have two gothics in the same series -- Virgo and Scorpio, I believe. As of now he hasn't had one slot yanked out from under him, but I'm unsure of final titles. Incidentally, both Gene and I have been pleasantly nonplussed by the care and attention Ballantine gives authors on gothic cover presentations. Usually gothic covers (apparently) are bought by the dozen and picked at random out of stack, bearing no resemblance whatever to the text of the book they illustrate. But Ballantine's policy obviously is to inform the artist specifically of a detailed scene from the book, and the results are a delight. For instance, on the Babylon gothic the editor called me to check -- since the book's still in rough draft and she had no other way of getting the information -- as to the heroine's clothing, hair style, facial characteristics and confirming whether a certain outlined scene would have such and such graphic arrangements and props -- for the use of the artist in creating a cover for the final copy. I hope the project still goes forward, because the scene picked for the cover isn't dependent on the astrological element, so can be used despite the yanking of the series gimmick.

Have a buncha stuff here from the Trimbles regarding Equicon:Filmcon, (April 16-18, 76, PO Box 23127, LA CA 90023 for further information). It seems unlikely we'll be able





It's been longer than usual since the last issue. Primarily because Juanita and I both got busy with professional writing this summer and didn't have time to put out an issue. Results of all this activity so far are: NOW YOU SEE IT/HIM/THEM.. by Gene DeWeese and myself, is currently available from Doubleday. No word on a paperback reprint, but it's been picked up by a publisher of books for the partially sighted, and a contract for a sequel is being negotiated. (Possibly will have been signed by the time you read this.) GATES OF THE UNIVERSE, by Gene and I, is available as Laser Books #6. Coming attractions from Laser are #11 and 27 by

Juanita, and #38 by me. (We're planning on having still more, but these have been paid for and scheduled.) Currently I'm doing what amounts to extensive editorial revisions for Laser on another author's manuscript. Juanita has sold one gothic to Ballantine for publication next year, and has a contract for (and is halfway through with) a second one.

In July I started in a new and theoretically higher-prestige position with Overhead Door. Before I left the drafting room I was working overtime so they wouldn't fall quite so far behind when the new man took over; as soon as I started the new job, that department began working overtime. Working 9 hours a day and typing novel a couple or three hours per night and on some weekends plays hell with other activities.

Then we did attend conventions. Midwestcon was the usual pleasant weekend. Rivercon was even more fun. Partly, I suppose, because we were Fan Guests of Honor, which always helps. But mainly because in addition to the better class of midwestern fans, we had a lot of southern fans, some of whom I knew via fanzines but not in person, and some of whom I'd never heard of before. Meeting Meade Frierson, John Guidry, Sam Long, etc. in person was a definite plus. Long and Binker Hughes put on a lovely filksing, along with another girl whose name I never did get. (Juanita was singing with a Murray somebody who was very good, but they were so crowded that I didn't stay long.) And finally getting ourselves one of Dennis Dotson's paintings was a definite plus. For the first time, he showed paintings at a convention where we had some money. Also, I enhanced my fannish image by buying a morningstar from Anduril Arms. What every fan household needs (or at least, what this one needed. Hanging Joe Hensley asked to borrow it; he thought it would be a dandy instrument to replace his judge's gavel. Make the lawyers show him a bit more respect.)

Incidentally, I'm indebted to someone else for the "Hanging Joe" title, but I can't recall who. Speak up and take your credit. Whoever it was said that now that Joe was a judge, he needed something a bit more dignified than "Honest Joe". I agree.

The people at Windycon were nice enough; I got to meet Victoria Vayne, renew acquaintance with Mike Domina, who gaffed 10 or so years ago and is just getting back in, and see people like Denis Quane, Leah Fisher, Jean Inda, Ben Solon, and Aimee Masquelier, who I don't run into at all that many cons. But the hotel was another matter. I didn't like the Blackstone last year, but after going around with the Ascot House, the Blackstone began to seem positively nostalgic. I don't like going to cons in downtown Chicago to begin with (which is probably part of the trouble), so after trying it for two years I'm not going to do it any more. (I told the hotel what I thought of it and got back a form letter of apology; they were deeply hurt and all that. Deep enough to spend a dime on me, anyway.)

So far, Rivercon has been the top convention for me this year, though I'm still looking forward to Chambanacon, which is usually one of the best.

Otherwise, we gardened, more or less, attended monthly ISFA meetings, and spent too little time in taking care of my father's place in Silver Lake (70 miles away) and

in visiting Dad in the nursing home. Last time I was there he actually recognized me as a relative, which was better than he'd been doing.

One of the ISFA meetings was partially devoted to a preview showing of "Space:1999". The studio representative asked for our "candid opinions" but I don't think he wanted quite as candid a set of opinions as he got. It's an incredibly bad show; the only thing going for it is that it's rather pretty. The producers seemed to think it would take the place of "Star Trek" in the hearts and minds of the viewers; not bloody likely. ST might have had fudgy science in spots, but not constantly, and it had characterization (on a Cap Future level, maybe, but there) and decent acting. Space has no characterization, and while I know that Landau is capable of acting, and I assume that Bain is, they aren't being allowed to do it in this turkey. The whole cast could be replaced by robots and nobody would know the difference. It's a rather pretty show, if you have a color set; Juanita has been watching it now and then, with the sound turned off. I don't even do that, but I wander through the living room now and then while it's on.

I was interested in Harry Reasoner's reaction to Betty Ford's suggestion that newsmen not emphasize assassination attempts so much, because it gives other halfwits ideas. He rejected it because it would interfere with his rights; he'd much rather interfere with someone else's rights by banning guns. (But he was honest enough to at least mention the suggestion; most tv newsmen ignored it, I noticed. Incidentally, with all the furor about the continuing evil of firearms, isn't it interesting that the commentators only get in a real stew about them when a politician gets shot at?)

Juanita's mother got the autumn Hammacher Schlemmer catalog. On the front cover was what I first took to be a weird sort of spirit duplicator or mimeo. But according to the ad, it's an electric crepe-maker. It's an idea for using up that worn-out old copying machine, though. Install heating coils in the rollers, enlarge the ink-feeding system to handle batter, and voila! A \$600 crepes-maker....

I've been getting ads for something called "SFEXPO '76". A super-convention, they say. Jackie Franke called and got some information on the group (all of which seems to be in their second ad, anyway, though she got it 3 months ahead of time). The promoters claim to be fans or readers; maybe they are. What they seem to be mostly is promoters, anxious to set fandom on the same profitable basis as the ST cons. Very big plans, most of which appall me. ("What Authors Are Coming..." they ask rhetorically. I can tell you a couple who aren't coming.) There will be no further mention of this convention in YANDRO; this is one wave of the future that I'm not riding.

I note some fanzine comment on the colored labels which have been showing up here and there on mail. The P.O. fanzine included a chart for them a few issues back. All are for postal customers who presort and bundle mail; the label goes on the top letter or parcel in the bundle. (The chart doesn't say so, but evidently regional mailing centers in the postal system are also using them.) Blue F - All mail for same firm (I haven't encountered one of these yet). Red D - All for same city or Zip Code area. Orange S - All for same state. Yellow C - All for same city but for differing Zip Codes within city. Green 3 - All for same first 3 digits of Zip Code. I haven't asked the local post office if they're available here; if they are, they may be showing up on a few YANDROs; I'd be using the S and C labels.

Speaking of the post office; I had heard about a forthcoming postal strike in Canada, so when I had letters finished to Wayne MacDonald and Billy Pettit I inquired at the local P.O. to see if they were accepting Canadian mail. I was told they were, so I mailed the letters. They came back, of course. Seems nobody had got around to telling the local clerks that mail was suspended. The postal administration keeps telling us how things are improving, while little inefficiencies like this keep getting worse. (And of course the locals, who aren't to blame, get most of the complaints.)

With luck, this YANDRO will be out sometime in November and another Y and the final DEVLINS will appear sometime in late November. I have stuff in the files that should be published; the next issue will definitely carry a Dave Locke column. I have hopes of getting all material currently in our files published at least by our next Annish. (which will appear; I bought this hundred reams of paper, and....) RSC

# ALL PHONEDOM WILL BE PLUNGED INTO WAR

WONDERMENT BY ~~BOB TUCKER~~

I don't often worry about the mundanes, about the fools and idiots out there in the other world who are hell-bent on ending the world, but lately I've been lying awake nights contemplating the fate of an "Equipment and Building Engineer" who works (or did work) for the General Telephone Company of Illinois. The man may have been forcibly retired by the time you read this, sent packing to Florida with a gold watch and a framed certificate of almost-loyalty to the company -- or else he has been transferred to Alaska as punishment and may be laying cable on the bleak northshore.

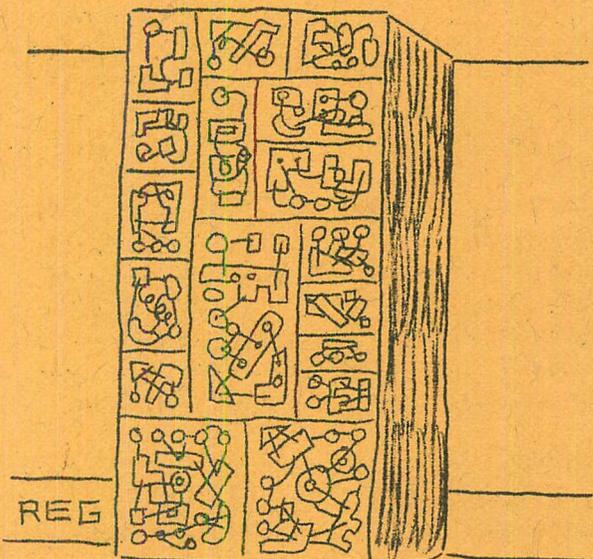
His sin was that he once expressed himself with remarkable candor, when he should have taken refuge in bureaucratic doubletalk.

General Tel of Illinois publishes an internal house organ called General News, a six- or eight-page slick-paper tabloid which cries out for a competent fanzine editor to pump life into it. (A good fanzine editor could, with freedom, turn the News into a thing of joy and beauty, a paper worth reading.) As it is now, the paper concentrates on company image above all and the only news it publishes are those items calculated to inspire other employees and improve everyone's image: the branch manager who was elected mayor of his hometown, the cable splicer who received a Red Cross medal, the telephone operator who organized a sewing circle for charity, and the salesman who sold more telephones than anybody in three counties. Inspiring stuff, expensively published with photographs on slick paper. Good for lining bird cages and cat boxes.

The one redeeming feature of the News is a letter column called "Speak Up!" and I have a suspicion it won't last long. The letter column "Speak Up!" is a forum in which employees are invited to air grievances, to question company policy, to challenge supervisory practices, to let off steam in print rather than resort to sabotage in grim desperation. Every letter is answered by some official deemed best qualified

to handle the complaint, some official with knowledge of the particular subject under discussion. And with but one exception (that poor, candid Equipment and Building Engineer) every answer is couched in sparkling, obfuscatory doubletalk designed to not-answer the question or the complaint but yet to impress fellow bureaucrats and stun the complainer.

An example: a lineman who patrolled his own small town and the wide-open country spaces surrounding it wanted to know why he had to drive several miles to the exchange office each morning -- where he received a work assignment which sent him right back to his own hometown and the country spaces surrounding it. Why couldn't his daily assignment be



telephoned or mailed to him, thus saving him that long daily roundtrip.

The answer: "You will be pleased to know that a Company wide study has recently been undertaken to determine the most judicial and economical utilization of company vehicles. This study has been instituted as a result of our company addressing itself to both the national energy shortage and the internal economics necessary to the welfare of the company in a period of spiraling costs."

Splendid. Now to that Equipment and Building Engineer, who dared give an honest answer.

The letter (abridged): "Why doesn't the Company use its own make of equipment for the TV monitoring system (in security areas)? Our office has a Sony receiver in use. It seems like it should be a Sylvania receiver (because the company is affiliated with Sylvania Electronics, and owns and sells Sylvania equipment). It looks like we don't have faith in our own products. Using (Sylvania Equipment) for security ought to demonstrate the durability of the product and be a good advertisement (for employees and the public alike)."

The answer by the Equipment and Building Engineer was something I never expected to find in print, in a company newspaper. (And I hope he enjoys the Florida beaches.)

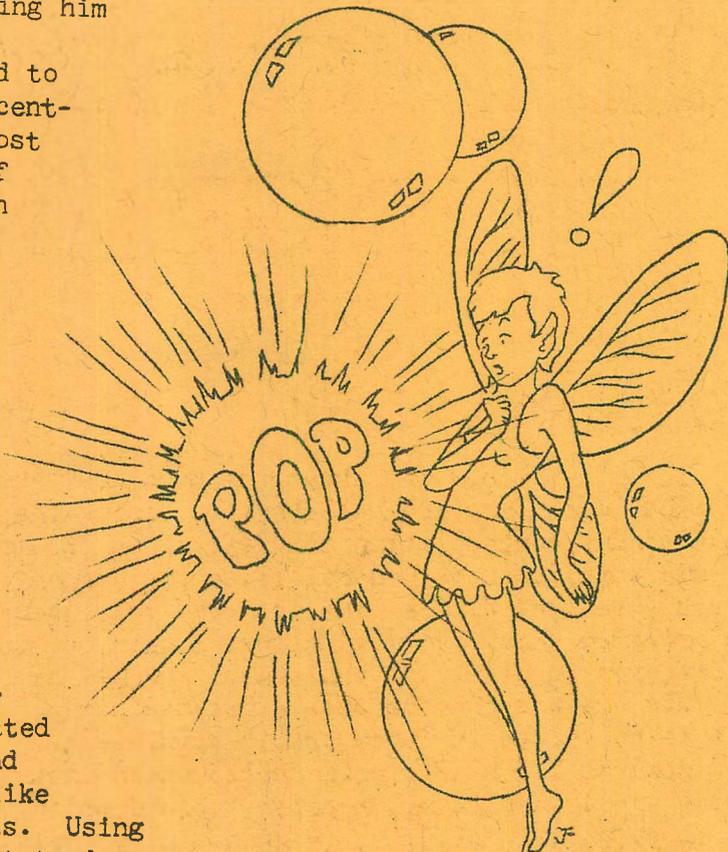
With astonishing candor (but yet phrased in bureaucratic jargon) the engineer replied that several brands of equipment were tested before the security systems were installed. He said that three cameras were tested: Channel Master, Panasonic, and Sylvania; and three TV monitors: Panasonic, Sony, and Sylvania. In the end, the Channel Master camera and the Sony monitor were chosen because they out-performed the other equipment and because they were \$750 cheaper than comparable Sylvania equipment.

It has been a long time since an engineer excited my sense of wonder.

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If you start a thousand pigs typing on a thousand typewriters, they will eventually compose Typewriter In The Sty.  
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#### NEW ADDRESSES

Kay & Gary Anderson, 8386 Hollister, Ventura, CA 93030  
Freff, 3624 North Potomac, Arlington, VA 22213  
Susan Wood, Dept. of English, Univ. of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC V6T 1W5, CAN.  
Brian Tannahill, PSC 4 - Box 17241, Keesler AFB, MS 39534  
Don Ayres, c/o David Gregory, 6565 Fountain Ave. #10, Hollywood, CA 90024  
Doug Carroll, 2252 Mt. Holly Road, Camden, AR 71701  
Hank Davis, Box 332, Knickerbocker Station, New York, NY 10002  
Joan Bowers, 16520 Detroit Ave. #11, Lakewood, OH 44107  
"Fantasy House" is gone. New name and address is Shroud, Publishers, 5652 Vineland Ave., North Hollywood, CA 91606  
Maydene Crosby, 7333 St. Rd. 25 N., Lafayette, IN 47905  
Jan Trenholm, 305 W. 13th. St., Apt. 5A, New York, NY 10014  
(Since we haven't published for awhile, some of these may not be too new, but they are new for us, anyway.)



# DEATH AND

# DR BALLARD

MICHAEL G. CONEY

My wife is talking about going to England again, just for a couple of weeks, leaving me in charge of the domestic scene -- and I know what that means. Death and Despair will once more stalk the corridors of the Coney residence.

The last time she went, she said, "Don't forget to feed the cat." The cat is a large and headstrong male named Sabrina. Covered with dense black fur since birth, this beast was originally assumed to be female -- it was a convenient thing to assume, since nobody was eager to burrow through all that foliage to find out for sure. The vet set us right, though, when Sabrina was taken in to be spayed.

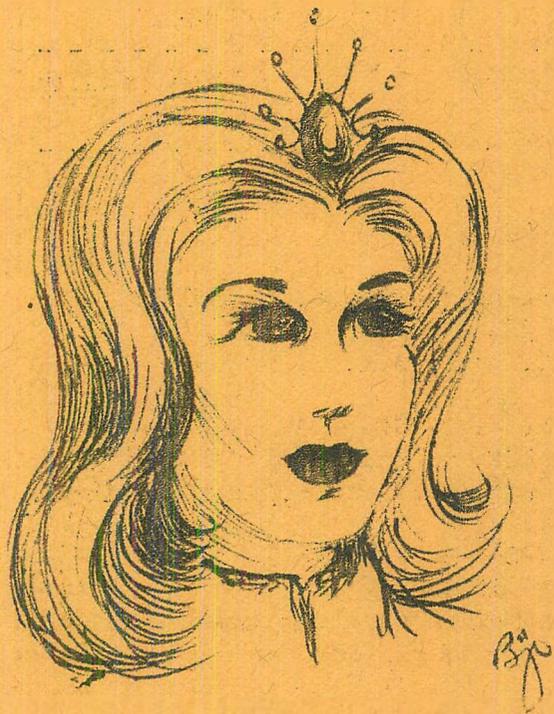
I ought to have said to my wife, "Yes, but what do I feed the cat on?" and it would have saved us much heartbreak. Instead I said, "Of course I won't forget to feed the cat. Do you take me for a fool?" "Goodbye," she said.

I asked my daughter what the cat ate and she said, "Canned stuff," so I went to the supermarket. There is no shortage of pet food there. There was PAWS and WHISKAS and KIT-E-KAT and PURINA and many more besides, and DR. BALLARDS. And my eye brought up with a soggy thud against this last name. It was aimed at me, and me alone. How could I, an SF fan, possibly feed my cat anything else? Even Buck Coulson -- given no alternative -- would have gravitated towards that can like a captured meteorite. It stood on the shelf solid and respectable, an intellectual oasis in the mindless desert of hard-sell. I took it down reverently and made for the cashier.

I must confess to a certain trembling anticipation as I opened the can. The cat was stropping its back against my shins. The punctured can let out a whiff of the Jurassic, a hint of rain-forests, of jewelled alligators. I pulled back the lid. The contents resembled a drowned giant, coarse-ground. I heaped a generous helping into the cat's dish. The cat turned around and walked off into the night, its tail held stiffly aloft.

When my wife came back, three weeks later, I told her a sad story. I told her how my daughter's guinea-pig had died because its bath-water was too deep and she said, "Thank God for that. I'm having no more rodents in this house. Where's Sabrina?"

I told her the story, even sadder, of how our daughter's friend's guinea-pig had also died, through being pushed too hard. I described in detail how this peculiar phenomenon -- which had nothing to do with academic achievement -- had come about. It seems -- so my daughter told me -- that you put your guinea-pig in your doli's baby-carriage and you tuck him in comfortably with his little head on the pillow, then



you take him to the top of a steep hill and give him a good hard push.

My wife said, "Too bad. What's that awful stuff in Sabrina's dish?"

So I told her the absolutely heartrending story of Bonnie's kittens. Bonnie types my novels for me and often tells me stories in the hope, maybe, that one day I will use one. But this isn't the day. Coming after the guinea-pig it might well be responsible for a rash of suicides among the gentle readers of Yandro, and Bonnie wouldn't want that to happen.

My wife said, "Sabrina's dead, isn't she? That's what you're trying to tell me."

I explained that the cat was not technically dead, since she'd only been missing three weeks. The police had been informed. The fishpond had been dragged. The roadsides had been searched for broken furry forms, teeth bared in dying snarls. In vain, in vain. Therefore it was possible that the cat was still alive, but sulking.

The cat chose this moment to return, stalking in through the front door and stopping before the dish of now-putrescent DR. BALLARD'S, his green eyes roving from it to me, then to my wife with deep meaning. She snatched him up. "He's so thin," she lamented. "What has the nasty man been doing to you, darling?" she asked the smirking stoolie. "How can you expect Sabrina to eat this muck?" she asked me. "You know he always has the same as us. Bacon and egg. Maybe a little roast turkey. What is this stuff, anyway?" "DR.BALLARD'S," I admitted.

"Dr. What?" she asked.

There is no romance in my wife's soul. Not for her do bright gliders carve the clouds, do flowers sing or crystals ring. "Some crap I got from the supermarket," I muttered. "I thought it looked O.K., but I must have been wrong. You never know what they put in pet food, these days."

She seemed about to pursue the matter further, when there was an interruption. Our daughter came in, carrying an inert thing which dribbled green slime.

"Did Dad tell you what happened to the turtle?" she asked....

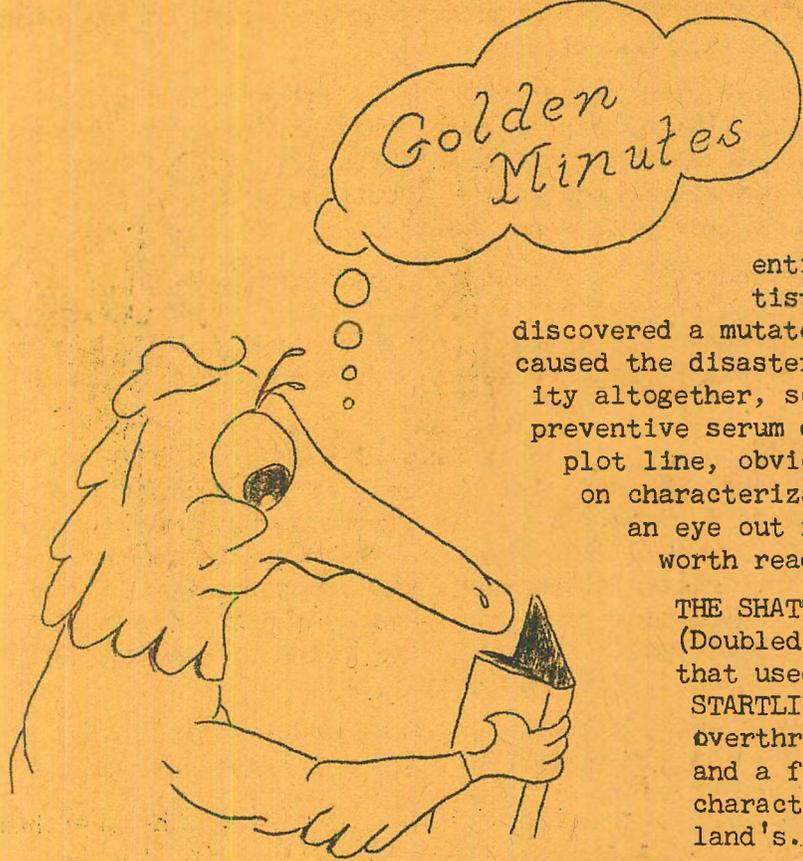
Copyright (c) 1975 by Michael G. Coney

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WONDERS OF SCIENCE DEPARTMENT. We got an ad from IBM for their "Mag Card/A" type-writer. Nice little thing for writers. You type your draft, which is stored on a magnetic card. Then you proofread and type in the changes only on each sheet. Then you plug the card in and the machine types out error-free copy. Lovely. Only Jud Horning was at the last ISFA meeting, and mentioned that the price of the machine is around \$10,000. (Or did he say \$12,000?) Either way, it would shoot the hell out of several gothic sales. Jud mentioned that another company makes an even better machine for only \$9000, though. A bargain, but one that I think I can live without. Was there ever a science fiction story which mentioned that all the marvels of Ralph 124Cl's future would be too expensive for the average clod to own?  
RSC

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READING RATES DEPARTMENT. Since typing the book review column, I've stacked up another 60 books to be reviewed - and I still have 38 "review books" waiting to be read. Sometimes I wonder if Gutenberg had the right idea.....  
RSC

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The Thompsons send a newspaper clipping concerning the use of the new "totally defensive" weapon, the Taser, by criminals. It's the latest thing in armed robbery, despite manufacturer's claims that it could never be adapted to criminal use. Let's hear again how registering guns will reduce crime.  
RSC





Golden  
Minutes

PLURIBUS, by Michael Kurland (Doubleday, \$5.95) An after-the-disaster story in which the residents of the U.S. (and presumably the world) have reverted to a pre-Industrial Revolution culture except for a few isolated scientific communities, while the scientists of the Martian colony have just discovered a mutated form of the plague virus which caused the disaster. This one might finish off humanity altogether, so the Martians are trying to get a preventive serum distributed. Nothing extra in the plot line, obviously, but Kurland does a nice job on characterization and specific problems. Keep an eye out for it at your local library; it's worth reading.

THE SHATTERED PEOPLE, by Robert Hoskins (Doubleday, \$5.95) This is the sort of thing that used to be in the poorer issues of STARTLING STORIES. Adventure, intrigue, overthrow-the-vizier, swords and sorcery and a few aliens. Unfortunately, Hoskins' characters aren't as interesting as Kurland's. Worth missing.

Z FOR ZACHARIAH, by Robert C. O'Brien (Atheneum, \$6.95) An after-the-Bomb novel,

more or less a juvenile. Narrator is a girl who is the sole survivor in a hidden and still fertile valley. This one bothers me a bit. The girl comes across as having been thrown off a bit mentally by the disaster; her reactions don't strike me as quite normal. But I'm not sure the author intended it that way. Brilliant characterization (the disaster certainly might have such an effect on a lone survivor) or just bad writing?

COMBAT SF, ed. by Gordon Dickson (Doubleday, \$6.95) I'm a bit miffed because he left out my favorite combat story, Kornbluth's "The Only Thing We Learn". However, included are "The Last Command" by Keith Laumer (I admire an author who can write maudlin sentimentality about a robot tank), "Men of Good Will" by Ben Bova and Myron R. Lewis (a fair gimmick of Moon warfare), "The Pair" by Joe Hensley (sentiment again; rather trite, this time), "The Butcher's Bill" by David Drake (like something from an old EC comic), "Single Combat" by Joe Green (an original description of combat, anyway), "The Man Who Came Early" by Poul Anderson (one of his excellent stories of culture shock - in reverse, this time), "Patron of the Arts" by Fred Saberhagen (an interesting minor Berserker story, but hardly combat sf), "Time Piece" by Joe Haldeman (the reminiscences of an old warrior and tired), "Ricochet On Miza" by Dickson (mental combat), "No War, or Battle's Sound" by Harry Harrison (a nice subversive idea about war), "His Truth Goes Marching On" by Jerry Pournelle (ideology), and "The Horrors of War" by Gene Wolfe (military androids). Overall, fairish. Anderson is great; Harrison and Wolfe good, the others ranging down from there.

THE MAGIC MEADOW, by Alexander Key (Westminster, \$5.50) Juvenile. A group of permanently disabled children in a hospital ward learn to reach a "new" world of sunshine and trees (and monsters?) by teleportation. Fairly short; very well done for the 10 year old set. Recommended for Christmas giving.

FAMOUS FANTASTIC CLASSICS #2 (Fax Collectors Editions, Box E, West Linn, OR 97068 - \$5.00) One novel included; The Radio Flyers, by Ralph Milne Farley, photocopied from the original ARGOSY serial. Hollow earth story, moderately well handled for 1929 but no world-beater even then. This leaves room for only one short, "The Stagnant Death"

by H. Bedford-Jones, from a 1938 BLUEBOOK. A Sargasso Sea story; adequate but not to be mentioned in the same breath with William Hope Hodgson's stories of the same type. A paperback volume; nice printing and binding.

GRAND CANYON, by Victoria Sackville-West (secondhand) The background is science fiction; an undefeated Nazi Germany, with Japanese help, is assaulting the United States. The plot concerns a group of carefully differentiated people in a hotel on the rim of the Grand Canyon, who sit around and talk - about the war, metaphysical concepts, each other, etc., more or less adnauseum. An oddity (but not good).

RED PLANET, by H. J. Campbell (secondhand) As I recall, Ethel Lindsay sent me this some years ago, and I just got around to reading it. It's a fairly standard sf-adventure story of the time - published 1953 - and I rather enjoyed it. (It's also a "Panther Library" volume, and I thought Panther was a pb company. This is hard-cover.)

BLOND BARBARIANS AND NOBLE SAVAGES, by L. Sprague de Camp (T-K Graphics, \$2.75) Three more or less connected sections. The material on Lovecraft's Aryanism was mostly included in Lovecraft. Robert E. Howard's Celtic fixation was newer to me, though I believe it was originally in FANTASTIC. The final section covers the myth of the heroic barbarian (or, in an earlier incarnation, the noble savage) in general. It's a rather small booklet, well done of course, and should be of some interest to readers of Howard, Lovecraft, s&s in general - or tales of cowboys and Indians and watchers of John Wayne movies, for that matter.

THE VAMPIRE, by Sidney Horler (Bookfinger, Box 487, Peter Stuyvesant Sta., New York, NY 10009, \$4.00) Reprint of a 1930s British book; the publisher says this may be the first US edition. Horler was evidently a writer of British "thrillers", and he manages to reduce his vampire to just one more international criminal, foiled in his nefarious plot to rule the world (or perhaps just England - which was much the same thing to the British reader) by the hero and the valiant minions of Scotland Yard. It's an interesting variation on the vampire theme, but not a terribly good book. Printing and binding are neat but not gaudy. Physically, the book is well worth the price; the contents are mostly for collectors of antiquarian fantasy.

THREE TRIPS IN TIME AND SPACE (Hawthorne Books, \$5.95) But Publishers Central is selling them for \$1.00. The premise is matter transmission. Larry Niven's "Flash Crowd" considers the negative aspects such as mobs, riots, and new crimes. It's somewhat of a modern classic. "You Take The High Road" by John Brunner, transfers airline ticket problems to the new medium; amusing but not serious. "Rumfuddle" by Jack Vance is mostly an adventure yarn about duplicates from alternate worlds; not very good.

THE NEW ATLANTIS, ed. by Robert Silverberg (Book Club) Blurbed as by "three of science fiction's most gifted young writers - Gene Wolfe mentioned his appreciation of that pen ultimate word. Wolfe's story "Silhouette" concerns the internal tensions on a spaceship; everyone including the computer is a little psychotic. In Ursula le Guin's "The New Atlantis" the problem is essentially the same but the canvas is wider; a future US which is overcrowded, under-resourced, politically restricted, and sinking. "A Momentary Taste of Being" by James Tiptree, gets us back on a psychologically unsound spaceship, where hallucinations and aliens are mingled (or is it hallucinations of aliens?) I usually like Tiptree, but I couldn't finish this one. Overall, the book is disappointing; tremendously so, considering the quality of the authors.

ENCHANTED PILGRIMAGE, by Clifford Simak (Book Club) A more or less adult fairy tale, with a friendly goblin, a gnome, a young scholar, and various other persons in a quest to seek the Old Ones in the Wasteland. Unserious, lightweight, and moderately charming.

ZARKON, LORD OF THE UNKNOWN, by Lin Carter (Doubleday, \$5.95) This is an absolutely hilarious book, but I keep wondering if Lin meant it to be. It's a straightfaced

imitation of Doc Savage, and Lin has caught the rather strained style of Lester Dent to perfection. Which, of course, is why it's funny. One doesn't get phrases like "the breadth of his nobly proportioned brow" these days. Or "a haunted look about his probing, magnetic eyes". Keeping this up for a full novel gets a little wearing, and I hope the book isn't (as it purports to be) the first of a series. But as a parody, it's a very funny book.

NO NIGHT WITHOUT STARS, by Andre Norton (Atheneum, \$6.95) A war has driven humanity back to barbarism, and a man and a woman seek lost knowledge in the ruins. Typical plot; fairly typical Norton writing, mystic mental powers and all. Somehow, I couldn't get as interested in this as I usually do in Norton, though I can't say why. Anyway, if you're a Norton fan, you'll want it.

THE EARLY WILLIAMSON, by Jack Williamson (Doubleday, \$5.95) A rather skinny volume compared to the ones by Asimov and del Rey. But then, Williamson didn't write all that many short stories. In this case, "early" means 1928 to 1933; well before either Asimov or del Rey. The stories are crude, as were most stf stories of the time. The author's reminiscences are the best this series has yet produced, and are just about worth the price of the volume by themselves. The fiction is interesting more from a historical than a literary standpoint, though it was among the best of its time.

UNIVERSE AHEAD, by Sylvia Engdahl and Rick Roberson (Atheneum, \$8.95) This is theoretically a science fiction anthology for people who don't know anything about science fiction and aren't all that thrilled about learning. Engdahl's introduction is a patronizing explanation of how science fiction fans are all right in their place, but she wouldn't want her daughter to marry one. Roberson talks about the relevancy of the application of scientific principles to real situations, and casts a small sneer at escapist literature. Life is real and earnest, and stf should reflect it. After all this, the book is surprisingly good, though a majority of the stories should be familiar to YANDRO readers. ("Kyrie" by Anderson, "Ararat" by Zenna Henderson, "Nightmare Brother" by Nourse, "The Wilderness" by Bradbury, "It's Such A Beautiful Day" by Asimov, "Old Man Henderson" by Kris Neville, "Lower Than Angels" by Budrys, "The Christmas Present" by Dickson.) "Ranging" by John Jakes is less familiar; adequate but overemotional. The lesser known stories are also of lesser quality. Rosemary Stephens' "The Animal", from SEVENTEEN, is a tearjerker about overpopulation and a regimented society. "The Samaritan" by Richard Harper, from BOYS'LIFE, is the sort of uplifting and stuffy fiction that magazine has been pushing for 30 years or more. Roberson's own "Cloudlab", original with this book, is a sort of juvenile version of George O. Smith; adequate but uninspiring. And a collaboration between Roberson and Engdahl, "The Beckoning Trail", has lots of elementary philosophy but no science at all. Overall, it's a good collection for beginners, particularly beginners who like philosophy rather than action or science.

NOW YOU SEE IT/HIM/THEM... by Gene DeWeese and Robert Coulson (Doubleday, \$5.95) Well, I liked it, even if it is at least 3/4 Gene's book. This has no science either, and a lot of fudgy esp, but the background is a science fiction convention, which might make it interesting to fans. One small irony is the standard "any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead" disclaimer directly across the page from Gene's "Thanks to all the fans, pros, and worldcons whose bits and pieces are scattered throughout this book." I might point out to the neofan that the book includes real people, correctly described (and we had to get releases from all of them to satisfy Doubleday's legal department), real people described but not named, and various fan names Tuckerized onto totally unreal people., and the latter group is the largest. The convention itself is based on all the cons Gene and I have attended.

(Masquerades really did work that way, in the Good Old Days.) You may not want to buy it, but do pick up a copy and look at the back of the dust jacket; I'm quietly proud of Doubleday and Sharon Jarvis for going along with us on that. And I hope it's fun to read, because I loathed most of the writing I did on it.

CAUTION: INFLAMMABLE!, by Thomas N. Scortia (Doubleday, \$5.95) Scortia has always been a writer of good, solid, entertaining, unmemorable fiction. This collection includes 20 of his stories. Original publication ranges from 1954 thru 1973, generally in the sf magazines. Old-timers will have already read most of them, and probably not be interested in re-reading them. New readers will very likely enjoy them. (Don't buy this, but get your library to do so.)

THE ADVENTURE OF THE PEERLESS PEER, by Philip José Farmer (Aspen Press, \$5.50) I have not generally been terribly interested in Farmer's interpretations of the works of Lester Dent, Jules Verne, Herman Melville, et al, but I enjoyed this one thoroughly. Primarily because nobody is being terribly serious about all this nonsense. The alleged plot is primarily a means of bringing Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson face to face with Tarzan and as many other pulp heroes as Farmer can manage. It's a very small book for the money, and the dust jacket is excruciatingly bad, but it's a lot of fun to read.

THE GREY KING, by Susan Cooper (Atheneum, \$6.95) Fourth in the author's juvenile series on the unending struggle between Good and Evil. In this one, Immortal Will Stanton is faced with another manifestation of the Dark, this time in the Welsh countryside, and makes friends with a strange boy whose heritage proves rather surprising. They win, of course. The writing is good; writing about absolute good and absolute evil isn't easy, these days, but Cooper manages without making the book too pretentious. Recommended for the 8 to 12 set; a good Christmas gift, particularly if you've been giving the earlier books in the series as they came out.

BUY JUPITER, by Isaac Asimov (Doubleday, \$5.95) This collection began life as the Nesfa Press book, Have You Seen These? Doubleday added more stories and more of the Asimovian commentary; eventually they will have published all of his fiction in hard covers, with his biography sandwiched among the stories. These stories are a long way from his best, but the commentary is interesting.

NO BLADE OF GRASS, by John Christopher (Avon/Equinox, \$1.95) #11 in the SF Rediscovery series. This is hardly a "rediscovery", since it's been in print most of the time since it was written, but it's an excellent book. One of the few really good disaster novels; it made a big splash when it appeared and still reads well. (And, in my personal opinion, it's the last good novel that Christopher wrote.) Highly recommended.

A MIRROR FOR OBSERVERS, by Edgar Pangborn (Avon/Equinox, \$1.95) #12. This certainly belongs in the series; it's a classic that more people ought to read. It's also a book that I want to study some day, because it's essentially a novel about the virtues of mankind, and I'm not sure how Pangborn managed it without being saccharine. Essentially it's religious and philosophic, even if the angels and devils are both called Martians. One of the best books sf ever produced.

BILL, THE GALACTIC HERO, by Harry Harrison (Avon/Equinox, \$1.95) #13. This was one of the attempted refutations of Heinlein's Starship Trooper. It was popular when it appeared, but not with me. (Both reactions probably due to the fact that it's a farce and I dislike overdone alleged humor as much as most readers enjoy it.) If you enjoy crude humor, by all means get this.

ULTIMATE WORLD, by Hugo Gernsback (Avon/Equinox, \$1.95) #14. If this had been first published in 1910, it might have the charm of antiquity. Since it was actually published in 1971, it's simply a bad book. In his introduction, Sam Moskowitz touts the brilliant ideas in the volume, but any ideas I saw were as creaky as the writing style. The book does a lot to destroy all of Avon's pretensions about their series.

CITY UNDER THE SEA, by Ken Bulmer (Avon/Equinox, \$1.95) #15. Originally this was half of an Ace double, and is a good example of the entertaining, forgettable material that comprised that series. It's fun, even at the current price, but "important and influential"? Hardly. It has lots of action and villainous plots in a scheme to surgically revise humans so they can live under water.

POLICE YOUR PLANET, by "Lester del Rey & Erik van Lhin" (Ballantine, \$1.50) Since Lester del Rey is "Erik van Lhin", I'm not sure what's going on here. This was first mentioned in SCIENCE FICTION ADVENTURES, as a novelet in a forthcoming issue. When that issue forthcame, it had become "first of two parts". The second issue announced its segment as "second of three parts". But it didn't end in the 3rd issue, either, and readers began to suspect that it was going to go on forever, anticipating Perry Rhodan by 20 years. But it did end, in the forth issue. Later, it was bruited about that Lester, who also edited the magazine (hence the pseudonym for the fiction), had been writing the story as he went along, each time doing enough of it to fill up the empty space in that issue. Rather surprisingly, for this sort of genesis, it was not only entertaining space opera, but it holds up remarkably well. Nothing to take seriously, but a very competently done adventure story. Recommended.

THE DISPOSSESSED, by Ursula K. le Guin (Avon, \$1.75) I reviewed the hardcover awhile back. It's an excellent book; a good look at the evils of capitalism and communism. (The capitalist section is too much of a polemic, but the anarchic/communist society is brilliantly done.) A Hugo and Nebula winner.

THE MOTE IN GOD'S EYE, by Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle (Pocket Books, \$1.95) If Dispossessed was the best book of last year, this is its closest competition. I also reviewed the hardcover of this one awhile back, and recommended it. (And in my opinion, it's as good as Dispossessed; voting for one or the other was a flip-of-the-coin situation.) This is first contact with aliens - real aliens. The only mark against it is that the first section is strictly space-opera, and not a very credible one. The exceptional part of the novel begins with Part Two.

NEW WORLDS 6, ed. by Charles Platt and Hilary Bailey (Avon/Equinox, \$2.95) The most pretentious and least interesting of the original pb anthology series. This is, according to the introduction, speculative fiction of contemporary awareness (I keep wondering what Rick Roberson thinks of it). I ignored most of the stories except for a brief skimming. However, Eleanor Arnason's "The Warlord of Saturn's Moons" is excellent and amusing, "G. I. Sparrow" by Gerard Giannattasio was a competently written incident though tailored to the NEW WORLDS theory of writing (which is that if you can't think of an explanation or an ending, you pass it off as experimental, unorthodox writing), "Lakewood Cemetary" by Ruth Berman is a mediocre vignette, and B. J. Bayley's "Maladjustment" is readable if unimportant. The rest of the stories are like cheap statuary; convoluted but hollow.

THE DEATHWORMS OF KRATOS, by Richard Avery (Fawcett, \$1.25) This is billed as "The Expendables #1", so I assume it's another adventure series more or less disguised as science fiction. Though actually this is more science-fictional than most; our heroes are ~~on a fleet that~~ evaluating new planets for possible colonization. The writing is slick and acceptable; characterization better than usual for a series. I don't like series, but for those who do, this is a cut above the average.

THE ELLUVAN GIFT, by Simon Lang (Avon, \$1.25) A sequel to All The Gods of Eisernon. This seems to be turning into another series of a spaceship wandering around contacting alien and generally hostile races; what hath Roddenberry wrought. This is somewhat more philosophic than most series. Characters are acceptable. (I didn't find them terribly interesting, but see for yourself.)

STRESS PATIERN, by Neal Barrett, Jr. (Daw, 95¢) One of the more interesting gimmicks. Our hero is stranded on a very strange planet, and his quest is to find out what makes it tick. It ties together rather neatly. Unserious but interesting.

ENDLESS VOYAGE, by Marion Zimmer Bradley (Ace, \$1.25) Space opera plot; the Explorers live on their ships and are more or less unhappy when they have to interact with groundlings - or with Explorers from another ship, for that matter. The rural village syndrome - outsiders are different - extrapolated to the stars. Very well done, as is the handling of the tensions and emotional crosscurrents of ship life. Recommended.

DETOUR, by William Wilson (Berkley, \$1.25) A horror story of a rural village with a difference. Not fantasy, but a fair attempt at a shocker which would have been better with fewer pseudo-significant Insights. Very ham-handed use of psychology. But still moderately interesting.

THE TRANSITION OF TITUS CROW, by Brian Lumley (Daw, \$1.50) Bruce says he's going to comment on it, and since it's imitation Lovecraft and he's the Lovecraft fan, go read his column. It seemed a good imitation to me.

THE DRACULA TAPE, by Fred Saberhagen (Warner, \$1.50) This looked terrible. I only bought it because of the author's name, and it's a vindication of that method of purchase. This is Count Dracula's own defense against his detractors. His actions were totally misunderstood; he only wanted to be friendly. And besides, he is the innocent victim of prejudice. Very well done; recommended.

BERSERKER'S PLANET, by Fred Saberhagen (Daw, \$1.25) Swords and sorcery and science, on a planet with a primitive culture and an extremely odd religion. Moderately good adventure.

A MIDSUMMER TEMPEST, by Poul Anderson (Ballantine, \$1.50) An alternate world in which Shakespeare is a historian. (Well, he's sort of a historian in ours, but here his plays are literally true, even - or especially - the fantasy parts.) This mixes the English civil war, railroads, Ariel and Caliban and company, and has bit parts for Holger Danske and Valeria Matuchek from Poul's other works. There are interesting little bits for stf scholars, such as a fanatic Roundhead named Nehemiah Scudder, and occasional horrendous puns. ("The fault, brute steersman, lies not in her spars but in thysself.") But mostly, it's an utterly fascinating alternate world background. Highly recommended.

THE WHENABOUTS OF BURR, by Michael Kurland (Daw, \$1.25) More alternate worlds. I was rather hoping for a detailed depiction of one; Kurland takes the other - and easier - route of providing tantalizing bits of several. But it's fast-paced and entertaining, if not as memorable as Poul's book. Kurland takes a light humorous tone, and does it well, as in Ben Franklin's invention of an automatic handshaker for politicians. ("Said it removed the personal touch. I told them that was its major value. Removing the personal touch of politicians is always a desirable goal...") The book is recommended, and I've already inquired about the possibility of purchasing the original of the Freas cover.

JOSHUA, SON OF NONE, by Nancy Freedman (Dell, \$1.50) Reading this one made me wonder why some bad books become best-sellers and others remain simply bad books. Because this is an exceptionally bad book. The plot is silly, the characters pure cardboard, the dialog artificial. As a reader, I resent the fact that I wasted money on it (it would be just as bad a book if it had been sent free for review, but I wouldn't be as annoyed) and as an author I resent the fact that pretentious twaddle like this makes money.

THE ENCHANTED PLANET, by Pierre Barbet (Daw, \$1.25) A sequel to Games Psyborgs Play, which I didn't much like, either. Barbet is imaginative enough, but I'm completely unable to get interested in his characters.

BREAKAWAY, by E. C. Tubb (Pocket Books, \$1.50) The first two books in the MOON ODYSSEY, by John Rankine (Pocket Books, \$1.50) "Space:1999" series. They're based on the show, and presumably cover the first four episodes. (At least, the first half of Breakaway covers the initial show.) Tubb sticks very close to the script (and I assume Rankine does, too, though since I haven't seen his episodes, I can't guarantee it). This is a relief, since I didn't really think he would write such drivel by himself. The show is bad, but pretty in color. The books are just bad (they are illustrated with stills from the series, but in black and white they don't come across nearly as well.) The plot is ridiculous, the science is nonexistent, and the characters are tissue-paper. (In that respect, the books are better than the show, where Landau and Bain displayed all the acting ability of store-window dummies.) And the price is outrageous.

THE SPACEJACKS, by Robert Wells (Berkley, 95¢) Industrial competition and alien intrigue among the planets. I never really believed in Wells' idea of so much interplanetary travel that there are numerous salvage companies competing for business, but if you can swallow that one, the rest of the book is adequate adventure, if unmemorable.

FLOW MY TEARS, THE POLICEMAN SAID, by Philip K. Dick (Daw, \$1.50) A search for identity, of course; Dick seldom writes about anything else. And a long and rather tiresome complaint that people do not cherish one another. Damn right they don't, and people like Dick's protagonist are one of the reasons.

NIGHT OF DELUSIONS, by Keith Laumer (Berkley, 95¢) This is the one, I believe, which was originally marketed with the Laumer cover and title over another book entirely; a second-rate detective novel, someone said. Eventually the error was discovered, the defective copies removed from newsstands, and the book reissued. I think I have one of the good copies, but since this also seems to be a second-rate detective novel, albeit involving stf concepts like alternate probabilities, it's hard to tell. It's nicely intricate, as are most of Laumer's books, but not particularly intriguing.

EXPERIMENT AT PROTO, by Philip Oakes (Avon, \$1.25) A terribly British book, filled with ineffectual scientists and ineffectual sex. If done well, I suppose this sort of thing could be profound; when Oakes does it, it's incredibly boring, like a lot of British science fiction. The scientific gimmick is human communication with chimps, which the author manages to make just as boring as the rest of the book, which I suppose is a talent of sorts. (But I prefer John Collier.)

TA, by John Robert Russell (Pocket Books, \$1.25) In a blurb, Jerry Pournelle is quoted as saying "if you liked De Camp's Viagens, you'll love Russell." I never did think highly of Jerry's critical abilities, but there's no need for him to insult de Camp. This one is a very pedestrian sort of alien-planet swords-and-sorcery. It's both serious and uninspired (I don't object to the latter as much as I do to the former.) I will give Russell one mark of credit; this doesn't seem to be the first volume of a series. Thanks for small favors.

THE SLAVES OF HEAVEN, by Edmund Cooper (Berkley, 95¢) Superscience coexisting with barbarism. It's been a fairly staple stf plot since Burroughs' Mars books, but Burroughs handled it a lot better than Cooper does.

THE TENTH PLANET, by Edmund Cooper (Berkley, 95¢) I think Cooper's dialog is the worst part of his writing. Though the characters aren't all that great, they could be given a semblance of life if they didn't all sound like robots.

DHALGREN, by Samuel R. Delany (Bantam, \$1.95) In page-count, it's worth the money. In enjoyment... One of the minor bits of one-upmanship at recent stf gatherings seems to be the discovery of who in the group managed to last the longest in this one. A few hardy souls read the whole thing, and are regarded with mild awe and perhaps a little pity. The problem is that the book isn't science fiction. It's a youth-culture novel with enough stf trappings to get it listed as science fiction. Delany has tried hard for original imagery. ("It is not that I have no past. Rather, it continually fragments on the terrible and vivid ephemera of now." "Beyond, the burning city squatted on weak, inverted images of its fires.") Quite often the result is original garbage, but at least as often, the trick succeeds. (And makes those sections read like pages and pages of READER'S DIGEST quotes.) Dialog is far superior to Cooper or Russell or Oakes, but there is a tendency for everyone in the book to talk and think like a college sophomore, which is impressive mostly to those readers who are college sophomores, or are looking forward to being one.

THE PRINCESS ERIDE, by William Goldman (Ballantine, \$1.95) An amusing fairy-tale fantasy. Unfortunately, I kept getting the impression that Goldman was being clever at the expense of his material; trying to prove his sophistication by sneering at such naive literature. (Perhaps I'm overly sensitive, but it left a bad taste.)

CHAMIEL, by Edward Pearson (Pocket Books, 95¢) A retelling of the revolt of the angels and the tempting of Adam and Eve, narrated by an angel. Not all that well narrated, either; the only excuse for retelling a fantasy is improving on the original, and Pearson was a long way from that. (Okay; you can also retell it to give it a fresh slant; he didn't do that, either.)

MERLIN'S MIRROR, by Andre Norton (Daw, \$1.25) It's a nice chance for Norton to work in lots of mysticism, but it's not one of her better books. Retelling the Arthur and Merlin legend eliminates one of the best features of her stories; the exotic alien backgrounds. Even if Merlin is the descendent of star-travelers, the story still has to be laid in Olde Englande. It's competent, but not exciting.

2018 A.D. OR THE KING KONG BLUES, by Sam J. Lundwall (Daw, \$1.25) Blurbed as "the bestseller sf novel that shocked Sweden", but the Swedes shouldn't be as easily shocked as all that. It's a fairly standard warning against a dismal future if we continue in our intransigence against the Spirit of Man. Lundwall has made it seem realistic by being realistic as much as possible; he says much of the background was taken from current newspaper headlines. But it still isn't terribly interesting.

SEEDS OF CHANGE, by Thomas F. Monteleone (Laser, free) This is their promotional giveaway. In the last issue of YANDRO, Freff and Steve Simmons commented on some of its inadequacies. It has them - but compared to the preceding 15 or 16 items, it's not all that bad. (One flaw presumably due to copy-editing; "Some of them's only job is..." Maybe that's Canuck usage, Susan?) The only major flaw is the alien spaceship, which just happens to be precisely what is needed; a deux ex machina with a vengeance (and the accent on the machina). Otherwise it's a perfectly adequate if uninspiring adventure story.

GATES OF THE UNIVERSE, by Robert Coulson and Eugene DeWeese (Laser #4, 95¢) This is a perfectly marvelous...oh, you won't believe that, eh? Well, it's about this character who accidentally drives his bulldozer through a matter transmitter to a weird and wonderful world where he finds romance, adventure, melodrama and occasional patches of farce. Anyway, our hero, with the aid of the imaginary but invincible Commander Freff, saves the day. Gene and I have hopes of it being sort of fun to read. (I like it better than our Doubleday effort, but then maybe that's because I wrote more of it.)

THE LAST DAYS OF THE GREAT STATE OF CALIFORNIA, by Curt Gentry (Ballantine, \$1.95) I missed this the first time around, but Ballantine has brought it back in their Comstock line. It's an odd one. The framework is science-fictional; California has just been sunk by an earthquake, and the author is penning a eulogy. But the material, from the political foot-in-mouth disease ("I promise if I am elected I will restore moral turpitude") to religions to lumbering statistics, is solid, fascinating, fact. Gentry did a great job, and if you passed the book up because it looked like one more pseudo-scientific disaster novel (as I did), go back and buy a copy.

THE STORK FACTOR, by Zach Hughes (Berkley, 95¢) A fair adventure novel of overpopulation, the resulting rigid controls (and rigid thinking) and a wandering evangelist who discovers that he can actually heal people. Not top-notch, but interesting.

TIDE, by Zach Hughes (Berkley, 95¢) A scientific experiment goes wrong; this time it's an attempt to "farm" fish for an overpopulated world. Good enough action-adventure.

THE BIG BLACK MARK, by A. Bertram Chandler (Daw, \$1.25) Filling in another gap in the apparently endless saga of Commodore Grimes, Chandler tells of the expedition which got Grimes kicked out of the Federation Survey. Fair. Chandler is an entertaining writer, but personally I think Grimes played out several books back. I enjoyed the dedication to Captain Bligh more than I did the book.

AT THE NARROW PASSAGE, by Richard Meredith (Berkley, 95¢) Meredith has gone Laumer one better with a meeting of two opposing cultures which can cross the time-lines,

with a few aliens and bewildered locals thrown in. Fast action. A bit too long and involved for my taste, but competent.

OPTIONS, by Robert Sheckley (Pyramid, \$1.25) Sheckley's first novel in eight years, the blurb says. I think he's been studying Phil Dick and J. G. Ballard in the interim, and the results are not happy.

THE R-MASTER, by Gordon R. Dickson (Daw, \$1.25) The new member of the superman club discovers flaws in the system. So he fixes it. With a lot of action in between, of course, but not much suspense. Moderately entertaining.

SPACE RELATIONS, by Donald Barr (Fawcett, \$1.25) What PLANET STORIES might have been like if it had been allowed to depict actual sex. The book is really too long for the amount of story present, but it was moderately enjoyable. (Not good, mind you; enjoyable.)

OUR CHILDREN'S CHILDREN, by Clifford R. Simak (Berkley, 95¢) A double invasion from time; first by the descendents of future man, and second by the monsters who are pursuing them. Dull.

THE BIRTHGRAVE, by Tanith Lee (Daw, \$1.50) Another thick one; so thick, apparently, that a special introduction by Marion Bradley advertised on the cover had to be skipped. Personally, I think the book would have been improved by cutting out some of the rather tedious description and including the introduction. However..... Superwoman comes out of a volcano and spends 400 pages trying to discover who and what she is. (And then she finds out, and is sorry she asked.) Much too slow-paced for me; isn't there a happy medium in these things? The author is prone to putting in great chunks of description, which do nothing at all for me. But if you like that sort of story, by all means try this one.

MANDRILL, by Richard Gardner (Pocket Books, \$1.25) A modern novel of psychologically disturbed people - in the world of the mainstream writer, everyone is at least neurotic - with a few stf trappings. (Mainly the fact that the action takes place in a research lab.) Stf authors have been suggesting for years that science fiction should be merged with the main stream of literature. Well, here it has been, and how do you like it? (I didn't finish it, myself.)

FARTHEST STAR, by Frederik Pohl and Jack Williamson (Ballantine, \$1.50) A thick one. Also basically psychological, though with a more science-fictional framework than Gardner's novel. Humans can be duplicated. The duplicates are sent to a far-off research station monitoring a strange extra-galactic object. Nothing is lost from the point of view of the scientists back home, since the originals are still there, but the duplicates, with no future but death from radiation, feel differently about it.

TOTAL ECLIPSE, by John Brunner (Daw, \$1.25) I reviewed the Book Club edition awhile back. A research team on an alien planet is trying to find what caused the downfall of its civilization in order to apply the solution to Earth's own crumbling structure. An interesting idea, but Brunner didn't do enough with it to make it one of his better novels.

THE GORGON FESTIVAL, by John Boyd (Bantam, 95¢) More mundane psychology, in the invention of a youth elixir by a California college professor. Unlike Gardner, Boyd knows how to show the resulting tensions without spending paragraphs describing them, and the result is a fairly entertaining book. Nothing to vote for a Hugo, but worth reading.

THE QUEEN OF SPELLS, by Dahlov Ipcar (Dell, 95¢) A juvenile fantasy romance, based on the Childe ballad "Tam Lin" (which I had never heard of before, despite a more than casual interest in folk music). I suppose if you're not interested in folk music, this would be a mediocre fantasy; if you are interested, then it's a very interesting book. Recommended with reservations.

SPECIAL FEATURE, by Charles V. deVet (Avon, 95¢) Interesting idea; an alien killer on Earth is protected by a tv network for the benefits of live coverage of its

killings. Nicely cynical, but not handled all that expertly. DeVet got his start with the pulp AMAZING, and still shows it here and there.

THE BEST OF CORDWAINER SMITH, ed. by J. J. Pierce (Ballantine, \$1.95) If you like Smith, I suppose you have your own idea of his best. If you don't like him - and I don't (or didn't; past tense here) - then his best isn't all that much different from his worst. Anyway, here you get 12 stories, an article on Smith by Pierce, and a chronology of Smith's future history. Total of not quite 400 pages. If you like Smith, you'll buy it, even if the stories have all been anthologized elsewhere. If you don't know anything about Smith, you ought to buy it and find out. He was a very popular writer, even if not with me. (And if he hadn't insisted on getting cute with the names of his characters, I wouldn't have disliked him as much; he antagonized me with his titles before I ever got started on the stories, and the names were too irritating for me to concentrate much of the characteristics - not that I ever found many to concentrate on.)

RENEGADES OF TIME, by Raymond F. Jones (Laser #1, 95¢) Lightweight space opera, but entertaining enough on a dull afternoon. Earthman gets tangled up with barbaric aliens who have stolen the secrets of space travel from the good guys (who are scientifically advanced but indolent), defeats the assault on Earth, etc. Jones could probably write this sort of thing in his sleep, but he does a quite adequate job of it. Since Laser books are aimed at a readership which wouldn't know a deep scientific concept if it bit them, this ranks as an excellent job, and I enjoyed it more than I do some of the more pretentious and less successful efforts.

2000 A.D., by Jacques Sadoul (Henry Regnery Co. \$17.95 hardbound, \$7.95 pb) Since the pb is the same size, I can hardly recommend an extra \$10 for stiff covers, except maybe to libraries. This should have been up in front with the more expensive volumes, but it just arrived. It's 8-1/2 x 11 size, 170 pages, and contains several hundred illustrations from the old pulp magazines. Color is scarce; there are 8 color pages with a total of 17 reproductions on them. Most of the illustrations were in black and white to begin with, being from interior drawings, though there are a few covers reproduced in black and white, which is my only quibble. (Oh, there could be minor nit-pickings; not enough Cartier, no Hubert Rogers at all, not enough Schomburg and Valigursky in the machinery and spaceship sections and too much Paul, Morey and Wesso, not enough Emsch, etc. But with the vast number of US and British pulps to choose from it would be impossible to make a selection to please everyone.) Overall, it's a very good book of the illustrating of the pulp days, and quite nostalgic for me. (I was amused to find that the "Women of the Cosmos" section dominated by Lawrence and Finlay - well, they dominated the field in their day, too, because they were good. Brundage and Bergey are also included, but they aren't in the same class.) The pb version is highly recommended. Text is in English; there isn't much of it and except for identifying the illustrations it isn't very important.

THE BLUE STAR, by Fletcher Pratt (Ballantine, \$1.50) Reprint of what is probably Pratt's worst fantasy. But at his worst, he was still pretty good in the fantasy line; if you haven't read it, give it a try.

CLOSE TO CRITICAL, by Hal Clement (Ballantine, \$1.50) Not one of Clement's better works, but again, the man has no peer in his descriptions of alien planets and life-forms. His poorest is better than most writers' best. Recommended.

DINOSAUR BEACH, by Keith Laumer (Daw, \$1.25) Reprint of one of Laumer's involved time-travel adventures. This was one of his better ones, and I enjoyed it; worth reading, if you don't already have it.

SPELL OF THE WITCH WORLD, by Andre Norton (Daw, \$1.25) Reprint of Daw Book #1. Two novelets, both pretty good examples of the Norton brand of romantic swords and sorcery. Recommended to newcomers.

SLEEPWALKER'S WORLD, by Gordon Dickson (Daw, \$1.25) Reprint; a book with some very nice ideas but altogether too many of them to make a coherent book. Not good.

SMITH OF WOOTEN MAJOR and FARMER GILES OF HAM, by J. R. R. Tolkien (Ballantine, \$1.50) It must have been nice to be such a famous writer that even one's lesser works were published and reprinted and became best-sellers. These are rather amusing fairy tales, and this edition has a nice cover by Hildebrandt and interiors by Pauline Baynes. Recommended for the 8 to 10 year old crowd - and for dedicated Tolkienists.

SLAN, by A. E. van Vogt (Berkley, 95¢) One of the most celebrated second-rate novels of all time. If you're going to call yourself a fan, you really ought to read Slan, because of the impact it had on fandom when it first appeared. In its favor, it's less involved and contains fewer idiocies than most van Vogt novels, and is an acceptable action-adventure book. But it's a long way from the definitive novel of the superman, which it tries hard to be.

WHO?, by Algis Budrys (Ballantine, \$1.50) Actually a spy novel with stf trappings, but exceptionally well done. One of the minor classics of the field. If a man has had enough plastic surgery to turn him into a halfway robot, how do you know it's really him and not a clever imposter? Frequently reprinted, but recommended if you haven't already read it.

THE BEST OF JOHN COLLIER (Pocket Books, \$1.95) Forty-seven short stories, plus two chapters of a novel, from one of the best short-story writers in the English language. Certainly the best writer of humorous, ironic fantasy. Some of the contents here are terribly familiar ("Evening Primrose", "Back For Christmas", etc.) but still funny. Others, such as "Without Benefit of Galsworthy", have seldom been reprinted, which has been a loss to fantasy fans. Collier should be savored; a few stories at a time. Forty-seven stories in one lump is a bit much - but I think I'll see if anyone has ever published a Complete John Collier. I could read one story a day from now until.... Buy this and see how you like it (and if you don't like it, don't expose your crude taste by saying so.)

TALES OF KNOWN SPACE, by Larry Niven (Ballantine, \$1.50) Thirteen stories from Niven's future history; the four novels and a few other longer works have been excluded. Plus bibliography, chronology, foreward and afterword by the author, and lovely inside cover art by Bonnie Dalzell. Some of the stories have appeared in other Niven collections; most seem to have been only in the magazines until now. One of the best books of the year.

A GIFT FROM EARTH, by Larry Niven (Ballantine, \$1.50) A novel, also in the series, reprinted in a matching format. I've read better stf novels, but this is a good solid work.

WORLD OF PTAVVS, by Larry Niven (Ballantine, \$1.50) Reprint of another novel in the series, with more Dalzell work. You might as well get the complete set, while you're at it. It's worth the money, particularly if you don't have the earlier editions.

THE BOOK OF POUL ANDERSON (Daw, \$1.50) Peprint of the hardcover Many Worlds of Poul Anderson, which among other things sparked fandom's current lawsuit. I reviewed the hardcover; it's an excellent work, with 8 stories and two critiques of Anderson's work. If you didn't buy the hardcover, buy this.

THE BEST OF FREDERIK POHL (Ballantine, \$1.95) Nineteen stories, including some excellent ones and some that aren't so hot. (It is always astonishing to me that two of Pohl's worst stories, "Day Million" and "The Midas Plague", are among his most popular - with anthologists, anyway.) But overall, this is a nice thick collection of one of the better writers in the field.

NO DIRECTION HOME, by Norman Spinrad (Pocket Books, \$1.25) A collection of 11 Spinrad stories. When he isn't sacrificing art to propaganda in an effort to shock his readers, Spinrad is a pretty good writer. (I suppose he's a good propagandist, too, but since I don't shock easily he never impressed me.) Here we have a little of both - but enough of the art to make it worthwhile reading. Recommended with a few reservations.

THE STARDROPPERS, by John Brunner (Daw, \$1.25) Reprint of an earlier Daw book. Not one of Brunner's best; it's an acceptable action novel with an interesting gimmick and a not very believable solution.

MENTION MY NAME IN ATLANTIS, by John Jakes (Daw, \$1.25) Another Daw reprint. This very possibly is Jakes' best work. His serious swords and sorcery is pretty bad, but this Conan parody holds up remarkably well.

THE SUNS OF SCORPIO, by Alan Burt Akers (Daw, \$1.25) Two books in the "Dray Pres-BLADESMAN OF ANTARES, by Alan Burt Akers (Daw, \$1.25) cott" series; a reprint of #2 with a nice Kirk cover and interiors, and #9, with a mediocre Gaughan cover and excellent interiors. I suppose if you like imitation Burroughs, this is about as good as you're going to get. But don't readers ever get tired of this stuff?

TRANSFORMATIONS: UNDERSTANDING WORLD HISTORY THROUGH SCIENCE FICTION, ed. by Daniel Roselle (Fawcett, 95¢) A companion to their US history volume. It isn't going to teach anyone anything about world history - the textbook questions at the end of each story are occasionally hilarious and occasionally merely pretentious. But it's not a bad anthology. Prehistory, of course, is represented by Bradbury's "Sound of Thunder". (Asimov's "Day of the Hunter" would be better, but the Bradbury is better known.) Greeks are covered by "The Gorgon's Head" by Gertrude Bacon, a rather pedestrian fantasy with no element of suspense whatsoever. "Thus We Frustrate Charlemagne" by R. A. Lafferty, is next in line; might be interesting to see what a high school history class would make of that one. The Renaissance is covered by Bradbury's "The Smile" (I can think of several better choices.) However, the selection for East-West relations is perfect; "The Man On Top", by Reginald Bretnor. Expanding horizons of science is the section for Asimov's "It's Such A Beautiful Day", a rather mediocre choice. Dictatorships are shown by Julian Kawalec's "I Kill Myself", which if nothing else proves why Stanislaw Lem is considered a great writer in Poland. The atomic threat is provided by Judith Merrill's "That Only a Mother", another excellent choice. Woman's lib is shown thru another Merrill; "Survival Ship" which is all right, I suppose, though there must be better selections. Henry Kuttner's "Absalom" illustrates the generation gap, and is the third excellent selection. And Ellison's "Repent, Harlequin, Said The Ticktockman" is illustrative of dehumanization, and is a good enough choice. Overall; interesting, but not for the purpose for which it is ostensibly intended.

BEFORE THE GOLDEN AGE: Book 2 and Book 3, ed. by Isaac Asimov (Fawcett, \$1.50 each) Six long stories in Book 2 and 12 shorter ones in Book 3. These complete the reprints from the one-volume hardcover (which was probably too heavy to carry, anyway.) Asimov's history of the era and his personal biography are in most cases better than the fiction. #2 includes "The Man Who Awoke" by Laurence Manning (recently published as a novel by Ballantine), and two good ones, Murray Leinster's "Sidewise In Time" and Raymond Z. Gallun's "Old Faithful". Jack Williamson's "Born of the Sun" was good for its time but is a little creaky now. "Tumithak in Shawm" by Charles Tanner, and "Colossus" by Donald Wandrei, were better left buried. In #3 the quality of the fiction improves. Weinbaum's "Parasite Planet", Leinster's "Proxima Centauri" (one of the first generations-ship stories, which so many other writers used later), and Ed Hamilton's "The Accursed Galaxy" (with its lovely explanations of human origins) are still quite readable today. Ross Rocklynne's "The Men and the Mirror" is a nice scientific-puzzle story, "He Who Shrank" by Henry Hasse, is one of the early classics, and Hamilton's "Devolution" is acceptable if crude. Leslie Stone's "Human Pets of Mars" isn't bad for the time, but is an obvious takeoff of Wells' "War of the Worlds". John Campbell's "Brain Stealers of Mars" is an imitation of Doc Smith. A good imitation, but still... "Minus Planet" by John Clark and "Past, Present and Future" by Nat Schachner, were mediocre even for their time. Campbell's article, "Other Eyes Watching", is a nice example of his non-fiction style. Then we have Asimov's "Big Game"; one of the "lost" unpublished stories which someone unfortunately found. This is for Asimov completists only, but overall the books are an entertaining historical tour of science fiction's beginnings.

BEST SCIENCE FICTION OF THE YEAR #4, ed. by Terry Carr (Ballantine, \$1.95)

THE 1975 ANNUAL WORLD'S BEST SF, ed. by Don Wollheim (Daw, \$1.50)

No agreements between the editors this time - or between either of the editors and me, for that matter. I found both books remarkably dull.

THE YEAR'S BEST HORROR STORIES: Series I, ed. by Richard Davis (Daw, \$1.25)

THE YEAR'S BEST HORROR STORIES: Series III, ed. by Richard Davis (Daw, \$1.25)

Series I is reprinted, and it wasn't all that great the first time around. Series III is new. Maybe it's me, but I found them totally unhorrifying and even duller than the sf books above.

STAR TREK LOG FIVE, by Alan Dean Foster (Ballantine, \$1.25) Three more novelets from the scripts of the animated series. Acceptable, if not particularly exciting to anyone but a Trek fan.

STAR TREK LIVES!, by Jacqueline Lichtenberg, Sondra Marshak, and Joan Winston (Ballantine, \$1.95) Personal memoirs of ST fandom, and some samples of ST fan fiction. Yes. (But worse is coming; at least two entire volumes of ST fan fiction are being assembled.)

THE CRUSADER #4: MY LADY QUEEN, by "John Cleve" (Dell, \$1.50) The last I heard from Andy, this is at least temporarily the last of the series, due to a monetary and contract dispute between author and publisher. It's the same sort of sex book, interrupted now and then by combat scenes, as the previous volumes. (If you've been reading John Norman, try the real thing, by somebody who knows how to write it.)

NINJA'S REVENGE, by Piers Anthony and Roberto Fuentes (Berkley, 95¢) Fourth book in the oriental-combat series. Lots of violence for the modern reader. I'm not particularly fond of it; I dislike series anyway, and I'm not particularly interested in any of the various formalized divisions of unarmed combat. But the writing is good enough (except perhaps for the fantasy element, which is the poorest part of the series) and the descriptions of techniques would seem to be accurate.

DEAD MAN'S GOLD, by Lee Hoffman (Ace, 75¢) I try to keep up with the non-sf writing of fans. Lee writes quite good westerns, if you care for that sort of thing. I rather enjoyed this.

LONG AFTER SUMMER, by Robert Nathan (Dell, 95¢) Another of Nathan's gentle novels of love. Not fantasy, though in the modern world it seems fantastic enough. Fairly good, though not one of Nathan's best by a long shot.

THE OTHER GLASS TEAT, by Harlan Ellison (Pyramid, \$1.50) I thoroughly enjoyed The Glass Teat, and expected to do the same with this. Unfortunately from my point of view, this one contained fewer of Harlan's opinions of tv (which I agree with, in the main) and more of his comments on how his scripts are butchered, how the fascists are taking over America, and so on (which I disagree with). It's in Harlan's usual ranting vein, which is popular with younger readers but not with me. (But I didn't dislike the book; I just didn't like it as well as I did the first volume. Still more or less recommended.)

SCIENCE PAST, SCIENCE FUTURE, by Isaac Asimov (Doubleday, \$8.95) An assortment of articles from various odd sources such as MODERN MATURITY, MOTOR BOATING AND SAILING, FOOD MANAGEMENT, BELL TELEVISION MAGAZINE, etc. This provides one good and one bad point. The good one is that you probably haven't read these in their original publications (aside from a few like the TV GUIDE reprints). The bad one is that they're tailored to the mundane mentality. The ones from MODERN MATURITY, in particular, are unsuitable for any fan over 10 years old. Still over half the book remains interesting to people who know the basics of science, and there is a minor benefit that in tailoring the articles to specific audiences, he has come up with a variety of viewpoints of the universe.

OTHER WORLDS, OTHER UNIVERSES, ed. by Brad Steiger and John White (Doubleday, \$7.95) I had doubts about this just from looking at the names of the editors. White I don't know, but I do not like Steiger's writing, his subject matter, or his out-

look on life. This allegedly covers all bases from orthodox science to spiritualism, "in search of omni-science" (whatever the editors think that might be) and it's every bit as bad as I thought it would be. The editors' idea of an orthodox scientist seems to be Timothy Leary, and the quality of the prose - and of the ideas - goes down from there. Avoid this like the plague.

A HISTORY OF THE DEVIL, by William Woods (Berkley Windhover, \$2.95) Seems to be a fairly standard treatise on the way in which pagan gods became Christian devils. (The ones who became Christian saints are ignored.) Woods emphasizes the idea that beliefs change and evolve, and that we can't simply dismiss witch-hunters in the Middle Ages as reactionary sadists. The Inquisitors for the most part carried out the will of the people, or at least of a large proportion of the people.

AMPHIGOREY, by Edward Gorey (Berkley Windhover, \$4.95) I've always liked Gorey's work, but until now I never bought any because the books were always undersized and overpriced. This one is oversized and fairly priced, and reprints 15 of the earlier works; The Unstrung Harp, The Listing Attic, The Doubtful Guest, The Object Lesson, The Bug Book, The Fatal Lozenge, The Hapless Child, The Curious Sofa, The Willowdale Handcar, The Gashlycrumb Tinies, The Insect God, The West Wing, The Wuggly Ump, The Sinking Spell, and The Remembered Visit. There is quite a variety included. Wuggly is a sort of cross between Dr. Suess and Charles Addams. Lozenge and Gashlycrumb are alphabet books for morbid children. ("A is for Amy who fell down the stairs, B is for Basil assaulted by bears...") Object Lesson is a predecessor of Snoopy's writing efforts. ("At twilight, however, no message had come from the asylum." "On the shore a bat, or possibly an umbrella, disengaged itself from the shrubbery...") Juanita's favorite is Harp, which depicts the heartrending life of an author. ("The talk deals with disappointing sales, inadequate publicity, worse than inadequate royalties, idiotic or criminal reviews, others' declining talent, and the unspeakable horror of the literary life." Just like a SFWA meeting) Highly recommended; by all means pick up a copy.

HOW DO THEY FIND IT?, by George Sullivan (Westminster, \$6.50) Nice factual book for the inquisitive child; another in the publisher's "How Do They?" series. The author opens with dowsing for water and goes on to the detection devices for treasure hunting, the workings of sonar, oil drilling, and the uses of satellites in mining and forestry, along with tornado detecting and the operation of airlines (the latter divided into sections on navigation and prevention of skyjacking). A comprehensive and well-written book for a juvenile Christmas or birthday.

SCIENCE-WHO NEEDS IT?, by Ben Bova (Westminster, \$5.95) An explanation and history of the scientific method aimed at youngsters. Beginning with Francis Bacon's Novum Organum, he explains clearly what the scientific method is, how it has been used to change the world, and what its limitations are. Also recommended for gift-giving; age 10 or so for fan kids, 12 or 13 for mundanes.

THE WHITE JADE FOX, by Andre Norton (Dutton, \$7.95) Norton's first gothic romance, and I'm glad she finally made it, since she's been trying for years. (No explanation for previous failures, unless she's too good for the field.) This is a historical gothic, with genuine fantasy included - and Chinese fantasy, at that. Bev DeWeese thought the fantasy was introduced too late, and awkwardly, but I didn't get that impression. (Though God knows I'm not a gothic connoisseur.

FILLETS OF PLAICE, by Gerald Durrell (remaindered, 39¢) Not a bad price for an excellent \$6.00 book. This consists of various more or less isolated incidents of Durrell's life, from the amazing party he managed for a British colonial officer to the affair of Ursula, one of the more creative users of the English language. If you see a copy of this, grab it.

THE KILLER ANGELS, by Michael Shaara (Ballantine, \$1.95) A new and excellent book about Gettysburg, and a Pulitzer Prize winner. It's a long way from Shaara's previous work such as "Orphans of the Void", but it's nice to see a member of the stf club making good. He takes the viewpoints of various officers who fought at Gettys-

burg, but primarily that of Longstreet for the South, and for the North that of Colonel Lawrence Chamberlain, who fought at Little Round Top on July 2 and on July 3 was in the "Safest place on the battlefield. Right smack dab in the center of the line." It's a marvelous book; get it.

THE CASTE WAR OF YUCATAN, by Nelson Reed (Stanford University Press, \$2.95) John Miesel recommended this one to me, and even got it for me when I couldn't locate a copy. It's the story of the only Indian war in North America in which the Indians won; there was an independent Mayan state in Yucatan from about 1850 to about 1900. (And the feeling lingers; the author was there in 1959 and was asked by an Indian leader for "rifles and men to help drive the Mexicans out." He comments that "I had gone looking for recollections of the Caste War, and now I was invited to enlist.") There's an old ballad called "The Lure of the Tropics" in which one stanza runs: "But the thing that'll double-bar my soul,

When it flaps at Heaven's doors,  
Was peddling booze to the Santa Cruz,

And Winchester forty-fours." I always wondered just what, specifically, that referred to; now I know. (It's fascinating how unrelated bits and pieces will tie together if you read enough.) Anyway, the history is fascinating, and the writing well above the average. ("I am religious; you are superstitious; he believes in magic." An illustration of the problems of competing religions, which were an important part of the struggle.) An outstanding book for the history fan.

REBELS VICTORIOUS, by Lucien Agniel (Ballantine, \$1.50) A Mockingbird edition. This covers the southern campaigns of the Revolution. There isn't a lot new about it - or at least there wasn't for me - but it's very well handled. Recommended for those who don't already have a host of books on the Revolution.

SCARFACE, by Andre Norton (secondhand) This is a Comet pb; not sure that I've ever heard of the company before. The plot has unfortunate overtones of Gilbert and Sullivan, but it's a fair juvenile. Our hero has been raised to be a pirate, but eventually discovers his true identity.

THE FORGOTTEN DOOR, by Alexander Key (secondhand) A Scholastic pb edition. A fairly typical juvenile fantasy; many of Key's works seem to involve finding an escape to a "better world" somewhere.

DOC HOLIDAY, by John Myers Myers (Bison, \$1.95) Considering the numerous and varied ways in which he has been portrayed in movies, it might be well for anyone interested in the west or in pop culture to get the facts. Doc was not merely an unpleasant character; he had a certain raw humor. ("Doctor, don't your conscience ever trouble you?" "No, I coughed that up with my lungs years ago.")

THE PROTOCOLS OF THE WISE MEN OF ZION (secondhand) In case you haven't heard of this (I thought everyone had, but found that several fans looked blank when I mentioned it), it's the most celebrated and long-lasting piece of hate literature ever penned. Mine is a 1920 edition; there are numerous earlier and later ones. Ostensibly, it's the detailed plot of the International Jewish Conspiracy to take over the world. The imagination of the author or authors (nobody knows, really) is interesting. (Did you know that the graduated income tax is a Jewish plot? So are those journalists who "make daily attacks upon the personnel of the administration". Which I suppose includes those who wrote about Watergate as well as the earlier ones who publicized Teapot Dome...) Don't under any circumstances pay for a new edition, because that puts money into the hands of bigots. But if you can pick up a secondhand copy for a nickel, as I did, it's a fascinating book.

WESTERN BADMEN, by Dorothy M. Johnson (Ballantine, \$1.25) A Comstock edition. I like Johnson's writing. (So do movie producers; "A Man Called Horse", "The Hanging Tree" and "The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance" were all made from her short stories.) In this case, she sticks to facts. Most of the badmen are well known, but a few such as Joe Slade were new to me. (I had encountered a cleaned-up version of Joe in Luke Short's novel The Whip, but I hadn't known he was real.) Again, recommended to history and western fans.

THE RETURN OF SHERLOCK HOLMES, by A. Conan Doyle (Ballantine, \$1.25) I reviewed MEMOIRS OF SHERLOCK HOLMES, by A. Conan Doyle (Ballantine, \$1.25) the first 3 THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES, by A. Conan Doyle (Ballantine, \$1.25) volumes of this series last time. The introductions here are perhaps not as good as those in the first three books, but they're good enough. The stories, of course, are all literary classics; everyone should read Holmes and most people do, sooner or later.

DAMNED TO SUCCESS, by Hans Hellmut Kirst (Berkley, \$1.50) Another and much more modern detective story, set in Kirst's modern, decadent Germany. (Which should be extremely familiar to stf readers used to reading about modern or future decadent America; the two countries have remarkable similarities.) This is one of Kirst's poorer books, meaning it's only slightly better than anyone else's detective epics. The characters are typical Kirst; the honest man beset by an unscrupulous world that he doesn't quite understand, the more or less honest man who knows how to use the system to obtain justice, and the villains. Kirst's villains are always realistic enough to make you shudder.

WHEN THE WHIPPORWILL, by Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings (Ballantine, \$1.75) Another Mockingbird edition; this one a collection of short stories. I used to be very fond of them. Today I tend to wince at the racisms included - but they are all valid parts of Southern life in the 1930s when the stories were written. An excellent depiction of the rural South of that era.

THE NEW HANDBOOK OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS, by Richard Burack, M.D., with Fred J. Fox, M.D. (Ballantine, \$1.95) A nicely indexed handbook covering the most popular prescription drugs of our time, with ratings on their worth and expense. The authors feel that most brandname drugs can be obtained more cheaply under their generic names - and that some of them don't do all that much good, anyway. Slightly less than a third of the book covers drug company profits, advertising, recalls of hazardous drugs by major companies, etc. Then we get into the drugs themselves, from acetaminophen to Zylprim, with comments and recommendations. (I checked mine immediately, of course; Aarane isn't listed - too new, probably - Aldactazide isn't highly thought of, aminophylline is considered excellent, insulin is preferred to any of the oral diabetic drugs, which the authors consider unsafe. Not a bad average; I never liked Aldactazide anyway.) An interesting book. Recommended (to everyone except John Miesel, who won't like the comments on Darvon.)

FOUR REFORMS, by William F. Buckley, Jr. (Berkley, \$1.25) I always find Buckley interesting, even when I disagree with him. He may be wrong, but he's seldom dull. (And he's wrong much less often than liberals would like to believe.) Recommended.

THE OUTDOORSMAN'S HANDBOOK, by Clyde Ormond (Berkley, \$1.95) Aimed largely at hunters and fishermen. There are specialist publications for backpackers, and something like the Boy Scout Fieldbook would be better for the average vacationer.

THE MOONSTONE SPIRIT, by "Jean" DeWeese (Ballantine, 95¢) Numbers 6 and 8 in the THE CARNELIAN CAT, by "Jean" DeWeese (Ballantine, 95¢) "Birthstone Gothic" series. Both are competently done straight gothics. I have trouble believing that Gene could write them with a straight face, but he did; I'm not sure I could. For those interested in trivia, the cat pictured on the cover of Carnelian Cat is Gene and Bev's Samantha. Gene Tuckerizes like mad in Moonstone, but most of the names aren't those of fans.

BLOOD RUBY, by Jan Alexander (Ballantine, 95¢) #7 in the Birthstone series. I wanted something with which to compare Gene's and Juanita's efforts, and I'd previously skimmed through Alexander's books on the stands and found them moderately readable. So is this one - but Gene's are much better.

BARROW SINISTER, by Elsie Lee (Dell, 75¢) I rather admire Lee's competent heroines; they are among the few gothic heroines who are intelligent enough to be interesting. Besides, she has a sense of humor.

A SHADOW ON THE HOUSE, by Florence Stevenson (Signet, \$1.25) Her latest, and one of her better gothics. Her heroine is a budding opera singer, with all the self-

centeredness of the breed. (Her stepfather, who provided her with a piano, dies accidentally and she and her mother must move. "I was inconsolable over the loss of the piano." Now there's a heroine who knows what she wants....) The ending is a bit melodramatic, but the book is still fairly good fun.

OPHELIA, by Florence Stevenson (secondhand) I've been looking for  
A FEAST OF EGGSHELLS, by Florence Stevenson (secondhand) copies of these for some years; finally Denny Lien picked them up for me. These are much different from the usual gothic, and are genuinely fantasy as well as being genuinely funny. Ophelia is a beloved cat who inherits a rich old lady's estate - and is drowned in a well at the end of Chapter 1. She returns as a beautiful young woman who has to pretend to amnesia because nobody is going to believe her memories. She still has some catlike traits (when the villain tries to hypnotize her, she bats the little swinging ball out of his hand). Feast concerns reincarnation; specifically, a sweet little girl who has the soul - and the vocabulary - of an ex-showgirl with a heart of brass who has returned to look after her daughter. Daughter is now an adult, of course, and complications ensue. It's not quite as funny as Curse of the Conculens, but it's a worthy companion to it. Keep an eye out for it at secondhand book stores. (And if you find two copies, I know a small but devoted circle of Stevenson fans who would be delighted with the extra.)

FRIDAY'S CHILD, by Georgette Heyer (Berkley, \$1.50) Reprint; not one of Heyer's best, but good enough.

TO LOVE AND BE WISE, by Josephine Tey (Berkley, \$1.25) Reprint of a very good mystery.

THE WITCH'S BIBLE, by Gavin and Yvonne Frost (Berkley, \$1.50) A sort of combination of explanation of the beliefs of witch cults and "how-to" book. Acceptably written, but such remarkably silly ideas....

GODS FROM THE FAR EAST, by Henriette Mertz (Ballantine, \$1.50) Stories of pre-Columbian visits to North America by Chinese have a bit more basis in fact than most of their type. As usual, however, the author overstates her case, in both text and photos. (She has a photo of "ancient corn" alongside the modern variety. Which is nice except the "ancient" ear is quite obviously strawberry popcorn, and no more ancient than ordinary sweet corn.) After saying that she will "scrupulously follow every instruction laid down in the Classic" on direction and distance, she starts juggling them about halfway through. There may possibly have been such trips - but she doesn't prove it.

COLONY: EARTH, by Richard E. Mooney (Fawcett, \$1.50) Mertz at least had some basis of fact to work from. Mooney is working on pure imagination and the writings of several other half-baked sensationalists.

THE RITE OF EXORCISM, by Craig Karpel (Berkley, \$1.50) If you're bothered by possessive spirits, this is just what you need. This contains the rites, for both specific and general exorcisms, in both English and Latin, a short history of possession and (for some strange reason) the Hebrew alphabet. Could come in handy for writers of supernatural fiction, if nothing else.

MARITAL BRINKMANSHIP, by A. H. Chapman, M.D. (Berkley, \$1.25) One more marriage manual for people who don't have enough common sense to solve their own problems. Sometimes I wonder about the mundane citizenry of this country (and some of the fan citizenry, too...)

BREAKHEART PASS, by Alistair MacLean (Fawcett, \$1.50) I wondered what MacLean could do with a western. Not much. A thriller writer should know enough about firearms to avoid putting a safety catch on a single-action Colt. He doesn't date his action, but it's apparently shortly after the Civil War - yet his troop train has air brakes that weren't adopted until made mandatory in 1893 (in fact, his brakes appear whenever the plot requires them to, whether there is anyone around but the author to operate them or not.) The plot is about par for a British western, meaning Godawful. Being idiotic, it's of course a best-seller.

# GRUMBLINGS

John Brunner, The Square House, Palmer Street, South Petherton, Somerset TA13 5DB  
Great Britain.

In re: THE SHOCKWAVE RIDER

I hear that the editor whom Harper & Row assigned to their edition of the above-named novel has quit and gone to the West Coast.

Would that she had done so sooner.

In my version of the book there were two brothers Josh Treves, citizen of Precipice and co-owner of the dog named Brynhilde; and Jake Treves, a biologist working somewhere in the Kansas City area who comes to Nick and Kate's rescue -- and Bagheera's.

You may hunt in vain for Jake Treves in the Harper & Row text. Someone -- I can only assume it was the editor in charge -- decided without consulting me that Jake was surplus to requirements and deleted him. Wherever his name appeared, it has been changed to that of his brother.

On another but alas not dissimilar occasion I stated that while I never mind carrying back the can for my own mistakes I am darned if I will stand Joseph for errors foisted on me that are actually due to someone else's stupidity and/or incompetence.

As Churchill is reputed to have said, "The purpose of recriminating about the past is to stop the same thing from happening again."

So, if you plan to review this novel, kindly refer to what has been done to it without my knowledge. If you publish a fanzine, please quote me. Alternatively, or as well, perhaps you'll write to SF Writers of America, and Harper & Row, and Publishers Weekly, and whoever else strikes you are potentially helpful, saying -- if you agree, naturally! -- that this kind of thing should not be allowed.

Not only I but a lot of my colleagues will be obliged to you.

[[Due to our slow publication schedule recently, this is probably old news to most of you. But better late than never, and all that. (Write to Harper & Row now, and they'll figure they're never going to hear the end of this.) RSC]]

L. Sprague de Camp, 278 Hothorpe Lane, Villanova PA 19085

Thanks for Yandro 232. About the girls who built the counterweighted catapult: the medieval costumes are the right ones. That's a trebuchet, which doesn't go back to Roman times. It was an improvement on the Chinese p'ao and came into used around +XII] The Chinese could whistle up 500 coolies to pull on the short arm, but in Europe coolies were not so easily come by, so somebody thought of using a counterweight (e.g. a basketful of heavy stones) instead.

Just back from Ecuador, where I was chased along the beach by a couple of irascible sea lions. I can still move faster on land than they; but on an earlier tour or the Galápagos, a lady who didn't think they'd bite changed her mind after 9 stitches. Muy encantador.

Don & Margaret Thompson, 8786 Hendricks Road, Mentor OH 44060

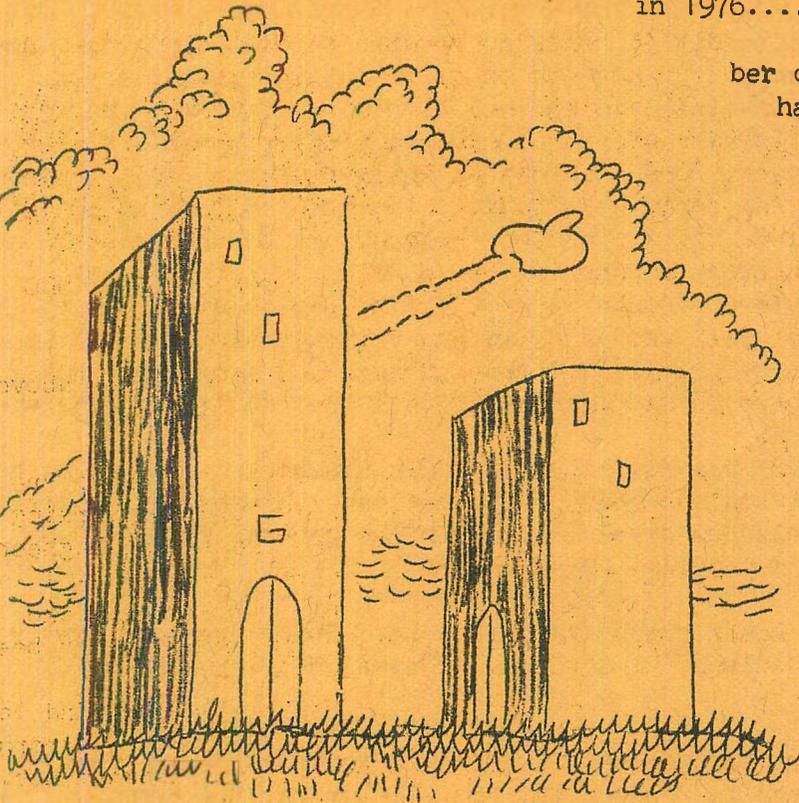
Thanks for your recommendation on ADVENTURE OF THE PEERLESS PEER. We hadn't really decided to watch for it, but we'll get it on your recommendation.

(Current idea in getting freebies, by the way, is a project Don has in mind for SHOWTIME ((the PRESS entertainment tabloid)) -- a review of all the calendars he can think of. There's the Tolkien calendar, the Fantasy ditto, the Star Trek one, a "night light" one for kids, a PEANUTS one, and so on... Should have enough calendars

in 1976....

There's been a rather stunning number of Vastly Important discoveries that have been made recently, you know?

They think they've found the cause (and a cure for) rheumatoid arthritis (a protozoan, wiped out with a broad-spectrum protozoa killer). Researchers accidentally discovered a monopole (magnet with only one pole), which they've billed as possibly the most important scientific discovery of the century (vast possibilities in realms of energy production, medicine, all kinds of stuff). A vaccine for elimination of tooth decay is well underway (works in rats). A report on DBS in the last week or so repeats something I'd heard earlier -- that some Florida (or Texas, I missed that part) town discovered that water hyacinths (which flourish in waterways in such profusion as



to be nuisances) were a boon; 4 acres of water hyacinths were sufficient to purify sewage water which ran into the hyacinths as sewage water and came out the other side cleaner than many cities' drinking water -- with no additives. And the flowers grew so fast that they could be chopped up, processed, and the resulting methane provided the natural gas to fuel most of the town. And still have enough flowers left to purify town water.

Remarked on the last item to a friend, who commented that it made one believe in some Vast, Eternal Plan after all...

[[Assuming anyone actually does anything with the water hyacinth idea...RSC]]

Jessica Amanda Salmonson, PO Box 89517, Zenith WA 98188

Tonight I watched the second episode of SPACE:1999 and though I found it better than the unlamented STARLOST and UFO, that's like finding cowdung less offensive than cat dung, thus I shan't watch it again. The best part of the program was the commercial for Laser books. Fitting: bad stf books advertised on a bad stf program. But oh so slick that ad! I just hope it doesn't cause too many people to be introduced to stf via the likes of Laser rather than something like MARTIAN CHRONICLES as was I... because they'll not be interested long with such an introduction.

Y232 has Adrienne Fein clarifying and correcting Leah Zeldes' perhaps inadvertent put-down of SISTERHOOD IS POWERFUL, a defense I appreciated seeing for that valid set of essays. Yet Leah did have a point -- she just cited the wrong tome as example, and named the wrong faction. There are indeed radical man-hating/would-be killers in the women's movements, but these are not feminists. They are lesbian separatists.

I personally would gladly live in a manless universe, reproducing by the sharing of ovums of any number of feasible alternatives to copulation with a, yuk, male. So I have radical tendencies -- but those feelings lose their wind when I meet the occasional male who is actually nice, intelligent and can in some small way enrich my life. F.M. Busby is a beautiful person to know and I just luv Eleanor. H. Warner Munn has been doing private readings for myself and one other, from a new epic novel that is so powerful that it alternately moves me to laughter and tears. I've even been managing a genuine affair with a fashion photographer, and it ain't that awful because he is an

exceptional human being (though admittedly it helps to be able to meet all these women who also pose before his camera's eye). So men can be all right in special cases.

Yet the separatist movement occasionally disguised as radical feminism has its appeal. I recently began showing a series of video tapes at both my Women's Rap Group and the YWCA's Lesbian resource center. One film was an interview with Jill Johnston who wrote LESBIAN NATION, a compelling political thesis. Another was Kate Millet doing her first public readings from FLYING. (Still another happened to be my own sweet self as interviewed on the educational network.) Showing these films, watching them, I was drawn toward these bright women's views, though later I'd find faults with some of the statements, as I would any statement followed as by an unwavering zealot. At a meeting of the Nameless Ones, I found myself telling Loren McGregor and some other male-fen that, come the revolution, we were going to shoot off all their balls. But I was, of course, "ranting with a smile".

Liz Fisher's "Fishmania" in #231 was hilarious. Dainis Bisenieks' article on book mark collecting was intriguing; but how odd that he doesn't mention pressed flowers or butterflies. I once found a shriveled-up black thing with the general shape of an orchid squarshed in a book -- from a wedding? Heavy date?

[[Well, now, that depends on whose Laser books are picked up. There are some pretty good writers in that series: J. Coulson, R. Coulson. DeWeese, Hensley...RSC]]

### Betty McLaren

A frantic search through papers cannot surface a few of your people to whom I wanted to respond. Tom whom I wanted to respond to. Or...let's go from memory.

Somebody asked if I work for John Mantley. Once, dear and understanding reader, one EVER works for John Mantley, one continues to work for John Mantley. He has that way with people. Then again, so do I. John Mantley is in as deep as Betty McLaren.

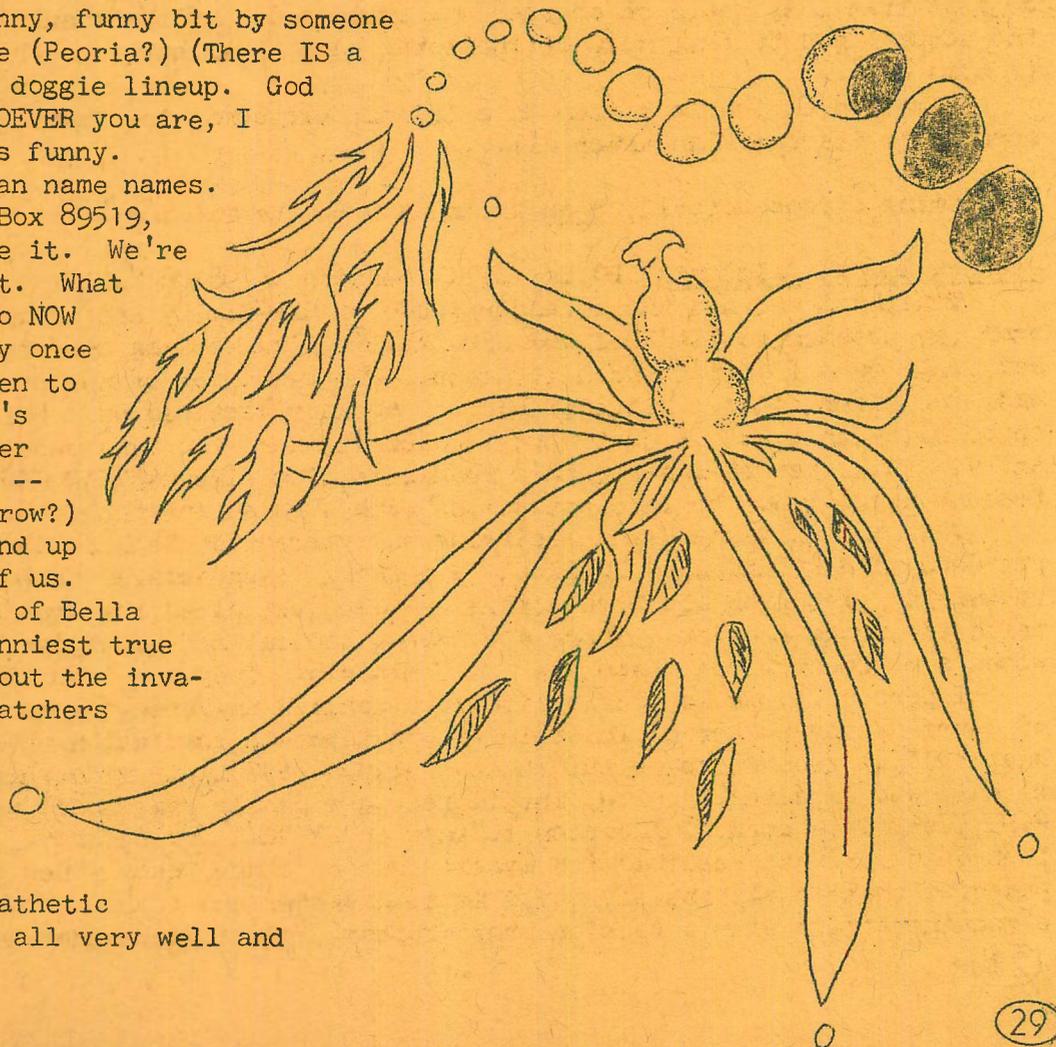
So much for John Mantley.

There was a funny, funny bit by someone in an unlikely place (Peoria?) (There IS a Peoria?) about some doggie lineup. God that was funny. WHOEVER you are, I remember that it was funny.

THIS ISSUE I can name names.

Jessica Salmonson, Box 89519, you're going to make it. We're ALL going to make it. What it's boiling down to NOW is with whom. Every once in a while you listen to or read a woman who's really got it together (LOVE Karen DeWolfe -- or is it Karen De Crow?) and you want to stand up and shout for all of us.

A woman by the name of Bella Stumbo wrote the funniest true piece of fiction about the invasion of the body-snatchers in the Civic Center of IA. However, shortly thereafter she was farmed out around the country doing straight, empathetic reporting, which is all very well and



good, but if Liz Fishman can be as funny as Bella Stumbo was in that piece, and if she likes boys to snuggle up to at night over girls, I'd Love to meet with it.

Ah, Michael G. Coney, 1016 Cypress Road...so you found a blonde-sex symbol to retype your latest 100,000 word novel. There but for the grace of Betty Friedan go I. If I had twenty-five cents for every man writer I have given ideas to, typed manuscripts for, permitted to use my name as a reference... However, that's past. Last year I made \$102.80 with my writing. I AM ON MY WAY.

Has it only been a year? I was going to work in the Mayor's office (That's Tom Bradley)? On his Committee on the Aging. And somebody asked just what does a Committee on the Aging do besides age. Since the Committee experienced me, they seem more cautious about what they call things now. I was asked to contact something called the Commission on the Status of Women and I wrote quite firmly that they could save the money setting up a Commission on the Status of Women; I could dig up three thousand women in three minutes to tell them it's lousy.

Things in the middle of LA are probably more exciting right now than they've ever been. We really haven't had time to age. GOD that's profound. In fact, Tom's image as Mr. Bland is coming apart at the seams. (I like to take credit for things like this because I'm always the first one they blame if they don't turn out right.) First we had a sexist war. Then we had a racist war. Now everyone's into a War on Corruption. Women and minorities, we're invincibles. (There IS a 1964 Civil Rights Act, you know.)

Then one of the big corporations in the sky got worried and scrambled together something called the Affirmative Action Association for Women. With a logo casually suggesting a white bird locked in a womb. SUBTLE?! They had women going around renting little black boys and insisting THEY were the real oppressed minority. After threatening to have their books audited I was elected to their executive board and placed in a seat of honor on something called an Affirmative Action Council. Right up there with Asian-Chicano-Black men, commissioners, etc.

Go, they said, go, get all the garbage out. So I did. I cried and carried on about all the women who have been discriminated against because of religion, color, age, and/or land of national origin. I was magnificent.

So then they pulled me out and put someone in who could speak rationally about money, contracts, consulting services, attorneys, etc. There's MONEY in affirmative action! Jesus Christ, I had forgotten about money. I thought the name of the game was to help all those people who've been discriminated against get enough to eat, decent housing, proper schooling, etc.

To make a simple story complex since last we met I've 1) challenged and exposed corruption in an election held here, 2) challenged and exposed AT LEAST gross and collusive inefficiency in the corporation, 3) challenged and exposed the collusive money interests investing in the white bird, 4) been stripped of all honors and dishonorably discharged from the board of the Affirmative Action Association for Women for taking too much affirmative action, and 5) received a 'Notice to Correct Deficiencies' from the corporation.

Well, hell. I've been fired from better places than the City of Los Angeles. I've been fired by a 29-year-old man at the Chamber of Commerce on the eve of Watergate for insubordination. THAT'S class.

Then there's Bhutan stamps. I have the first Bhutan stamps ever printed. I didn't even know there was a Bhutan until a friend sold me the stamps in 1970 and I reread LOST HORIZON. What I really into now is not only POF stamps but hand-made paper cut. (Chinese folk art)

The name of the record on the Bhutan stamp is "The White Haired Girl". It has marvelous sides with songs like "Unquenchable Wrath" (Female Solo & Chorus), "Paper Cut Flowers for the Window," "Hatred Burns in My Heart," "The Landlord Demands Payment of Debts," "Hsi-erh and Aunt Change Share Weal and Woe," ... and on and on. I'd recommend it AT LEAST as funny as Mort Sahl.

Leah Zeldes, 21961 Parklawn, Oak Park MI 48237

Well, Orlando has won the bid, so there's no sense talking about it now (as if

there was before -- when it was fairly obvious they were the only real choice). What would you say to worldcon in Detroit in '83 or '85? The Renaissance Center currently being built on the riverfront will be sizable enough to handle a huge convention.

If that's too far in the future, how about a regional in, say, 1976? (Yes, of course I'm leading up to a plug.) AutoClave will be the first sf con held in Detroit since Detention in '59. It will be held 28-31 May 1976 at the Howard Johnson's New Center Motor Lodge. GoHs are Gene Wolfe and Donn Brazier; toastmaster is Mike Glicksohn. Registration is \$5 in advance, \$6 after 1 May, and \$7 at the door. The address is: AutoClave, Box 04097, Detroit MI 48204. The con is to be oriented mainly towards fannish and fanzine fans. Chairfen are Gary S. Mattingly, Joe Wesson, and myself. Further information may be obtained from the con address or me. If you run another "Checklist of Upcoming Conventions" we'd appreciate a notice. Thanks.

Regarding Adrienne Fein's letter in Y232: Her New York address seems to prove my point that those in East and West are more uptight about women's liberation than those of us in the Midwest. I've enclosed an article which brings out that feminism is coming into the Midwest slowly and gradually, without any real flurry about it. It's a slow, easy loosening of the roles that have held men and women for so many years. And that's the way it ought to be; nothing can change 'Right now! Immediately!' without a lot of chaos and confusion.

One of the major differences between rape and seduction is that "rape" is applicable to women only, while "seduction" is applicable to either sex -- I could seduce a man as easily as he could seduce me. (In the State of Michigan, the word, "rape," is not applicable at all. The new term is "forcible sexual assault." Five areas of a woman's body are considered to be private, and when violated, it is considered sexual assault. If you were to pat a woman on the rear, she could have you prosecuted for forcible sexual assault.) As for being able to say "yes!" or "no!" just once and have that taken as a final, honest answer, how many times can you do that in anything? I sure wish you could -- I'd like to try it on missionaries, salespeople, nagging mothers, little children, and my dog, who is right now pestering me to go outside (it's pouring).

I should apologize; I have not read SISTERHOOD IS POWERFUL, only excerpts of it in various pro- and anti-feminism articles. I merely brought it up as an example of fanaticism.

Self-defense is a different thing altogether, and I don't really see what it has to do with feminism in particular. Everyone, male or female, should be able to defend himself in case of attack. Women aren't the only ones who get mugged.

Somehow, I don't think that if a man opens a door for me he is implying that I can't do it for myself. I also don't see how this and other simple acts of courtesy (that I just as easily and naturally do for other people) imply vulnerability. I know women who will refuse to enter through a doorway if a man is holding the door open; this is silly and unreasonable and oftentimes seems downright hostile. Courtesy should be reciprocated, not put down.

As for men who say "women don't need to work -- they can always be whores," they can merely be told that is work, and that the same logic also works for men (as the book THE HAPPY HUSTLER by Grant Tracy Saxon, which has been going the rounds of Detroit area fandom, confirms). And what men say is of no consequence. What matters is that there are equal opportunities to be taken advantage of, if a woman chooses to do so.

I don't like to listen to sexism either -- including that of many women's liber types. As far as I'm concerned I know I'm "liberated"; I don't feel any compulsion to prove it to anyone else.

[[A letter in MS suggested handling the cocktail party "fanny patter" -- generally a drunken s.(1)o.b.the woman barely knows -- by turning the tables and being a "balls patter"; the letter writer said that put the offender in his place, but I suspect too many such slobs would simply take it as an invitation to worse. Hence the law, while startling, may be very much in order in certain situations. JWC]]

Mary Schaub, Box 218, c/o C.S. Schaub, Spex NC 27502

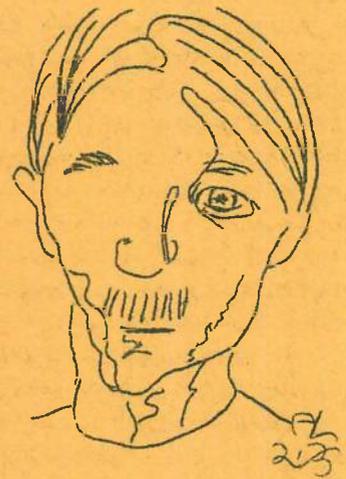
Glad to hear from you today -- a ray of sunshine in an otherwise grim mail haul. I got three manuscripts back today -- my record so far (2 were the same story, whereby hangs a long and tedious tale, a sort of postal mystery that I can't resist inflicting you with, if only in outline. I sent a short story to Baen at Galaxy on Oct, 29 of last year and waited for some response. In late January this year, he rejected another story I had sent him Oct.22, so I figured he was working his way down through his pile and my story in question should come back any day. Not so. I wrote a couple of weeks ago to ask if it ever got there ((I certify my stuff so that I can trace it if it gets lost)). Came a sweet letter from an editorial assistant Nay, the story in question never reached them. I confronted my post office with the certified slip and they filled in a jolly form about a yard long and dispatched it to the NY post office. In due course, back came the slip -- AHA! the manuscript HAD been delivered all right, and was accepted by one M. Hughes (the hitherto unsung villain in the piece; this would almost make a good operetta, with lots of chances for soulful duets and solos of the "yes, I did" "no, you didn't" variety.)). I writ this news to the ed. asst., who replied with some asperity that it had NOT gotten logged in at their office, therefore it had never arrived, and would I photocopy the carbon? I retyped the silly thing (only about 9 pages) and sent it off return receipt requested, deliver to addressee only. Today I got the return receipt back, and who do you think signed it? M. Hughes! I also got ((take a deep breath and sit down if your heart is weak)) BOTH copies of the feeble tale, each containing a sad note of apology. Seems the old original had gotten there, and had gotten misfiled in the editor's office (the ed. asst. put 3 !'s after that news, which I couldn't find so awfully surprising, seeing as how I had addressed it to the editor in the first place)); Baen also put in a handwritten note to apologize for holding the story so long; and with the retyped version, I got another scribble from the ed. asst. So I've bundled my wayward brainchild up and am sending it off to Ferman tomorrow. Author's ulcers must be fancier than plain old everyday ulcers.)

Books keep piling up. I do recommend an oldie, if you are ever in the mood for an entertaining British mystery in the leisurely old style, I suggest A.E.W. Mason's THE PRISONER IN THE OPAL, now available through T-K Graphics in Baltimore in a British paperback edition. Mason invented a French Sureté detective named Hanaud whom I hadn't run into before. His versions of English proverbs and idioms are worth reading (such as "I see him as the power behind the sofa!" or "it would be like locking the stable door after the horse has stolen the oats!"). The novel deals with Satanism in the chateau country, no less -- very delightful.

I noticed Steve Simmons' negative reaction to Wilbur Smith's THE SUNBIRD in Y232, and feel I should say a few words in favor of the book. I bought a copy on pure impulse at the drug-store last summer, lured into the expenditure by a cover blurb about a lost civilization discovered by archaeologists in deepest Africa (the H. Rider Haggard syndrome). The first half of the book is contemporary, with the archaeologists fossicking around and discovering -- finally -- the remnants of a lost city in an unexpected corner of the outback. The hero and his friend then blunder across the Hidden Cave (where would we be without at least one lost cave?) with a mysterious pool (boy, is it mysterious -- it later transpires that the whole aboveground portion of the city was sunk



in this pool, a problem in plain physics that left me speechless with envy at the author's finding such a remarkable, yet convenient hole to stuff his city in) and a concealed door into hidden archives (they wrote on gold, which was awfully thoughtful of them, these old city builders), and ultimately, through another hidden trap door... but I mustn't spoil the big surprise for you as to what was behind it. Anyhoo, the modern chaps find it possible to translate the archive material, and the second half of the book consists of the somewhat parallel life story of the ancient city dwellers (echoes of SHE again). Frankly, I found the ancient half much the better as a rousing adventure story, if a bit wordy. I kept having the suspicious feeling that Smith wrote the old half, and his agent said, "You'll never sell this stuff, kid! Tack on a modern preface with a lot of sex and jealousy and maybe I can place the thing for you." I'd almost bet a hidden gold piece it really went that way. I hadn't ever heard of Smith before, though I see he's written other things. I rather enjoyed SUNBIRD -- it had a definite Haggard flavor, and an inevitable tragic doom plot that was gloomily satisfying (why the hero didn't kill the main evil protagonist when he had the chance -- he had several chances, but he kept whacking off just a bit of the man at a time and turning him loose, to come back later and have to go it all over again, of course)...sort of a "Had we but known, we could have sure avoided a lot of trouble book" book. Great for a summer's day, if you're in the humor for blood and thunder, with romantic interludes you can always skip over.



Your ad featuring the Meso-American religious ceremonies at a newly opening shopping center did sound intriguing. Rain Dances, maybe? Where is Robert Graves when we need him?

[[The trials of authors; unfortunately, the experience related is neither unusual nor restricted to any one publisher. Since I generally dislike Haggard, this review made me less interested in reading SUNBIRD than Steve's did. The last quote refers to an ad in the Fort Wayne paper, which started me wondering just which Meso-American religious ceremonies they were reproducing. Throwing virgins into a sacred well, assuming that they could find a virgin in Fort Wayne these days? Ripping the heart of a shopper out with a stone knife? If I was R.A. Lafferty I could get a whole story out of that. RSC]]

#### Bob & Anne Passovoy

Slick tv and magazine ads inviegled us into using AMTRAK to get to Kalamazoo. That was a mistake. The agents had of course sold far more tickets than the train could honor, and the station was using a particularly rotten trick to keep the extra passengers off the train. Anyone could purchase tickets, but boarding passes had to be specifically requested -- and passengers without passes never got past the gate. By the time they'd obtained one and run back (about 2 city blocks) the train would be gone. Luckily, the fan who picked up our tickets also knew about passes. They tried to discourage us from boarding, "SRO only to Detroit" (a fib), and all in all I am agin AMTRAK.

Bob picked up a nasty sinus infection at Midwestcon. It sat and perked for a week and then appeared in all its glory on the Friday of ReKWestCon. The poor man woke up with a splitting headache, a spasmed eye, and a respectable fever. And wanted to go on duty as Dorsai. Being a spoilsport and unsympathetic, I stole his pants. He stayed in bed that day. He did limited duty Saturday. After dinner we took him to a local emergency room; they prescribed him one of everything and showed him around. When he came out enthusing about their trauma unit, I decided to quit worry-

ing, as he was obviously going to be fine. Our casualty rate was kinda high at the con -- of 9 Dorsai, 4 were ill by Sunday. And the GoH, Kelly Freas, was nursing some nasty burns incurred while cleaning brushes. Poor Kelly's left hand was really painful-looking, tho it didn't seem to be bothering him. He sat in the parties and sketched as usual.

The convention was beautifully run. Paula Smith and Sharon Ferraro did a wonderful job and their con ran like clockwork. The greenies didn't have to do a thing but fulfill our contract -- quite a change from last year -- and the con committee, bless 'em, were always available and gave quick decisions when needed.

Next year, say the chairladies, if they can stand to do it again, the InKWestCon (shudder) will be held in a convention hotel. With halls. Jackie Franke says real cons gotta have hall parties.

The party I liked best was a makeup demo, during which Yang turned Kelly into an evil Klingon with Fu Manchu mustaches. Kelly loved it. He was fitted out in Klingon garb and an iron greave? gauntlet? a horny glove, anyway. Kelly spent 10 minutes in front of a mirror and failed to find any expression that wasn't villainous. Then he went to dinner. Kept the makeup on, etc., until the costume pageant he was to judge. Only six costumes showed up so they canned the contest and started a party.

### Maydene Crosby

Somewhere, not too long ago and in connection with Yandro-ISFA, I read or heard of someone asking what was meant by the statement: "... (one word)... (second word)... to catch meddlers". (The two blanks indicate different words used by different people.)

Anyway: I can give you a third version, complete, and further more, I can explain its (not too) subtle meaning -- in a personal way, understand. In East Texas, long may those piney woods wave in the wind, the expression goes "That's rovers to catch meddlers!" and means, bluntly, "None of your business!" or "Mind your own business!" I know because whenever it got close to my birthday, Christmas, graduation, etc., and I saw a package I hadn't seen before and asked Mother what it was, she said, "Rovers to catch meddlers!"

Even people with lots less smarts than I could get the meaning.

(Well, sure I was snooping! What the heck, you think I was an abnormal child?)

Zelda, deah, comments on Yandro 231: "...while Midwestern females are feminists they're of a more relaxed type than most. We don't want to kill off our menfolk..."

OK, I'll buy the "relaxed" part. I dunno the stats, but may be Indiana, f'rinstance, has less killing of menfolk by womenfolk than other areas. I DO know that in 1974 the Rev. Gipson (Pastor of 2nd Baptist Church) was stabbed to death by his wife -- (she was tried and acquitted.). So far in 1975, a Doctor in Monticello was shot by his wife. (There -- 1974 and 1975 cases -- both pronounced DOA at St. Elizabeth's Emergency Room.) (The victims, I mean, not the wives.)

So one woman killing her man per year in Indiana makes for more relaxed feminist mores, I s'pose.

Sandra Miesel, 8744 N. Pennsylvania St., Indianapolis IN 46240

To put it in final form, the "Coulson" is awarded for "conspicuous acerbity" in fanac. Well, why not? Surely your many admirers would be only too happy to sponsor such a prize.

[[Sandra's referring to one of my comments at Midwestcon that if everyone else was going to give out fan awards, I might as well give one. Sandra helped me decide what it should be for. RSC]]

Paula Smith, 507 Locust St., Kalamazoo MI

Yandro was nice, but it's obvious that Juanita is busy; even Bruce must be pre-occupied, because you rather filled the zine. Not that I'm complaining, much, any-

way. And the rest was mostly letters. That edcom Juanita put to Mark Sharpe's letter mentioned the WBGU program. Part of it was filmed at Ourcon in East Lansing last May; that's when they got Yang. As well as some of us, I'm told; haven't seen it yet.

Steve Simmons has been sending us conreports from Californiacons. He mentions that, per capita, the Midwest has a helluva lot more than the Golden State. Maybe more, but each tends to be smaller, I think; a plethora of regionals. Or maybe MID-fen are natural congoers. Or something. He mentions that Bruce lost out on the Hogu. Give my sympathies. 'Course, you were nominated too, weren't you?

[[A few other Califen have muttered that Cal has few cons -- which was one oblique defense for holding NASFIC out there. (No one objects to them staging empty cons per year, a la Midwest, but the sour grapes insistence that it be designated a national con rankles. ) And as for why the Midwest has more cons per capita than the other regions -- maybe because we have hyperenthusiastic demons for committee work -- otherwise known as stark-bonkers victims -- running around loose, like one Paula Smith, for example, hmm? JWC]]

Alice Hopf, 136 W. 16th St., New York NY 10011

You and Juanita never fail to amaze me. How you can write all those letters, answering all the ones printed in Yandro, let alone letters like mine; and fill a full-time job and do garden and such work...and on top of that write a book every couple of months! Grief! People say I'm prolific, but if I average two books a year I'm doing well. And then there's Andre, who has had so much trouble with her health. Last letter she said she couldn't remember a time when she wasn't in pain of some sort. Mostly stemming from falling over her cat and breaking her hip. She seems to have had unusually bad luck with the operations resulting from that. Most people I know get allright; but she had to have a second operation to take out the stitches. She thought that had worked, and she was free of pain but after a week it all started up again, with back pain thrown in too. And she says the pain killer they give her upsets her stomach so that she can't eat. Yet, in spite of all this, she manages to go on writing and turn out the usual number of books. I just don't see how she does it. Am sure I'd be completely stymied.

Speaking of Andre, do you know anything about the miniatures that have been made of characters from LORD OF THE RINGS and a couple of other sf series? Are they sold at cons? Are they done by just one artist? Or is there a commercial company that makes them? The thing is that some artist wrote to Andre and wanted to make miniatures of the characters in her Witch World series. She was very pleased at the prospect, but then discovered that Ace owns the commercial rights to her Witch World series. And she is sure that they will queer the deal. However, she finally told the artist to contact the people at Ace. But do you know if it's a company doing it, or the venture of some individual?

Your story about the cat turning on the water in the sink reminds me of a story in George Schallers' GOLDEN SHADOWS, FLYING HOOVES. Have you read it? It's a beautiful book (now in paperback, but I own a hardcover copy). About the two years he spent in Africa studying lions. He and his wife (and two little boys) had a cabin near the headquarters in the Serengetti Park. One day soon after his arrival, he heard the water running from a tap around the back of the house. So he went to turn it off and found two lions drinking. Apparently, like your cat, they had turned it on. But Schaller left very fast. It's a wonderful book. I'm sure you'd like it.

[[I couldn't imagine who the sculptor of the figures might be. Any ideas out there?]]

Jan Brown, 19407 Dorothy Avenue, Rocky River OH 44116

I wonder how many takers the Hartford City News-Times got for its Declaration of Independence ad? I know it was tried some places, and I think also in Cleveland

that people were asked to sign a copy of the Declaration and refused, thinking it was some kind of Communist plot.

That Massachusetts law sounds like the real answer, but wanna bet it'll be either repealed or struck down in court? Politicians, liberal and conservative, seem to have an objection to anything that might work. Wonder why? But I'd like to see gun licensing with some kind of training requirement, for family members as well as the purchaser, to maybe help end the tragedies of kids blowing themselves and their friends up because they don't know how to handle a gun. Never happen, though -- do we really value our kids that highly?

Rape, seduction, etc: I have about as much use as Adrienne does for a male who has trouble taking no for an answer. I'd define seduction as convincing a woman who is saying maybe to say yes. But if the guy takes that as a license to come on too strong for my mood, my maybe will rapidly turn to no!

In the few zines I get, so much of the fan fiction is serious -- unlike the fan fiction of the old days I hear about from some of the older fen I meet at cons. "Liberation" was lovely compared to the bad fantasy and worse New Wave I've been seeing.

[[Well, the Hartford City paper told the people what they were signing, which helped in the acceptance. They got a fair number -- but I doubt if any of the signers really read it.// I'm willing to license gun owners, coupled with mandatory safety training. (But training doesn't seem to cut down traffic accidents and I see no reason why it would cut down firearm accidents. It isn't lack of knowledge that causes accidents of that sort; it's lack of common sense.) RSC]]

Carolyn Doyle, 1949 N. Spencer, Indianapolis IN 46218

I'm really more of a city person, and like having people, noise, and pizza parlors nearby. I asked Bruce why you lived in Hartford City and he told me it certainly wasn't his idea, so I'm asking you. Why do you live in HC? I'm sure you could find a job in Indy, shark hunting if nothing else. (I'm not kidding; WIBC radio is having its star dj go out on a shark hunt, and every day he gets all these strange calls, mostly from women who want their husbands to go hunting with him. I myself don't listen to the radio too often, but mother does, confident that someday she is going to win the giant jackpot. A housewife's existence sounds far too dull for me to ever consider it.)

I think I'm really beginning to become a fan. Last weekend my parents went down to Kempron to help some of my relatives there build a garage, while I stayed with my grandparents; and when the phone rang there at 12:30 PM I rushed to it and asked, "Mother, did I get any mail?" (Never mind the fact that they were almost 3 hours late -- any fanzines???) At least Juanita has two fans around her plus an ample number of sf pubs; I'm living in a house where science fiction is a dirty word.

I think there's a mailbox someplace in Indy that looks just like the Love sculpture. Be glad you aren't a mailman and don't have to look at the thing every day. (Mark Sharpe says he's going to look for your mailbox if he can't find you. Tell me, is it really taller than the house and in the shape of a cannon?)

[[I wouldn't live in Hartford City for more money than anyone in the county makes. But in the country I can do pretty much what I like (including things like target practice that are frowned on in the city). I'm not surrounded by nosy neighbors (or any neighbors at all), and I don't have to constantly rub elbows with people I dislike. Besides, judging from the ones I've known, farmers make pretty good landlords. RSC Please! I am not now nor have I ever been a member of the Housewives Party. There was a period before I broke into writing and actually started selling when I suppose I might have been designated a "homemaker" (cutesy, abominable word). But my general attitude toward the house is I should really clean it occasionally lest it run away from home in disgust -- but heaven forbid I should get sickening -- or addicted -- about the procedure. Faugh. JWC]]