

YANDRO

JULY 76

236

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I might point out that Anna's drawing was made before she ever actually attended a convention.

"The planet had an ellipsular orbit."Bruce Coulson

In honor of the Bicentennial, this issue of YANDRO is dedicated to Benjamin Thompson, 1753-1814; physicist, chemist, military leader, discoverer of major improvements in the construction of chimneys and artillery, founder of two separate Rumford medals. Obviously a scholar and a gentleman.

One of the Franklin Mint's Bicentennial promotions is a set of "The 100 Greatest Masterpieces of American Literature". (Not solid silver books, as I first thought, but leather-bound, gold-stamped volumes priced at \$35 apiece.) Big fancy 16-page brochure telling you all about the binding and the allegedly erudite committee which made the selections. And nowhere does it say a word about what the titles are, or even who the authors might be! They'll sell; all too many Americans have more money than they do discrimination.

RSC

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"But it's a steal at \$20!"



Ah, the heady scent of pulp paper and fresh mimeo ink! It is one of those incredibly dense, muggy Midwestern days -- total grey overcast, the earth slowly steaming -- and I have been printing Yan most of the day. As a result the entire downstairs of this house smells like a press room -- of a cheap yellow newspaper, of course. Fortunately, I like the smell, and always have. (And it drowns out most hints of the pig lot situated directly behind our house. This could be a terrible day for stench from that arena, but the wind's cooperating and the pigs' owner, our landlord, keeps them more tidied up than some farmers do.)

All in all, pleasant print-room scent or not, it's the sort of day when I'm extremely grateful for the harnessing of electricity. Yan is better than 90 percent complete as of now, and I certainly couldn't have managed that while hand-cranking a mimeo, and without the cool refreshment of a breeze-box fan wafting my way. Like the celebrity who'd come up the long hard way and was asked by a reporter: "Don't you find you preferred the simple pleasures of your former life to all this glamour?-" The reply was: "I've been poor and I've been rich, and rich is better." I've hand-cranked my share of mimeo paper and done with no more relief from the heat than waving a folded newspaper back and forth under my chin. I do not share the lust to return to the days of yesteryear so many people now voice. I've done a (thankfully) small amount of scrubbing out clothes on a washboard, and believe me an automatic washer has it all over that, too. Roughing it may be fun as an occasional lark, something one does by choice and can leave whenever it gets tiresome and go back to modern conveniences. But as a necessary of life, roughing it is debilitating, callus-making, wearisome, and quite a variety of unpleasant names...

The ideal is to hang onto the scatterings of nice things -- material or otherwise -- from the past, cherish them and bring them forward with us to be admired, not to go back to the period where they originated. (Because you'd find those nice things were surrounded, in their own period, by a ghastly array of very un-nice things.)

As Buck details in "Rumblings" we've been clearing and cleaning out a vast accumulation of belongings from my father-in-law's property. Some of those things were old. I hesitate to call them antiques, because I have a peculiar attitude toward "antiques". An "antique" which is still useful -- useful to me -- is not an antique but just an old, still sturdy and good, solid object, and I will use it. There are some (few) things which are no longer usable but which are rather pretty, and if they don't take up too much room, I might hang onto them for strictly esthetic reasons -- though I would never buy such an object. And then there is junk. My junk is somebody else's antique: an old, useless, grotesque, frequently huge object that some people will pay absolutely ridiculous amounts of money for and do absolutely ridiculous things with. I have an old cast iron cooking kettle, and I have had offers for the thing -- not because the potential buyer wanted to use it, as I do, to cook up a huge batch of spaghetti sauce or whatever, but because the potential buyer planned to paint the thing white and plant flowers in it and put it out as some sort of lawn ornament. I do not understand.

One of the larger problems in sorting through my father-in-law's place, therefore, was deciding what was useful and what might, silly as it seemed, be valuable to someone else -- if certainly not to us.

That was brought home to me over July 4th weekend. We were in Milwaukee, visiting the DeWeeses, and bev noticed a squib in the paper -- places to see column, advertising "Octagon House". It sounded intriguing, so we took a drive through the rolling moraine to Watertown, Wisconsin and took the tour. Fantastic place. Three stories and basement and lighthouse tower. Built in the middle of the 19th Century, and

supplied with things like running soft hot water and central heating and an air conditioning system. The historical society tending the place had saved a lot of original furnishings and acquired other stuff from the same general period, of course. Most of it struck me as quaint and museumy -- the kind of chairs and gimcracks you enjoy seeing in such a place but would hate to own because you couldn't sit in the furniture and you couldn't use the dishware. But obviously it had all been obtained after some difficulty and expense and the museum was proud of its treasures. Hence, it was a jolt when we were shown into the dining room and I noticed the table service consisted of blue decorated plates in a style identical with some I had unearthed at my father-in-law's house. I had thought the plates -- bleeding blue paint, cracked glaze, and badly fading overall -- were hideous. But on a hunch I had carefully packed them and brought them back along with other treasures and possible treasures. My instincts, it seems, were right. But I still find it strange that private citizens would want to acquire such things. They really do belong in a place like Octagon House, where they may be viewed interestedly as a quaint sample of life in the old days. But I wouldn't want to eat off that kind of plates -- or even have one on continuous display, dripping its blue paint at me.

On a totally different subject (save as it concerns how times change...) sharper-eyed types will note the copyright on Buck's bit of verse in this issue. Normally we don't copyright Yan, of course, though if any contributor wishes it, as does de Camp, we will cheerfully add the obligatory circled C and notice. But in the future we will probably copyright even the flimsiest piece of doggerel that might be used in filksinging sessions. I'm rather sorry to have to resort to such a technique, but I'm afraid it's becoming necessary.

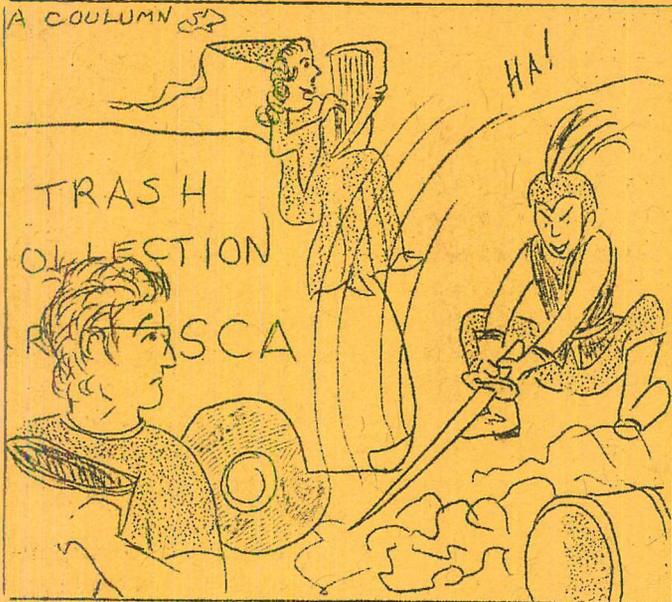
Filking -- or filksinging, for purists -- has had several up and downsurges since I started in fandom over two decades ago, and I don't think it has ever been as wide spread and as much practiced as it is today. But then there have never been so many fans as there are today, as witness the heroic measures concoms are taking to try to limit con sizes. And those facts means the newcomers to the field aren't aware of (or, in some cases, don't care about) the unwritten etiquette of filksinging. A cardinal rule has always been: no poaching. Poaching is lifting someone else's filksong and passing it off as one's own, or -- new problem -- making money from that person's labor.

Filking has been a gentleperson's agreement sort of sport. Trading around songs is fine, the more exchanges the merrier. But in a fandom as large and diversified as ours there's bound to be second and third hand passing around. Sometimes it's impossible to keep the author's name attached to the lyrics every single time those lyrics change hands. In which case, the source becomes lost. Which was too bad but no catastrophe in the older filksinging period. Fandom was small enough that sooner or later at a filksing somebody would pipe up and announce that he had heard that one before, and tell you who wrote it.

Now, that doesn't often happen. Worse, some of the newcomers don't seem to make any effort to ascertain the sources of material. Still worse, they get the urge to make money by publishing or performing. And it's no longer a gentleperson's agreement matter, it's grubby show biz commerciality, and that really is too bad.

I wish, as I say, it weren't necessary to copyright such things. But it's becoming more and more obvious that the strangest things just might, sometime in the future, develop into potential moneymakers. And since no one can count on the unwritten laws any more, we'll have to resort to the written ones.

One final, and happier, comment. Buck mentions our skyward adventures in the Wards' single-engine plane last Sunday. Indeed fun, despite their worries over the lumpy condition of Hartford City's very un-international grassy airstrip. I had been aloft in a Piper Cub years and years ago, when I was barely a teenager, and was delighted to learn that was one place where I had no acrophobia. But the take-off was from a paved strip, and that was long before I'd lost one six-year molar -- and when I did lose that tooth it started a painful chain of recurrent sinus problems which still plague me. That means pressure problems. I swallow hard walking up a mole hill, and had to really gulp in Sue's plane, even though we barely got up there. I don't get nauseated by the problem, only stuffy. But even at that, I wanna go up again, yeah, yeah! JWC



I am now officially a high school graduate, like thousands of other clods. Graduation was hot and boring, and I got a Bible forced on me as well. But that was free, so I guess I've no room for complaint; in fact, my class may have been one of the last recipients of those, since several other schools have run into various legal difficulties over separation of church and state on that matter.

And who you know is more important than what you know; not that this comes as any surprise to me, but this is the first time I've benefited from it. In trying to get a summer job to pay for college, I applied at Overhead Door, the same cheap-jack company my father is slaving for. I put in my application on Monday, and was hired

Tuesday, which was a lot faster than anyone else got on.

My first job for OHD was in maintenance: specifically, cleaning toilets. I happened to get a fairly good deal, though; both the guy who had the job before me and my successor did much poorer jobs than I did. (This isn't bragging; it was confirmed by quite a few of my co-workers. It is boasting...) I was transferred to steel doors and have managed to avoid dropping any door sections on my foot too often.

While on maintenance duty, I managed to see most of the plant, which turned up some rather odd incidents. Each department takes its trash to a blue bin, and then a fork lift takes the bin to a compactor. It took me a few days to realize that on the side of the bin was printed "Waste Enginerring by Ford-SCA Services". (Well, it was rather dirty printing.) Yang and the gang must be branching out. (At that, they've started at the top; if anyone knows anything about waste, it's OHD.)

Indianapolis has long had the reputation of being one of the few major cities with a fan club currently operating which does not stage a convention of any sort. Despite the efforts of one of our members, this still holds true. The person had lots of enthusiasm and money, but no experience or planning beforehand. We weren't bothered at all, since we hadn't expected much, and got to meet some of the local fen; but quite a few people who thought this was going to be a Trekcon got a rather rude shock when they arrived at a disaster.

Midwestcon was about as usual, both in size and enjoyability. We are hoping that Rivercon will be the same, and their past performance gives us no reason to doubt it.

The family has been watching the Olympics off and on (Mother refuses to listen to Cosell). The most fun has been spotting a Chicago driver in Montreal (well, who else would cut across five lanes of traffic to make a left turn?) and guessing which country will withdraw next. (Somehow, Egypt's withdrawing from the Olympics to protest the insult to Black Africa from New Zealand doesn't quite scan. I always thought the Egyptians were Semitic Caucasians, not blacks...) Whatever happened to the old idea that the Olympics were supposed to be above politics? (I know, it was shot down by Canada's actions in denying Taiwan entry into the Olympics. Whether or not Taiwan rejected a fair compromise by Canada and the IOC, the point is that the problem shouldn't have arisen in the first place. It's a pity that the IOC didn't take up Mexico City's offer to re-hold the Olympics and give Canada the what-for.) But I still think the reason for the withdrawal of all these African nations is rather silly. I could see their point if New Zealand actively supported the policy of apartheid, but I don't think that allowing a rugby team to tour the country is in that category. Anyway, what possible influence on racial policies could a group of athletes have? It's as ridiculous as expecting chess players to reform the country. Which brings me to my next item...

Korchnoi's defection to the West startled everyone. He was been one of the stalwarts of the Soviet team, and was playing in one of the Dutch International events

at the time. He's slightly-over-the-hill for a top-flight chess player (45 years old last March), but can still win tournaments. As for his reasons, who knows?

Getting back to the Olympics, I think the basic flaw in the modern version is in some of the events that are held. I am referring to gymnastics, diving, boxing... any sport where there is judging to decide who wins or loses. This kind of competition leads to accusations on the validity of the victories; from partisanship on the part of the judges, getting favorable judges on a particular event (one example of this already), or just plain incompetent judging. This fosters international animosity instead of amity. The ancient Greeks had a similar political situation to ours, and their Olympics took account of it. All events in the ancient Olympics were ones in track and field and wrestling. In all these events it is quite clear to everyone, expert or not, who has won or lost. There can be no arguments, no charges of favoritism or the superiority of one political system over another. (Superior training methods, yes.) But I doubt if anyone will take my advice. It's probably already been offered by far more prestigious sane heads, and rejected.

Collision with superstition: I was recently asked by a bank clerk whether I had any objections to taking a \$2 bill. After I rather bemusedly replied no, she told me a lot of people wouldn't take them. Jefferson would be horrified.

A few book reviews:

FANTASTIC NUDES: A PORTFOLIO BY STEPHEN E. FABIAN [Gerry de la Ree, \$8.00] Limited to 750 copies. I'm unfamiliar with most of the books from which Fabian has drawn his females, but from what little I do know, his figures seem to be accurate. If you like Fabian's work, and want a very good sample of it in a collector's edition, this would be the one to get. Like, you have a choice?

I PAINT WHAT I SEE, by Gahan Wilson [Fireside, \$3.95] Not nearly as good as Wilson's other book, GRAVESIDE MANNER. If you must have a collection of Wilson right away, this is about it, but I would suggest haunting secondhand stores for the other one. There are some nice cartoons here, but there are a lot more poor ones.

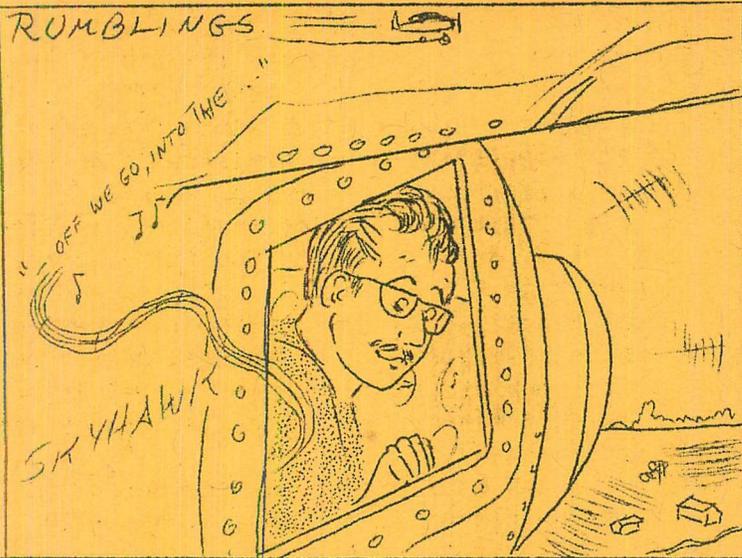
THE MOON HOAX, by R.A. Locke [Gregg Press, \$7.50] Something of a disappointment as well. It is not a reprint from the original newspaper column of the New York Sun of 1835, which created the entire hoax, but from a pamphlet based on the columns and printed years later. A slim little volume, it is padded out by an introduction by Ormond Seavey, who helps to explain matters. Though Seavey mentions that the illustrations accompanying the book were very well done, only one of them is included. All in all, though, the book is probably worth the money, since it's the only available copy for the average fan of the original hoax. It could have been much better.

THE RAPE OF THE A*P*E* (American Puritan Ethic), by Allen Sherman [Playboy Press, \$1.95] Oddly enough, this turned out to be a very funny book, though I confess to being a supporter of much of the American Puritan Ethic. (Though not when it's dealing with sex.) I don't agree with a lot of Sherman's philosophy, evidence, or conclusions, but he manages to entertain me all the same. Recommended.

THE MEDICI GUNS, by Martin Woodhouse and Robert Ross [Ballantine, \$1.75] A novel based, very loosely, on the life of Leonardo da Vinci. It's an extrapolation of what could have happened early in Leonardo's career. It's also a very well written novel, whether or not you happen to be a Leonardo buff like I am.

INFERNO, by Larry Niven and Jerry Pournell [Pocket Books, \$1.75] A re-writing of Dante's INFERNO, which I am sorry to say I have not yet read. Verse tends to bore me if carried on for any length of time. I got a rather odd impression; it's a very readable book, and comes to a conclusion consistent with the rest of the story, and yet I feel that it isn't all that good. I don't particularly like the ending, even if it is a logical one given the premise, because I don't agree with the premise. It's worth getting, but despite the blurb it's not anywhere near the class for a Hugo or Nebula winner.

THE AMBROSE BIERCE SATANIC READER, edited by Ernest Jerome Hopkins [Doubleday, \$5.95] Hopkins may be a good researcher, but he apparently lacks taste. I like Bierce, but this book would not leave a very good impression on a reader just discovering Bierce. Hopkins selected material that is now irrelevant, not terribly funny, or both. There are nice touches here and there, but you have to struggle through a lot of garbage. Someone cut out portions of my copy before selling it to a second-hand dealer, and I thank Steve Bridge for loaning me a library copy so I could Xerox the missing pages.



It's been some time since the last issue. Mostly, I've been busy. I had to sell Dad's house, to satisfy the court and the Welfare Dept. (Dad is in a nursing home), and this meant spending an immense amount of time driving 70 miles up to Silver Lake, sorting through everything there, piece by piece, bringing back what we wanted to keep, selling or burning the rest, and driving 70 miles back. I lost count of the number of weekends that took up. Then in June, Gene mailed me the first draft of *THE WOMBAT AFFAIR*, and I rashly promised to get the second draft completed and bring it along when we came up for a visit on July

4th weekend. (I didn't quite make it; I wrote the last chapter and some odd scenes - occasionally very odd - while we were in Milwaukee. But I do have the thing done, and it's Gene's problem from now on.) Then I had to do all the things I'd put off doing while I was realting and writing; cultivate the garden, grub poison ivy, get the library more or less straightened out before the ISFA meeting we hosted, etc. Then we started on this *YANDRO*, before I had made much of a dent in my accumulated correspondence. RealSoonNow....

Of course, there were a few interruptions. The aforementioned ISFA meeting took up one day, and Midwestcon very pleasantly killed a weekend. It was a better than usual Midwestcon, thanks partly to the collapse of SF EXPO; some of the pros who had planned on earning money for an appearance that weekend decided to come to Midwestcon; if they couldn't make money, they could enjoy themselves. And of course a good share of the midwestern pros - Tucker, Offutt, McLaughlin, etc. - hadn't ever intended to sell out Midwestcon for mere money. There were vast numbers of old-time fans, as well. The first face I saw as I entered the hotel was Bob Leman's, and I almost didn't believe it. I hadn't even heard his name mentioned in years. And I finally got to meet the fan most responsible for getting me into fandom; Dave Jenrette. (Now you know where to send the bombs.) The hotel was filled and overflowing. In addition to my part-time daughter, Anna Schoppenhorst, we ended up with two Dorsai in our room one night. (I'm not too happy about sharing a room with people I don't know, but I accepted on the basis of any friend of the Passovoy's being acceptable. Then one of the girls turned out to be Aimee Masquelier, who I already did know, and liked. The other girl, Kay Anderson, I still don't know, though she was pleasant enough. Juanita said she was wearing anametag saying "The Other Kay Anderson".) The parties were pleasant and long-lasting, and I got to meet - briefly - A. Bertram Chandler. Though I never did get around to giving him my opinion of series; John Miesel was egging me on to discuss the faults of series with both Chandler and Ted Tubb. (I couldn't do it with Tubb; he vanished in a small puff of smoke right after the banquet and I never saw him again.) I also got to talk briefly to Ed Hamilton and Leigh Brackett, two of my favorite people. I even forced a copy of my book on Ed. (The pro with his first - solo - book is every bit as pushy as the neo with his first fanzine.)

By the time you read this, we'll be attending Rivercon; with any luck, we'll get the issue published before the con, but probably not mailed until afterward. I'll try to bring along a few copies for subscribers who will be attending. Then, in another month, MidAmeriCon. Incidentally, at MidAmeriCon - and at Rivercon, if the stuff arrives in time - I'll be huckstering the brass and bronze figurines of Sterling Lanier. Some very nice material, both in fantasy figures and dinosaurs and such. We've been buying a few for ourselves, as we can afford them.

Another pleasant interruption came last weekend, when Sue Ward and her parents flew down and Sue took me for my first-ever ride in a small plane. (I've been on commercial airliners a couple of times, but they're not the same, somehow.) Bruce

got his first ride in any sort of airplane, and Juanita, the family expert, got her second experience. It was fun, though I must say I had a few qualms about landing. Banking, slowing down, and nosing down. But should we nose down quite that much? Aren't we coming down awfully fast? (Yes, and no, respectively, and it was quite a routine landing, as far as Sue was concerned. I managed to keep my doubts to myself.) On the whole, it was a thrill, and it has been some time since my last previous thrill. A lovely day.

Next issue we will try to get in more letters; it may be all book reviews and letters. And I'd like to get it out in August. (Sure; all I'm doing then is catching up on correspondence, repairing the target backstop which blew down in our last windstorm, going to an ISFA meeting, going to visit a jewelry-making establishment with the Miesels, and having Kay Anderson - Kay #1 - come for a week's visit before the Worldcon. No problem at all to get a YANDRO out.)

At least, I have extra time to read now. Bruce is working in the Overhead Door factory for the summer, and he starts work at 7:00 AM. I start at 7:30. So we go in together, and I have a free half-hour in which to read (and he has one in the afternoon, before I get off).

Hmm. I forgot to mention about having a vast assortment of unpublished letters. The really definitive letter on "Green Grow The Rushes, O" came from George Oshry, and I couldn't find it for this issue. Next time, definitely. We also have a vast number of Things That Go Bump In The Mailbox to report on; the column was cut out of this issue by space limitations, but I'll try to get everything mentioned next time.

A few items to mention. Rusty Hevelin sent a flyer announcing that Christine McGowan is the DUFF winner this year. She was the one candidate I knew almost nothing about; I'll try to rectify that at MidAmeriCon.

The Cryonics Society of Michigan is publishing a magazine, THE IMMORTALIST. They are interested in articles about any aspect of life in the future. Should be serious speculation, but not necessarily about cryonics or immortality. Like any good fanzine, they pay only in contributors' copies. They also offer sample copies, so you can see the sort of material they want. Write Editor, THE IMMORTALIST, 515 Briar Pl. #704, Chicago, IL 60657. This has been a public service announcement.

It's Anderson's Fault. Awhile back, Gary spent a weekend here while waiting for an Indianapolis firm to do something about one of his mad scientific inventions. At one point, we were both sitting on the floor for some reason, and our cat Grundoon (the stupid one) wandered in and fell over on the floor. (It's the way he lies down.) So I squared him around to face Gary, pushed on his hind legs, and scooted him three or four feet across the rug. Gary turned him around and scooted him back. After a half-hour or so, Gary and I got tired of this, much to Grundoon's disappointment; it was apparently the most fun he's ever had. (As I said, he's stupid. Also masochistic.) Ever since then, Grundoon has decided that I'm his dear friend. I can't sit down or lie down without getting a big stupid cat on my lap - or on whatever is uppermost, if I'm lying down. And unlike a lot of fans, I am not that thrilled by cats. Or by any animal at all in the house with me. Particularly if it's on top of me...

There are a couple of new science fiction magazines these days. I assume most readers have seen ODYSSEY, which has had two issues now. Large-size, but definitely pulp-oriented, especially the ads. It's been years since I've seen truss ads in a sf mag. (Some of the younger fans have expressed objections to the ads; I find them nostalgic. The good old days of STARTLING and SCIENCE FICTION QUARTERLY and Rosicrucians ads and I Talked With God; Actually And Literally.) ISAAC ASIMOV'S SCIENCE FICTION is still forthcoming, as far as I know, though I wouldn't be surprised to see copies of the first issue at Rivercon. (MidAmeriCon would be more likely.) It's to be digest, and features a rather strange assortment of editors - Asimov is not going to do a lot of the actual editing; he's more there to lend respectability to the mag. As a magazine fan, I'm happy to see them. Paperbacks are fine, and since I'm basically a novelist, paperbacks will be my major market. But as a reader, my first love is the magazines. When I started reading science fiction, there weren't any paperbacks, aside from a few items like LOST HORIZON, recognized as a mainstream classic. Don Wollheim's first anthology came out about the time I was entering fandom, but I didn't encounter it until later; there weren't that many paperbacks being sold in rural areas then. But every drugstore had its rack of pulps. RSC

DIFUGALTY

column by

DAVE LOCKE

I had two lousy times in Washington D.C., and I stayed there only the once.

They occurred during the gala senior class trip. I think all upstate New York high schools sent their seniors to Washington, though nowadays they might feel that the city would be too much of a bad influence on them.

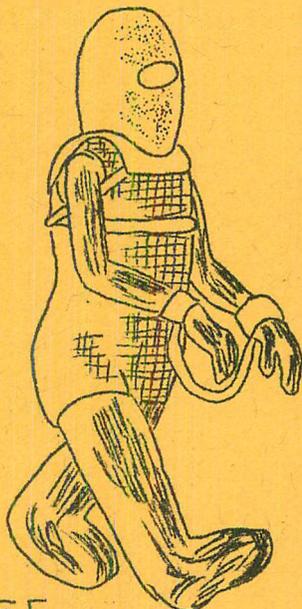
One of those lousy times was detailed elsewhere, in a fanzine called Shambles. It would fill your eyes with tears.

The other lousy time was when I met a homosexual in the men's room of a bar. I should preface all this by stating that I am not overly prejudiced against homosexuals. But I wouldn't want my brother to marry one. The word "overly" was a deliberate insertion, and not merely dropped in with (pardon the expression) gay abandon. You see, I do have somewhat of a prejudice against meeting homosexuals in the men's room of a bar, and the story that follows might explain to you why I feel that way.

Somehow a few of us underaged characters managed to work our way into a D.C. bar one night. I don't remember how. Considering how drunk we were before we even got there, we probably crawled between the legs of the bouncer. We then proceeded to contribute to the delinquency of each other by buying several rounds with the money our parents had given us for Coke and candy, and rationalizing it all with the thought that scotch was probably better for our teeth.

At that age I was partially under the impression that homosexuals were usually little guys with derby hats. Where I got that, I don't know. Indian Lake was not the greatest place to obtain a good street education, I'm afraid. (Many of the Indian Lake adults at that time believed that rock 'n roll was introduced to the free world as a communist plot to rot the minds of the capitalist youth.) Subsequent time spent on this spinning little ball of mud, much of it during that one day in D.C., has led me to suspect that a good many homosexuals are nine feet tall and built like all outdoors. Anyway, that's closer than derby hats.

We got ourselves all good and liquored up, or at least I did, and in between rounds I made a trip to the head. I was standing there in front of the urinal, waiting for it to stop revolving around me or to slow down once in a while so I could get in a squirt or two. I was weaving back and forth, and holding my own, when it came to me like out of a dim fog that there was something fishy afoot. But my mind wasn't in high gear and I couldn't quite lay immediate mental fingers on the nature of the problem. However, I had my fingers on something else, and removed one set of them to scratch my head. This helped matters. While scratching my head I noticed that there appeared to be two hands still holding onto my own. I was always pretty sharp at math, and I knew right away that this couldn't be correct. But I had to think about it for a second, because I



REG

didn't know why it wasn't right.

I used my free hand to count the number of hands again. The whole business was probably a clerical error, I presumed. One, two. And my counting hand made three. Of a sudden a small light shown through the alcohol, and I realized this wasn't right for the simple reason that I had only two hands. As it had to be me doing the counting with one of them, then one of the other two was a bogus hand. This sobered me up.

Out of pure reflex I whirled and placed one hundred and sixty pounds of knuckles into somebody's face, and then watched them fall on their ass and skid up against a wall. Maybe I wasn't quite sober even at that moment, because as I recall the fellow seemed to be about nine feet tall even while he was sitting there looking at his nose.

I decided that this would be a good time to leave the men's room, and perhaps the rest of the place as well. My adrenalin surge had carried me through the magic of the moment, but now I was back in the real world and the other fellow was significantly bigger than I was, even, as I say, while sitting down. Going on the premise that sooner or later he would get up, I decided to leave before that happened. Somehow, it made sense.

And that's why I'm not too thrilled at encountering homosexuals in the men's room of bars. Forgive me for this little prejudice, won't you?

I learned a valuable lesson, though. Ever since then I've been able to tell when I've had too much to drink, if I find myself in the head and starting to count the number of hands.



THE NEOFAN *

* = tune:
"The Orphan Girl"

by ----- ROBERT COULSON

(Dedicated to Anna Schoppenhorst and Carolyn Doyle)

"Some praise, some praise," cried the neofan,
At the door of the BNF's hall.

"I've striven so hard for egoboo,
But I am condemned by all."

"No praise, no praise," sneered the BNF,
"Success is never so sure.
Praise must be earned," he said in scorn,
"And there are no crumbs for the poor."

The next mail dawned, and the BNF
Reaped his munificent praise,
With never a glance for the neofan
Huddling beneath his gaze.

The mail was harsh, and the scorn swept down
On the head of the neofan pure;
And he sadly turned to the N3T,
Where there's egoboo for the poor.

THE GREAT

NAME-TAG

BY

jodie offutt

RIP-OFF

DEDICATED WITH LOVE TO BUCK COULSON
AND TOM REAMY

If the Bobs Bloch and Tucker choose to wear each other's name tags at a con, it is an old beloved fannish tradition. If any of the rest of us trade name tags, it is a silly annoying affectation.

That, my friends, is the difference between the Known and the Not-So-Known, and F's and the BNF's.

As with most things, fannish crazes seem to run in cycles. When I first began going to cons, several years ago, tag-switching was an "in-thing" and terribly confusing to me. When you are part of the Group, it can be cute and fun. When you're new, it is an unfortunately simple matter to become quite embarrassed by making assumptions based on false data. If somebody laughs at your unavoidable mistake, you can be hurt as well as embarrassed.

I neither approve of, nor get involved in, nametag exchanges.

Welllllll...with one exception. I'm a little ashamed to admit it, but it was a rather small con, it was pretty late at night, there weren't any neos around, everybody ~~else~~ was doing it, and...well, you know...

Bill Bowers and Ro Nagey were each other. I don't remember any more, except that I wound up the evening as Lloyd Biggle and decided that's the latest he's ever been up.

Thinking of myself as Lloyd Biggle, though, leads to further speculation of incongruous, funny, interesting, and just plain weird name tag trades.

For instance, an exchange that would make one think maybe they're the right ones after all, is Ken Keller and Ken Moore. Besides sharing a common given name, they each have engaging smiles, are con chairmen, and have delusions of grandeur.

We have so many Mikes in fandom -- and a lot of Mike G's -- that it would perpetuate confusion no end to take their name tags, shuffle them, and deal them out face down. A sort of fannish showdown to see who'd going to be Glycer, Glicksohn, Gorra, Ghoemaker, Lalor...

We could do the same with all our Daves: Locke, Gorman, Row, Jenrette, Romm...

I'd like to see Anne Passovoy as Patia Von Sternberg and vice versa for just one weekend. How about Tom Reamy and Filthy Pierre?

Joe Haldeman & Lou Tabakow

Bruce Coulson & Larry Downes

Linda Bushyager & Jackie Franke

Ron Bounds & Ginjer Buchanan

Ophelia Swanshit & Sheryl Smith

Rick Gellman & Honest Joe Hensley

Buck Coulson & Sandra Miesel

Roger Zelazny & Jerry Pournelle

Paul Walker & Pauline Palmer

Roger Elwood & Gordon Dickson

Don D'Amassa & Fredric Wertham

There might be some interesting combinations by cross-tagging according to couples: The Eisensteins and the Trimbles; the Freases and the Panshins. How about Ted & Karen Pauls and Jon & Joni Stopa or Bob & Ann Asprin and Norb & Leigh Couch? Then you have your sound-alikes and look-alikes:

Offutts and Moffatts
 Rittelmeyer & Fesselmeyer
 Blue Petal & Rose Hogue
 Richard Delap & Lester del Rey
 Freff and Flash
 Susan Wood & Jo Ann Wood
 John Millard & Bill Millardi

I've gotten to the point where I'm thinking of things like TAFF & DUFF -- and that's reaching, so it's time to stop. You'll think of some of your own, I'm sure. But...please: get it out of your system before you go to the next con.

There is another addiction sweeping through fandom now that sure will make me happy when it runs its course. All these SCA and Under Earth fringies who insist on putting their chosen names on their nametags.

I believe I'd rather get on an elevator with Bev Swanson as Rusty Hevelin (or vice versa) than try to decide whether or not to strike up a conversation with The Mad Hatter or Little Mary Sunshine or Jack the Ripper or Rovo the Revolting.

(ps...I have a secret desire to be Randy Bathurst sometime, so I can go around scribbling on guys' chests.)



AND THAT'S TRUE TOO

COLUMN BY

Denny Lien

I'm writing this July 5th, 1976. Yesterday was July 4, 1976. (You can establish a vector from that; verify direction of tachyon drive, etc.; so I'll stop with that much data.)

Happy birthday to us.

As U.S. readers of Yandro will recall, the 4th was not really so much the 4th as the 5th was, because the 4th (i.e., the 4th) was on a Sunday, while the 4th (i.e., the 5th) was not. (Non U.S. readers: don't try to understand; just roll with the punches.) Most of the people, fannish and (you should pardon the expression) otherwise, celebrated the 4th/5th in what they presumed was a meaningful, respectful, patriotic, significant way. They were mostly wrong. But I celebrated same in same. Namely:

A lot of folks in my neighborhood threw around a lot of firecrackers this weekend. They terrorized the local dogs, prevented a bit of sleep, and with any luck blew off a reasonable quantity of fingers. If you are into noise, danger, and the when-I'm-awake-everybody's-awake theory of the meaning of life, then that's a pretty good way of celebrating. There's been enough of that in the last two hundred years for historic precedent if you want it. I don't criticize on those grounds; but it's not my sort of celebration.

One or two people that I know got into their cars and drove off as far as half of their vacation time would take them, turned around, drove back. A bit more gasoline gone from the world and a pile-up or two, and they are back where they started, mostly. But: they saw what was beyond their immediate horizon, and returned to tell about it to the their neighbors. Whether said neighbors are interested or not. Next time they'll get a longer weekend, or a better car, and push the frontiers back by another state or so. I don't own a car; I drive only when forced to do so; but as a supporter of the space program I can understand. But that's not my sort of celebration either, and it doesn't wrap it all up, American-



history-wise. There've been stay-at-homes as well as fiddlefoots, and to use up the unique holiday honoring only the former is to honor only half of our history.

Most of the people I know headed down to the nearest lake, sat in the sun, drank beer. Against beer consumption I will hear no word spoken, but I do that every day anyway, and as a ceremony it fits only a portion of the heritage. Ordinarily, I have no strong desire to honor the Prohibition Era, but fair is fair -- for one day, anyway.

(Or two/one day(s).)
And as for the lake and the sun, they are hardly unique to one country

or one period; lakes grow on trees, and there is nothing new under the sun. Or on it. Or something like that.

A few people from my circle (much more of a trapezoid, really) of acquaintance may have spent the day(s) marching in a parade, or in a demonstration against a parade, or maybe some of each. So long as it amuses them I won't complain; at least it keeps them off the streets (figuratively...). It was a nice day for it and an overweight country like mine could use the exercise. An overweight individual body like mine could, too, but it's not my thing. And so long as it is not, and so long as there are a lot of lazy fat apolitical cynical sods like me lazing about, the doings of the active and the fit strike me as at best irrelevant and at worst suspiciously elitist.

Think about it for a while.

There's a lowest common denominator somewhere which is traditionally (at least) associated above all with America, and which thus ought to be celebrated meaningfully, respectfully, and all those other adjectives, on this/those day/days of any/all day(s). (No, the denominator is not "calendar reform," though that's not a bad idea either...)

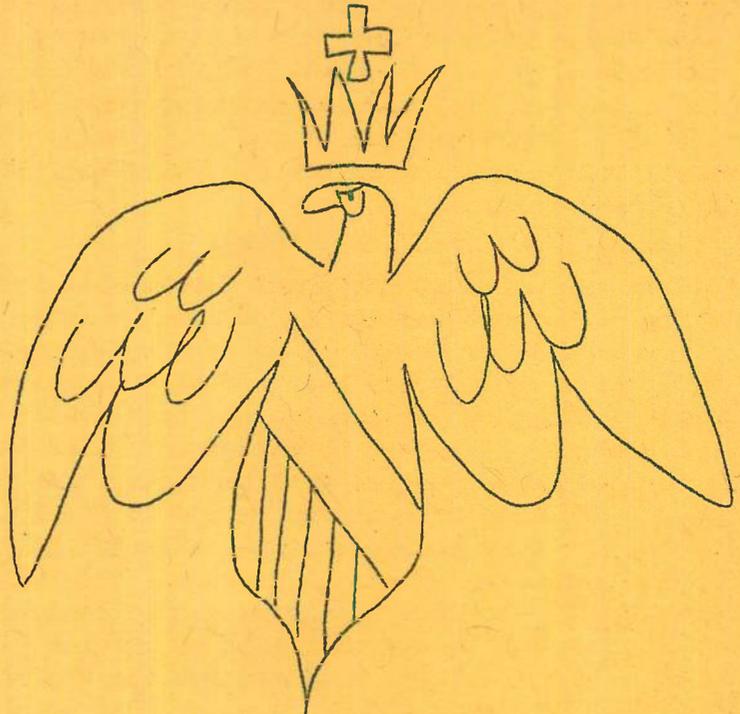
There have always been those of us too quiet and sober-sided and unspeakably drab and awful (and too scared of our neighbors) to keep everyone around us up with our celebrations. Too thrifty to waste gasoline or the equivalent on frivolity. Too hag-ridden to enjoy the nearest lake and the nearest Sol without feeling we're wasting time. Too busy to take a day off to march around carrying a flag, or a placard, or someone -- anyone -- on our shoulders.

Hail to two hundred years of the Puritan Ethic.

I spent both the 4th and the 5th of July at work, piling up overtime.

Happy birthday to us.

Other people were celebrating it in their own ways too. One stranger came into the library to use the Reference Division's photocopy machine and while he was there offered us various Beware-The-Illuminati literature. Pretty tame stuff after the Shea and Wilson novel -- this was mostly merely anti-Mason. No Lovecraftian Elder



Gods or talking porpoises at all, so far as I could tell from a quick scan. Still, he was doing the best he knew how. Happy birthday to him.

We were rather glad to have him show up, as we'd been short on eccentrics just of late and even a run-of-the-street-corner pamphlet pusher was something of a break in the thin veneer of civilization that separated us from the mangani. As I swung home through the jungle tonight, I got to thinking about a few of the more relatively unforgettable characters I'd met at the University Library lately (excluding those I'd forgotten, of course).

There was the voice on the phone (presumably belonging to a person ((the voice, not the phone; the phone belongs to an institution))) who wanted to know how to get nominated for a Pulitzer Prize. He'd just written a poem and knew a Pulitzer was offered in poetry. Nobody had been around to contact him yet. Possibly if one of the University faculty would care to nominate him it would speed up the award. Could I recommend someone? I looked up the ground rules and pointed out that the prize was generally awarded for an entire book of poetry, not for a single unpublished poem. Long silence. Feelings of guilt on my part. For all I know, maybe he did deserve a Pulitzer. Not too much guilt, though. I expect he'll be back in a month or two, asking for the addresses of vanity presses. And he'll be back in a year, asking about the Pulitzer again. But one factor will have changed. There will be fairly good odds that I won't happen to be around the phone at that time. Live for the moment.

Then there was the large-eyed freshperson who reported that a title from the card catalog was in German and wondered if that meant that the book was also in that language. My "very probably" brought forth a cry of the heart: "But why do you even have these books if they're not in English?" (I still haven't been able to think of an answer for that one which would satisfy both of us. Because It's There? Comes The Revolution, You Von't Ask? They Were Previously Owned By A Little Old Lady Who Only Read Them On Sundays?) I helped her find materials she could use in English and tried to forget that she could vote.

And just a month or two ago the phone voice of what seemed from context to be a would-be politician (presumably small-time variety, as he had condescended to ask for advice): would a stance for or against homosexuality gather him more votes? And how many? After a few futile attempts at coping with his question, I suggested he call State Senator Allan Spear (who is gay) for more detailed advice. The voice agreed to accept Senator Spear's office number from me, but not his home number, explaining that he didn't want to get too close to these people...

O.K. There are a lot of people out there that I don't want to get too close to either. I have an escape route planned: if they attack me via phone, I use my secret Captain Video Decoder Ring to put them in hypnotic thrall. If they attack in person, I fake to the left, then run to the map case on my right and (as they attempt to get around the Reference Desk) grab the NATIONAL ATLAS OF THE U.S. and hit them with it. A proper Bicentennial gesture.

On a more (?) scientific topic: Whenever the appearance of, say, a new Gor novel starts me considering that just maybe science fiction is not The Answer, something usually pops up in the outside world to make me feel better. (If that is the right adverb.) After two hundred years, I can report the following culmination of sorts:

The Spring announcements issue of Publishers' Weekly promises for Spring 1976 a 1-2-3 punch that should take care of that portion of the mundane reading population who have already bought all of the HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR SEX LIFE TO THE POINT WHERE YOU JUST CAN'T STAND IT ANYMORE books published during the last few seasons, and who are thus now ready for Something Reasonably Different:

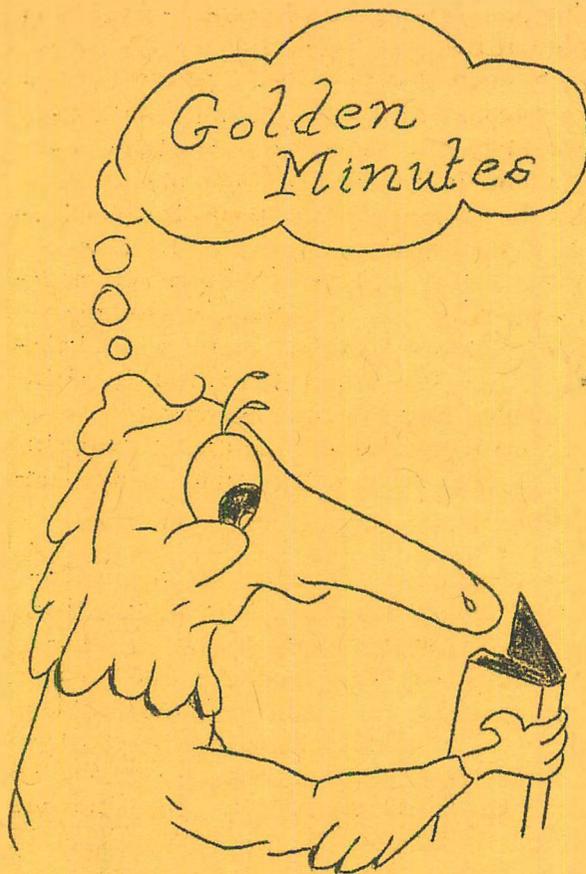
From Saturday Review Press in April: THE SEX LIFE OF THE FOOT AND SHOE.

From Scribner's in May: THE UNDIES BOOK.

From Scribner's in June: SEX LIVES OF ANIMALS WITHOUT BACKBONES.

Wake me up when it gets to be, say, October. I'll try to wake you when it gets to be next issue time.

Happy birthday to somebody or other. And to us.



THE OFFICERS OF THE BRIDGE [Ralph and Valerie Carnes - \$3 ?] I'm not sure what I did pay for it. This is an 8 1/2 x 11" paperback booklet, containing brief Star Trek articles, biographies, and photos, nearly all of which are the same sort of thing you can get in numerous fanzines. (There is one good closeup profile of Nichelle Nichols which is the best photo I've seen of her.) But the only reason I got the booklet is that it contains good reproductions of the Kelly Freas paintings of the cast. (At the time I got the book, I hadn't seen his ads for the posters, but all in all, I'm still not sorry I got the book; it's easier to store than the posters, for one thing, and we haven't room to hang up any more posters.)

HAWK AMONG THE SPARROWS [Dean McLaughlin, [Scribners, \$6.95] Three novelets. I figured this was worth the money since the title story is one of my all-time favorites (and since I bought it from Dean, I got an autograph along with it). "Hawk" is a story which should have -- but didn't -- won the Hugo; an excellent item on the problems of an inadvertent military time-traveler, and his solutions. With it, you "The Permanent

Implosion," an engineering-problem story that's enjoyable without being memorable, and "The Brotherhood of Keepers," a Campbellian item about killing with kindness and liberating with brutality, and sixteen pages of introduction, mainly on how these stories were written. But that's gravy; you're paying for the 65 pages of "Hawk" and it's well worth it. The rest is good enough, but not in the same class.

SHOOKWAVE RIDER, by John Brunner [Ballantine, \$1.50] There's also a hardcover edition and a Book Club edition, but Brunner objected to the way those were edited. Frankly, I couldn't see all that much difference; the changes he objected to were there, but they didn't really affect the story as much as he seemed to think. (He objected to making two characters into one; but the casual reader would probably assume they were the same, anyway. Only the nitpicker would notice, and neither is particularly important.) This is another of Brunner's "serious" novels, and this time he not only points out the evils of the world but suggests a possible solution. (Which turns out to be a superman; Brunner has a low opinion of the capabilities of homo sapiens. I tend to agree with him of course. It's where he insinuates that we've all got to get out and love one another that I disagree.) Anyway, it's an excellent book; not as good as STAND ON ZANZIBAR, but at least in the same class. Get it.

TO SERVE MAN, by "Karl Würf" [Owlswick Press, \$6.96] Inspired by the Damon Knight story, and subtitled "A Cookbook For People". Some nice recipes; I think my favorite is "chili con hombre", but others are good. I would judge that all are quite workable recipes; at a guess, I'd say they were originally designed for short pig and adapted for this volume. Highly recommended, especially if you're contemplating an airplane flight over the Andes in the near future. And if you can't find copies in your friendly local bookstore, I have a few on hand to sell.

BLACK VULMEA'S VENGEANCE, by Robert E. Howard [Donald M. Grant, Publisher, West Kingston, RI 02892 - \$15.00] Large-sized, a bit over 7 x 10", over 200 pages, with seven

full-color illustrations by Robert Pailthorpe. I'd have liked the illustrations better if Pailthorpe hadn't put Spanish cuirasses and helmets on British naval personnel, but aside from this he does an adequate imitation of Howard Pyle. The book contains three of Howard's pirate stories. There are fantasy elements; Howard evidently put them in nearly all his adventure stories. But basically there are straight adventure fiction. The longest story, "Swords of the Red Brotherhood," was previously unpublished, possibly due to a failure in the ranks of seagoing pulp magazines, since it's the best-written of the three. The title story is a typical pulp yarn, down to the soppy emotionalism of the reformed villain. "The Isle of Pirate's Doom" is mostly about this treasure in an ancient, crumbling city; it's one of Howard's favorite gimmicks. This was also unpublished until the recent Howard revival gave it a limited-edition pb version last year. The non-publishing is a bit more justified in this case, since most of the story consists of our noble hero meeting and reacting to a female pirate, and Howard's ability to write about women was insufficient to sustain a female character of this prominence. (It's not all that much worse than other feminine characters in the 1930s pulps, but it's worse.)

UNIVERSE 6, edited by Terry Carr [Doubleday, \$5.95] Includes "Journey to the Heartland" by Brian Aldiss (a psychological story with the usual dramatic statements that turn out to not mean anything when you examine them - "I return just as out of madness, as a person reborn."), "What Did You Do Last Year?" by Greg Benford and Gordon Eklund (the future of boredom and one-upmanship; moderately cute but obvious), "Custer's Last Jump" by Steven Utley and Howard Waldrop (a thoroughly fascinating parallel world; I loved the story even though I didn't believe a word of the background -- no suspension of disbelief but some nice touches for the history buff), "The Wine Has Been Left Open Too Long And The Memory Has Gone Flat" by Harlan Ellison (the title is longer and better than the story), "Under the Generator" by John Shirley (another anti-technological strawman, dispatched with the proper humanistic jargon), "Stars And Darkness" by Glenn Chang (another insane mind, somewhat better handled than most), and "Shifting Parameters In Disappearance And Memory" (I don't know what it's about since I got too bored to finish it). Overall, save your money, even if it comes out in pb.

A WATCHER IN THE WOODS, by Florence Engel Randall [Atheneum, \$6.95] A juvenile (teen age or so) fantasy, very well done. Jan's attitudes are closer to those of actual teen-agers I know than are most allegedly teen-age heroines. (Far too many writers call their characters "teen-age" but have them react like 10-year olds.) The reasoning behind the Watcher is a bit thin, but it's enjoyable enough while you're reading. Recommended as a gift for any non-fan girls you might want to convert. (And of course, read it yourself before giving it away.)

THIS DARKENING UNIVERSE, by Lloyd Biggle, Jr. [Doubleday, \$5.95] An intergalactic private eye; another in Biggle's Jan Darzek series. I probably dislike private detective series above all others, but this is well enough written space opera if you like that sort. An acceptable thriller.

THE EARLY POHL, by Fred Pohl, [Doubleday, \$5.95] This "Early" series keeps getting thinner; only 180 pages here. The stories were all originally written under pseudonyms (given here) and are exceptionally mediocre. The biographic/bibliographic material surrounding them is excellent. Pohl was not only a writer, but, almost from the start, an editor, and some of his best stories concern happenings from the editor's side of the desk. ("After you've edited G-8 AND HIS BATTLE ACES for a year or two a lot of strange things begin to look good to you.") Recommended.

THE EARLY LONG, by Frank Belknap Long [Doubleday, \$7.95] A whole 230 pages in this. I think this is the first volume of the series in which the stories are better than the accompanying memoirs; the latter could have been subtitled "What A Good Buddy I Was of H.P. Lovecraft," and the accuracy is marred by things like saying Astounding

"has had a much longer newsstand life span than any other magazine of its kind in America." Amazing Stories is British, maybe? But Long wasn't a bad writer when he stuck to eldritch horror, and the fiction, from the 1920s, 1930s, and the early 1940s, is all at least acceptable and some of it is quite good. Not recommended to science fiction only types; this is horror-fantasy.

THE CRIMSON CAPSULE, by Stanton A. Coblentz [second, \$1.25] Reprinted by Belmont as THE ANIMAL PEOPLE in 1970 for 75 cents, and overpriced there, too. Coblentz was a ham-handed satirist; this story of a future in which "normal" people are a persecuted minority is a pretty good sample of his work. I rather enjoy it, bad though it is, but I don't recommend it. The Avalon hardcover is more for collectors now than it is for readers.

SPACE ODYSSEYS, edited by Brian Aldiss [Doubleday, \$7.95] A companion volume to the earlier SPACE OPERA. Stories include "The Sentinel" by Arthur C. Clarke (the story that eventually became "2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY"), "Galactic Patrol" by E. E. Smith (excerpt from a novel), "The Lake of the Gone Forever" by Leigh Brackett (one of her exotic adventures that I still reread oftener than I do "better" fiction), "Reason" by Asimov (the problems of instructing a literal mind), "Time Is the Traitor" by Alfred Bester (an obvious gimmick, but well-handled), "The Impossible Planet" by Philip K. Dick (a mood piece), "The Unfinished" by Frank Belknap Long (a gimmick which was only moderately new in 1951 when he wrote it and a bit stale now -- but still a surprisingly good story for Long), "And I Awoke And Found Me Here On The Cold Hill's Side" by James Tiptree, Jr. (I loathe that man's titles, but it's an excellent psychological story), "The Empress of Mars" by Ross Rocklynne (now, there's the sort of title I grew up with...unfortunately, the story itself is a very bad imitation of Burroughs), "I'm Going To Get You" by F.M. Busby (a veddy, veddy moderne vignette; at least it's only a little waste of time), "Strange Exodus" by Robert Abernathy (an interesting space opera-ish idea), "Star Ship" by Poul Anderson (thoroughly improbable but still entertaining; one of Poul's early stf-adventure tales), "To Each His Star" by Bryce Walton (supposedly a grand tragedy, but Walton couldn't quite pull it off), "The Big Hunger" by Walter M. Miller, Jr. (symbolic and psychological; very impressive for its time), and "Night Watch" by James Inglis (a mood piece, and one making a point that I can't find myself terribly interested in). Overall: 15 stories, 5 excellent, 4 good, 6 mediocre or less.

CLONED LIVES, by Pamela Sargent [Fawcett, \$1.50] Novelization of a series of stories about a clone "family"; the stories appeared in various publications and unless you're like me you probably didn't see all of them. Anyway, there is considerable additional material here and it's a true novel, not just a connected series. It's heavily psychological, but at least I can sympathize somewhat with clones for having identity problems. Overall, though, this is the sort of story that irritates me; I dislike protagonists who are handsome, intelligent, college-educated, and handed careers of their choice with no effort, and who still complain about their problems. It's probably a blue-collar reaction -- but it's partly that I have no sympathy for overemotional idiots. (Because of the clone aspect, my irritation is reduced here, but it's still present.) Recommended anyway; most fans -- though perhaps not most Mandro readers -- will identify fully with the protagonists.

AURORA: BEYOND EQUALITY, edited by Vonda McIntyre and Susan Janice Anderson (Fawcett, \$1.25] Fem-lib science fiction. I have no objection, though my reading experience with other theme anthologies didn't give me much enthusiasm for beginning this one; stf writers don't do very well when assigned a theme. However: contents include "Your Faces, O My Sisters! Your Faces Filled Of Light" by Raccoona Sheldon (that combination almost convinced me to not read it at all -- and considering my aversion to symbolism sans story, I might have been better off), "Houston, Houston, Do You Read" by James Tiptree, Jr. (an excellent novelet of time-lost astronauts; keep it in mind for the next Hugo), "The Mothers, The Mothers, How Eerily It Sounds" by Dave Skal (one

more straw-man establishment demolished), "The Antrim Hills" by Mildred Downy Broxon (a very good fantasy of the "night in Elf-hill" plot), "Is Gender Necessary?" by Ursula le Guin (article about the writing of THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS), "Corruption" by Joanna Russ (symbolism and psychology -- and a little emotional idiocy thrown in), "Here There Be Dragons" by P. J. Plauger (very good post-atomic adventure story), "Why Has The Virgin Mary Never Entered The Wigwam of Standing Bear?" by Craig Strete (let's hear it again for the antiestablishmentarians), and "Woman On The Edge of Time" by Marge Piercy (another utopia, with the transition conveniently obliterated; eminently forgettable). Overall, for a theme anthology, one outstanding story and two other excellent ones is above average, so call this a good try and buy it.

THE VENOM OF ARGUS: EXPENDABLES #4, by Richard Avery [Fawcett, \$1.25] Another space opera. I've been hearing various bad reactions to this series, and I'm not at all sure why. It's not good, but then what series is? The characters are crude, but they're still a step above most series. This plot did remind me a bit of Ole Doc Methuselah, but I can stand gimmicks that aren't brand new. I don't particularly like it because I don't particularly like any open series, but this one seems a shade better than most.

THE SHORES OF KANSAS, by Robert Chilson [Popular Library, \$1.25] I was rather put off reading this by the cover and the opening, but once I got past those it turned out to be an excellent adventure novel. Minor quibbles; the legal limit for duck guns is 10-gauge, not 12. And I could never suspend my disbelief as to the efficacy of a battle axe against dinosaurs. Otherwise, beyond a certain stiffness of the central character (partly intentional, but even Grant's thoughts are rigid), no objections. Not great literature, but one of the more enjoyable books I read, this time. Time-travel via psi powers is no more unrealistic than via any other means, and Chilson makes it read well. Highly recommended.

SOLDIER, ASK NOT, by Gordon Dickson [DAW #172, \$1.50] An enlargement of the original novelet. (Wollheim always makes a point that it's not an expansion; it's a restoration of the original length. But from the reader's point of view there's no difference. A short version is published first and then a longer one; only the author, editor, and academic critics know or care which was written first.) It's essentially the story of a hard, selfish man who finds humanity (or, from my viewpoint, is betrayed by his own, weaker self...), The philosophical background given at the beginning is so fuzzy that I don't think even Dickson believed in it; I certainly didn't. From there on, however, it's a good, well-written adventure novel and recommended.

DORSAIL, by Gordon Dickson [DAW #181, \$1.50] An expansion (yes, Don; I know) of the previously-published GENETIC GENERAL. It's one of the few novels in our field about supermen that manage to have a ring of truth about them. Most alleged supermen -- "Odd John" being a prime example -- are incredibly stupid when judged by what they do instead of what the author tells you about their brilliance. Donal Graeme manages to be convincing, and makes this one of the better novels in the field.

ANCIENT: MY ENEMY, by Gordon Dickson [DAW #190, \$1.50] A collection of stories first published between 1951 and 1969. Title story, "The Odd Ones," "The Monkey Wrench," "Tiger Green," "The Friendly Man," "Love Me True," "Our First Death," "In The Bone," "The Bleak And Barren Land." It's a good variety of stories, and I'm not going to review every one; go buy a copy and do your own review.

THE ENORMOUS HOURGLASS, by Ron Goulart [Award, \$1.25] One of Goulart's usual wild farces, this time featuring a conceited time machine, a timenapping, and Goulart's pungent comments on society. Recommended.

THE PROUD ENEMY, by F.M. Busby [Berkley, 85 cents] Normally, I don't care for sequels, but this one is acceptable enough. The central characters from CAGE A MAN are back,

forging an interstellar alliance in order to carry a war to the Demu. The problems of working with aliens in differing standards of honor, social custom, etc., are well handled (though none of the aliens are as totally alien as, say, Weinbaum's Tweel, mostly because it would take an entire book this size just to get our heroes into communication with them). Good enough space opera.

THE WITLING, by Vernor Vinge [Daw #175, \$1.25] Good adventure story, strong on the alien-world background. The prince, beneath contempt because he lacks psi powers, runs into scouts from Earth who also lack psi powers but have machines. The mutual culture shock makes for a good light entertaining story.

THE GRAY PRINCE, by Jack Vance [Avon, \$1.35] Vance is one of the current masters of exotic alien settings. He doesn't always do it right, but he comes close enough this time for a fascinating book. The politics of Koryphon have parallels on our own world -- philosophically, Vance is coming close to being a fantasy version of Allen Drury -- but in the end, they remain original, and the "race relations" are unique to that planet. Lovely wraparound cover by Patrick Woodruffe. Highly recommended.

THE GREEN GENE, by Peter Dickinson [DAW, #174, \$1.25] Race relations on a not-too-distant Earth. Dickinson has done what I once complained to Brunner for not doing: made Britain his repressive, race-conscious society. In the novel, the Celts have begun turning green literally, making it easier to discriminate against them. (Having the hero be an Indian medical statistician underscores the assumption that the book is a satire on Britain's present race problems with Indians, Jamaicans, Nigerians, etc. -- the British quit being smugly superior to Americans when they got a quantity of dark-skinned citizens of their own.) The plot is that of the standard thriller, but it's smoothly handled. Recommended.

BIRTH OF FIRE, by Jerry Pournelle [Laser #23, 95 cents] The Mars colony -- originally a prison colony -- the rebirth of individualism, the Martian revolution. I seem to have read it before, frequently. Jerry does an adequate job; this novel is pretty much the "space adventure" type that thrilled me when I first began reading science fiction. (Sometimes it still does, though this one isn't quite that good.) An acceptable time-waster.

TOMORROW KNIGHT, by Michael Kurland [DAW #183, \$1.25] The hero who discovers his entire battle-oriented world is a sham. I've read that before, even more frequently than I have the previous plot. Kurland does a workmanlike job; if there isn't anything particularly new here, there's plenty of action and occasional amusement. (Kurland seems to be another author who doesn't take his writing all that seriously; a good sign.) Recommended if you have the time to spend.

THE LAND LEVIATHAN, by Michael Moorcock [DAW #178, \$1.25] Another of Moorcock's parodies of the 1900s science fiction. As an individual book it's good enough, but it's Moorcock's second in an apparent series, and with Dick Lupoff mining the same vein we're getting a bit too much of what is a rather mediocre thing at best. (If you haven't read the previous books, I recommend this. If you have, you should be getting a little tired of all the cuteness by now.)

THE GLORY GAME, by Keith Laumer [Popular Library, 95 cents] This came out in 1973; I'm a bit behind in my reading. It's reasonably good space opera; perhaps a bit more serious than one expects from Laumer. For the adventure story fans.

JACK OF SWORDS, by E.C. Tubb [DAW #198, \$1.25] This is Dumarest #14. As far as I'm concerned it's about ten too many, but if you like endless series, go buy it. Space opera; Tubb can do this sort of thing in his sleep, and quite possibly did.

THE ALIEN EARTH, by Michael Elder [Pinnacle, \$1.25] An accidental time-traveler goes

into the past and then works his way up to the future again via suspended-animation capsules. The story itself is about as silly as that outline; very ephemeral adventure stuff.

FLIGHT TO OPAR, by Phil Farmer [DAW #197, \$1.50] Second book in this Tarzan-derived series. Farmer is a good writer; I wish he'd write something of his own again and quit imitating other people. (The imitations are presumably easy, since he's imitating writers who are inferior to him, but it's annoying to this part of the readership.)

SCOP, by Barry Malzberg [Pyramid, \$1.25] I don't read Malzberg, but if you do, this just came out.

BUNDUKI, by J.T. Edson [DAW #201, \$1.50] More imitation Tarzan. Personally, I'd sooner read gothics; they have more individuality.

SWORD OF THE GAEL, by Andy Offutt [Zebra, \$1.50] Imitation Howard, this time; in fact, Howard gets his name on the cover in bigger letters than Andy does. Good enough, I suppose, if you like that sort of thing.

ARMADA OF ANTARES, by Alan Burt Akers [DAW #189, \$1.25] And still more. A pastiche of Burroughs' Martian novels, this time, and the 11th in its own series.

RETURN TO THE PLANET OF THE APES #2 and #3, by William Arrow [Ballantine, \$1.50 each] I guess these are from the tv cartoon series. They aren't very good, though as far as I'm concerned they're at least not an imitation of somebody else's secondrate fiction.

STAR TREK LOG SEVEN, by Alan Dean Foster [Ballantine, \$1.50] This isn't really very good either, but compared to the last several titles up there it seems good. I didn't watch this cartoon series either, but at least Foster has the spirit of the old shows that I did watch -- he does a better job than Blish did. Rank it along with the medium-quality space opera -- acceptable if not brilliant.

THE LOST VALLEY OF ISKANDER, by Robert E. Howard [Zebra, \$1.50] Everything that Howard THE VULTURES OF WHAPETON, by Robert E. Howard [Zebra, \$1.50] ever wrote is now being THE INCREDIBLE ADVENTURES OF DENNIS DORGAN, by Howard [Zebra, \$1.50] reprinted. These contain, respectively, a novelet and two shorts about the exotic oriental adventures of Francis Gordon; two overblown and excessively bad Western novelets (despite living in Texas, Howard's Westerns were among his poorest stories, partly because they're too easily contrasted with historical fact); and ten short stories about a sailor in exotic oriental ports. ISKANDER might appeal to sword-and-sorcery fans; the others are for Howard completists only.

BROKE DOWN ENGINE, by Ron Goulart [Collier, \$1.25] A short story collection, aptly described by the subtitle "And Other Troubles With Machines". Goulart's future world is one of incompetent technology; refrigerators that get carsick, computerized houses that run away with one's girlfriend, android doctors programmed with red tape, etc. In other words, just like this world only more run-down; an extrapolation of America's love of new gimmicks and distaste for adequate maintenance. The stories are also very funny, if taken in small doses. Titles are "The Trouble With Machines," "Broke Down Engine," "Loftouse," "Calling Dr. Clockwork," "Princess #22," "All For Love," "The Katy Dialogues," "Nobody Starves," "Muscadine," "Disposal," "To The Rescue," "Joker For Hire," and "Terminal." If you detect various satiric references to tv shows, best sellers, and other ephemera of today's world, you're probably right. Recommended.

IN THE PROBLEM PIT, by Frederik Pohl [Bantam, \$1.50] Pohl, is, I'm told, a nice man (I've shared a speaker's table with him but never really got to know him) and a competent if not brilliant editor. But I don't like his fiction. (Part of my dislike is undoubtedly caused by Kingsley Amis, who years ago proved to his own satisfaction but

not to mine that Pohl was the greatest sf writer in the known universe. But another part is that I find most of his best-loved stories, like "Day Million," to be dull, slightly fictionalized tracts, of no possible interest to anyone able to think for himself. So, in reviewing his books, I'm more prejudiced than usual.) Well, "Day Million" isn't in here, but "The Man Who Ate The World" with its half-baked and sugar coated psychology, is. I do rather like "Let The Ants Try"; an early story, it isn't slick or sophisticated, but neither does it put me to sleep. The title story did, quite literally; I never finished it. "To See Another Mountain" contains an interesting idea about psi power, but it's a dull story. "The Deadly Mission of Phineas Snodgrass" is another tract; Pohl has singlehandedly mastered the art of writing -- and selling! -- dull vignettes. "Rafferty's Reasons" is so deeply psychological that it becomes pointless. "I Remember A Winter" is another tract. "The Schematic Man" is an interesting idea. "What To Do Till The Analyst Comes" is amusing, which saves it. "Some Joys Under The Star" isn't quite a tract, but reads like one. Maybe that's my problem with Pohl; he uses a stark descriptive style, and unless leavened by considerable humor, the results are soporific. There are two articles in the book which are more suited to the style, and which read better.

THE DAW SCIENCE FICTION READER, edited by Don Wollheim [DAW #200, \$1.50] A commemorative volume. Material includes "Fur Magic", a short juvenile novel by Andre Norton, one of the four she did in her "Magic" series on the mythology of the world; this one is based on American Indian myths. "Warrior" by Gordon Dickson is a short Dorsai story, originally published in 1970; The remainder is original. "The Truce," by Tanith Lee, is a rather trite gimmick which she manages to write well enough to put across; an achievement. "Wizard of Scorpio," by Alan Burt Akers, is a short Dray Prescott story. "The Martian El Dorado of Parker Wintley," by Lin Carter, is overblown humor; Carter is now imitating Dick Lupoff? "The Day of the Butterflies," By Marion Bradley, is an incident for a fantasy novel, rather than a short story. And "Captain Fagan Died Alone," by Brian Stableford, provides a nice description of the mystique of the superman; it's garbage, but thousands of people seem to believe it, including a lot who qualify as modern heroes -- race drivers, test pilots, etc. (I wonder if Stableford does? Robert E. Howard obviously did, but Stableford seems a bit more intelligent.) Overall; interesting.

THE BOOK OF ROBERT E. HOWARD, edited by Glenn Lord [Zebra, \$1.95] These two volumes THE SECOND BOOK OF ROBERT E. HOWARD, ed. Glenn Lord [Zebra, \$1.95] comprise a total of 700 pages and 43 stories, verses, and letters, and I'm not going to spend two or three pages reviewing everything in detail. The backgrounds vary: exotic oriental cities at the time of Crusades; ditto in modern times, the Old West, typical horror-story backgrounds; medieval France; a modern prize-ring. The characters are all pretty similar: the literary Hero, a blend of macho, morality, and madrigals. None of the stories is at all believable, but most of them are entertaining. Solomon Kane is the only one of Howard's major characters included. These are his minor series, and the non-series stories (which are generally the best of the lot, as usual). The variety, and the editorial explanations, give one a pretty good view of the pulp field of the 1930s and Howard's place in it, and the books are recommended as both history and light entertainment.

THE BOOK OF JOHN BRUNNER, [DAW #177, \$1.25] This also provides a little of everything. Included are limericks from Amra, the text of a worldcon speech, filksongs, poems, feghoots, articles on science fiction and writing, a crossword puzzle, and a few stories. (And may I sometime reach the point where my trivia gets a book to itself, eh?) Anyway, Brunner, is an entertaining writer, even when he's espousing some half-baked idea for non-violence, which he frequently does. (It's not that I'm in favor of violence; I'm in favor of practicality.) I don't even agree with his advice on how to write -- but since he's a better writer than I am, the unbiased reader might do well to pay more attention to Brunner than to me. The book is recommended.

THE BEST OF MACK REYNOLDS [Pocket Books, \$1.95] The best of Mack Reynolds is his trio

of future-African stories, which are too long to include in this volume. But you get a good variety here: 22 stories in 370 or so pages, with commentary by the author. They're humorously cynical stories -- or occasionally sadly cynical. They're entertaining, and show more insight into human nature than most of the writers of socio-psychological science fiction will ever achieve. Highly recommended.

THE BEST OF HARRY HARRISON, [Pocket Books, \$1.95] Twenty stories in 300 pages. Harrison puts more obvious morals into his stories, either because of his sincerity or because he doesn't think highly of the intelligence of his readers. Consequently, most of the stories in here are moderately entertaining and highly forgettable.

THE BEST OF JOHN W. CAMPBELL [Ballantine, \$1.95] In 360 pages, you get 11 stories and one article. Three of the stories -- "Twilight," "Forgetfulness," and "Who Goes There?" -- are among the classics of the field. The others vary; most are obviously products of their time and place, which was the 1930s pulps. But even then, they're superior products, if not at all like the present styles of science fiction. Recommended.

THE BEST OF A.E. VAN VOGT [Pocket Books, \$1.95] Only 250 pages, 7 stories, 3 articles, and a prolog to a novel. (And the best of van Vogt, "Black Destroyer," isn't included.) The stories are a mixed bag; a few, like "The Rull," and "War of Nerves," are sort of second-best van Vogt, which is certainly good enough to recommend. Others aren't. More intriguing than the stories are the author's comments on them, and what that comment reveals about the author. ("I finally -- a few years ago -- completed my study of human behavior by way of dianetics." Right; and I just completed my study of engineering by reading flying saucer books. Van Vogt is fond of the word "reality" and of approaching it via dianetics, general semantics, and the Bates system of eye-wiggling.) Overall, not recommended.

THE BEST OF POUL ANDERSON [Pocket Books, \$1.95] 290 pages, 9 stories. Everyone seems to have his own favorite Anderson stories. Only one of mine, "The Sky People," is included in this book; I'd have liked to have seen a couple of the early ones, like "Interloper" or "The Helping Hand" in here. ("Sam Hall" is included, but that was never one of my favorites, however popular it's been with others.) Anderson stories tend to be about people who find good, sound, Ayn Randish reasons for cooperating with one another and so preserving their individuality. (But he's a far better writer -- and thinker -- than Rand, so the stories are generally enjoyable.) Overall, this isn't quite as good a selection as the Reynolds book (which surprised me, because I think Anderson is a better writer) but it's certainly good enough to recommend.

THE BEST OF JACK VANCE [Pocket Books, \$1.95] 275 pages, 6 novelets. Of course, the best of Jack Vance has already been published, as THE DYING EARTH. "The Last Castle" and "The Moon Mch" are two of Vance's better works in his specialty of exotic-alien settings; well worth reading. The other four, "Sail 25," "Ullward's Retreat," "Abercrombie Station," and "Rumfiddle," are routine. Overall, readable if you have the time and money.

CONTINUUM #1, #2, #3, #4, edited by Roger Elwood [Berkley, 95 cents each] A unique concept: 8 writers, each doing 4 connected stories, with each of the four stories appearing in a separate volume. It sounded terribly contrived, but actually comes off better than the usual "theme" anthology. Edgar Pangborn takes top honors with four more stories in his post-disaster background; "The Children's Crusade," "The Legend of Hombas," "The Witches of Nupal," and "Mam Sola's House". Poul Anderson produces a tightly connected series (which probably will become a novel sooner or later) in "My Own, My Native Land," "Passing the Love of Women," "A Fair Exchange," and "To Promote The General Welfare". Gene Wolfe produces the best effort from the technical standpoint (I call it an "effort" because I'm not sure what the precise descriptive term should be; Gene is nothing if not inventive.). From there, the quality goes down a

bit. Anne McCaffrey's "crystal singer" stories are well written but the premise is a bit far-fetched for my taste, and the ending more than a little contrived. Chad Oliver does four stories in a galactic trading series; competent, but the sort of thing one has seen before. Phil Farmer and Tom Scortia evaded the idea of the series by simply writing four-part serials; Farmer's is fair and Scortia's isn't. The last series is even more experimental, with each segment by a different author. It's interesting, and I've read worse, but it's not all that great. Authors involved are Dean Koontz, Gail Kimberley, Pamela Sargent, and George Zebrowski (both on one story) and Barry Malzberg.

UNIVERSE 5, edited by Terry Carr [Popular Library, \$1.25] Original stories. Some are more original than others; consider Gene Wolfe's "The Rubber Band". (But introducing a character named Arch St. Louis for the sole purpose of perpetrating a horrendous pun about elevator cons is just not sporting, old chap.) Other good to excellent stories include "The Night Is Cold, The Stars Are Far Away" by Mildred Downy Broxon, "The Night Wind" by Edgar Pangborn, and perhaps "Passion Play" by J. Michael Reaves and "If This Is Winnetka, You Must Be Judy" by F.M. Busby. Not so good stories are "Shrödinger's Cat" by Ursula le Guin, "How It Felt" by Geo Alex Effinger, "Mysterious Doings In The Metropolitan Museum" by Fritz Leiber, "M Is For The Many" by J.J. Russ, "Survival Problems" by Kris Neville, "But As A Soldier, For His Country" by Stephen Goldin, and "The Ramparts" by Hilary Bailey. Not a bad average, really; go ahead and try the book.

THE CITY: 2000 A.D., edited by Ralph Clem, Martin Harry Greenberg, and Joseph Olander [Fawcett, \$1.95] I don't even like present-day cities, so I'm not the best judge of fiction about future ones. Basically, the stories are acceptable, though I doubt that the book is going to provide any of the vision the editors seem to feel is required in order to come to philosophical terms with the city. One of the odder stories is "Jesting Pilot" by Henry Kuttner, because it's copyrighted 1975. Previously unpublished? It's not all that great a story, but new Kuttner stories are rare these days. There is Sheckley's tongue-in-cheek "Street of Dreams, Feet of Clay," Ballard's "Billenium," Joe Hensley and Bob Silverberg on future ghettos, a couple of extrapolative satires on traffic problems that look a little silly already; the fuel will run out before congestion/pollution gets that bad. Total of 17 stories, one excerpt from a novel (Gernsback's RALPH 124C41/), and 300 pages. For a city-hater like me, not all that interesting; for the average fan, an average book.

QUICKIE THRILLERS, edited by Dr. Arthur Liebman [Pocket Books, \$1.50] A collection of 25 vignettes, divided into sections of "classic horror," "contemporary crime," and "beyond reality". Emphasis is on crime rather than fantasy, though fantasies are included. Vignettes are hard to write well. There are excellent ones here, such as "Gabriel-Ernst" by Saki, "In A Glass Darkly" by Agatha Christie (not really a vignette, though), and "Package Deal" by Jack Ritchie. The rest are sometimes clever and sometimes overly contrived (the one by Ellery Queen is positively idiotic). Overall, an interesting idea for an anthology, and a pretty good book.

SIX SCIENCE FICTION PLAYS, edited by Roger Elwood [Pocket Books, \$1.95] Another original idea. The first play, of course, is Harlan's original treatment of "City on the Edge of Forever" (proving conclusively that Roddenberry's revisions were not only improvements but absolutely necessary to keep everyone in his established character. True love or not, Kirk is a man who might sacrifice the rest of the universe for a woman, but never his command.) "Sting," a screenplay for a monster movie (or tv show) by Tom Reamy, is surprisingly good. Of course, in that genre, anything not producing instant nausea is surprisingly good, but if Reamy's story is hardly brilliant, it is at least less idiotic than the average tv show. "Contact Point," by Theodore and George Cogswell, is a one-act melodrama, peoples by stereotypes; I thought Ted was a better writer than that. "Stranger With Roses," by John Jakes, is also a one-act melodrama, well worth missing. "The Mechanical Bride," by Fritz Leiber, is much better; an actor himself, Leiber knows how to work toward visual realism; this would

probably be better when performed than when it is read. And "Let Me Hear You Whisper" by Paul Zindel is cute but not terribly good. Anyway, the three good ones -- Ellison, Reamy, and Leiber -- take up about 275 of the book's 390 pages, so you're getting your money's worth. (Even though Ellison's original treatment badly needed a few revisions, it's still well above average.)

THE BEST SCIENCE FICTION OF THE YEAR #5, edited by Terry Carr [Ballantine, \$1.95]
THE 1976 ANNUAL WORLD'S BEST SF, edited by Don Wollheim and Art Saha [DAW, \$1.50]
Carr gives you 12 stories and 370 pages; Wollheim provides 10 stories and 300 pages. Both pick "Child of All Ages" by P.J. Plauger (definitely a Best) and "The Storms of Windhaven" by Lisa Tuttle and George R. R. Martin (which I considered competent but hardly great). Carr also includes "In The Bowl" (great) and "Retrograde Summer" (good) by John Varley, "Down To A Sunless Sea" by Cordwainer Smith (same quality as other Smith stories; I don't care for them), "The Hero As Werwolf" by Gene Wolfe (excellent), "The Silent Eyes of Time" by Algis Budrys (good), "Croatoan" by Harlan Ellison (good), "Doing Lennon" by Greg Benford (fair), "The New Atlantis" by Ursula Le Guin (poor), "Clay Suburb" by Robert F. Young (poor), and "Sail the Tide of Mourning" by Dick Lupoff (acceptable). Overall, a pretty good selection. Wollheim includes "Catch That Zeppelin!" by Fritz Leiber (lousy, even if it does win an award, which it might), "The Peddler's Apprentice" by Joan and Vernor Vinge (excellent), "The Bees of Knowledge" by Barrington J. Bayley (good), "The Engineer and the Executioner" by Brian Stableford (poor), "Allegiances" by Michael Bishop (long-winded; I didn't care for it), "Helbent 4" by Stephen Robinett (good), "The Protocols of the Elders of Britain" by John Brunner (good, if farfetched), and "The Custodians" by Richard Cowper (very good). Overall, another good selection; Carr's is possibly a shade the better.

THE WELL OF THE UNICORN, by Fletcher Pratt [Ballantine, \$1.95] Lester del Rey's cover blurb, "the best piece of epic fantasy ever written," pretty well covers this. It's an alternate but recognizable medieval world. Protagonist Airar A'varson, looking only for a way to survive, changes his world -- but does it much more believably than is usual in such fictional cases. In 400 pages, Pratt has the space to work out his plot logically, and make his characters as real as the people next door. (Maybe more real, considering some of the neighbors we've had...) Highly recommended, if you haven't encountered it previously.

DAVY, by Edgar Pangborn [Ballantine, \$1.50] Another classic (I was going to call it a modern classic except I note it's 12 years old now). It's the novel of Pangborn's post-disaster society, and it manages to be both exotic and tremendously real. If you haven't read it, do so.

THE WEREWOLF OF PARIS, by Guy Endore [Pocket Books, \$1.95] A fairly often-reprinted werewolf novel from 1933. Not bad, but not all that great.

THE SHEEP LOOK UP, by John Brunner [Ballantine, \$1.95] One of Brunner's long, serious works. Not his best, but still very good, it's a kaleidoscope novel of a very unpleasant future. Highly recommended.

QUICKSAND, by John Brunner [DAW #203, \$1.50] I'm not sure what the hell this was supposed to be, possibly an attempt to move out of the sf field and into mainstream best-sellerdom. Whatever it was, it was unsuccessful. Heavily psychological, not very much fantasy, and not very good.

FURY, by Henry Kuttner [Magnum, \$1.50] But your corner dime store is probably selling it for much less. It's an excellent picture of the Hero type; the man driven to succeed at all costs. It shows his value to society -- and the dangers of letting him loose in society. It's really a rather unpleasant book, but I definitely recommend it. This is one of the books Lancer is selling via a side door (and not too

coherently; the cover says "Magnum" and the copyright page says "Prestige".

PRELUDE TO SPACE, by Arthur C. Clarke [Ballantine, \$1.50] Occasionally the factual content of a sf story becomes outdated by scientific advances; the Apollo landing on the Moon did this one in. But as Clarke says in a preface, prophecy is not the main purpose of science fiction writers. (Unfortunately, without the prophecy, this one is a trifle dull; mostly of historic interest these days.)

THE MIDWICH CUCKOOS, by John Wyndham [Ballantine, \$1.50] One of Wyndham's novels of incomprehensible aliens -- he liked that theme. These aliens produce incomprehensible hybrid children; it's a fairly good story, and made one of the better sf movies.

THE MINDWARPERS, by Eric Frank Russell [Magnum, \$1.50] Primarily a near-future thriller; acceptable but not one of Russell's best efforts by a long way.

THE HORROR IN THE MUSEUM, by H.P. Lovecraft and friends [Ballantine, \$1.50]

THE MASK OF CTHULHU, by August Derleth [Ballantine, \$1.50]

THE TRAIL OF CTHULHU, by August Derleth [Ballantine, \$1.50]

Three collections of Cthulhu Mythos stories -- not the better ones. I would think that anyone but neofans would have the earlier editions, but if you don't, and you're dying to read horror stories... At least, the Tinkelman covers on these are better than the Gallardo covers on the last batch.

SEVEN FOOTPRINTS TO SATAN, by A. Merritt [Avon, \$1.25] This one comes out at regular intervals; why, I'm not sure. It's not a fantasy, but a novel of a Satanist cult (which I suppose makes it quite appropriate these days). I found it dull the first time I read it (or read at it; I'm not sure I ever finished it) and see no reason to change my opinion now.

THE WANDERER, by Fritz Leiber [Ballantine, \$1.50] Leiber writes some of the worst science fiction I have ever read (and some of the best, so I have to read everything to make sure I don't miss a good one). This novel of an alien planet wandering into the solar system and disgorging alien peoples onto Earth is overlong, not terribly original, melodramatic, and for some reason it won a Hugo. (I suppose the difference is that most fans thought it showed insight into the human character, and I thought the characters were a pretty low grade of cardboard. Read it yourself and make your own decision -- but if I'm making it for you, I say save your money.)

ARABEL'S RAVEN, by Joan Aiken [Dell Yearling, 95 cents] Three juvenile fantasies about a spoiled brat and her talking raven, who is an incredible nuisance to everyone. The first two tales are pretty standard juvenile humor, but "The Escaped Black Mamba and Other Things" is moderately hilarious. Recommended to juvenile minds -- like mine.

WEIRD HEROES, Vols. #1. and #2, edited by Byron Preiss [Pyramid, \$1.50 each] This is supposed to be an attempt to recreate the pulp magazine in pb format, but it reads more like a prose comic book (quite possibly because it's being done by comics personnel, in the main.) Phil Farmer's parody of the pulp series character is fun; both of the "Greatheart Silver" stories are vastly entertaining. They're about the only part of these books that is, to anyone but a comics fans. A recreation of the pulps they're not.

THE PRINCE AND THE LILY, by James Brough [Ballantine, \$1.95] The title (and cover, at first glance) make this seem like a historical romance to the casual browser. Actually, I suppose it is, except that it's also true; the Prince is the future Edward VII, and the lily is Emilie Le Breton, better known as Lillie Langtry, "The Jersey Lily". It's replete with the stuff of Victorian romances -- beautiful women, scheming noblemen, and scandal in high places. I can't vouch for its accuracy, but it makes entertaining reading.

ALL IN A CENTURY, by E. J. Kahn, Jr. [Eli Lilly & Co] You can't get this one unless you're a stockholder or an employee of Lilly -- or know someone who is, such as John Miesel, from whom one can borrow a copy. Lilly celebrated its centennial with a fancy hardcover book, fine book-quality paper, and apparently a professional author to write it, instead of the company publicity department. The results are interesting. Pro-Lilly and pro-business, of course; it is an in-house publication. But company chauvinism is kept under restraint and tempered with occasional humor (genuine humor, not the contest-show variety which defaces most company publications). Personally, I'd have liked more about the early Lilly products and what they were used for; references to "Extraat of Thimbleweed", or "Hardhack" are tantalizing. But, overall, it was sort of fun. And some of the statistics might be interesting to the natural healing crowd.

GIRAFFE RAPS [Giraffe, \$5.95] And 8 1/2 x 11" paperbound book, consisting entirely of satires on advertising. This one follows the college-left code even more strictly than the Lilly book does the business-ethic one; it is anti-government, anti-police, anti-gun, etc., etc.; it's a requirement of satires these days. Nevertheless, it's an entertaining volume; some of the cigarette ads alone are worth the price of the book. The liquor ads vary. Juanita particularly liked some of the women's hygiene ones. And the "social scatological" section has lots of message and very little humor. (two good ads out of 17 in that section, as opposed to 5 good ones out of 9 in the alcohol department, and 6 of 11 in the cigarettes). Overall, it's worth the money.

CIVIL WAR MARINE: A DIARY OF THE RED RIVER EXPEDITION, edited by James P. Jones and Edward F. Keuchel [Gov't Printing Office, \$1.65] The diary of Frank Church, who was a Union officer during this less-than-successful expedition, plus biographical details of Church's life, and historical details of the campaign, plus numerous photographs. I'm occasionally startled by the amount of Civil War photographs that still exist. Interesting for history buffs.

FLAGS, by Whitney Smith [McGraw-Hill, \$39.95] But I got mine at a pre-publication discount. The history of flags and banners, plus depictions of the flags of all nations (including a couple of variants in the case of countries having revolutions at the time the book went to press, where it was impossible to make sure which flag would be in use afterwards), plus such odd designations as racing silks, shipline and airline symbols, the flags of minority groups within another nation (Armenian-Americans, Cornish, Alsatians, Basques, Kachins, Newfies, etc.) and a couple of large sections on flag symbolism. A bit expensive, but I enjoy flags.

BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO ARCHAEOLOGY, by Louis Brennan [Stackpole, \$9.95] These were sold ARTIFACTS OF PREHISTORIC AMERICA, by Louis Brennan [Stackpole, \$14.95] separately, but are actually a set. The GUIDE is just what the title indicates: instructions on how to find, dig, and report on archaeological sites. Invaluable for anyone who wants to putter around with archaeology (in my copious free time...) or for someone who might be considering making a career of it and who wants to know more about the subject first. ARTIFACTS is simply a nicely catalogued list of what the digger is apt to find, illustrated with photos. (Lots of photos; you might want to use it as a picture book of artifacts, or you might want to buy both books for research material in case you're planning to put something about archaeology into your next gothic, or Laser book, or whatever.)

THE PLANET THAT WASN'T, by Isaac Asimov [Doubleday, \$7.95] The latest collection of Asimov's columns from F&SF, Dec. 74 thru April 76. Still no index; I suppose eventually Juanita or I will have to produce an index for the magazine column as a whole. It contains quite a bit of information on questions that come up in daily conversation around here, but as it is, there's no hope of finding any particular subject. The table of contents is no help in locating subjects. Material is of course the usual fascinating assortment; everything from an explanation of why the chemical symbol for sodium is "Na" to demolishing various "scientific" proofs of the existence of God to

a comprehensive article on cholesterol. Recommended to anyone who doesn't have the magazines; if you do have them, you're not gaining anything by buying the book. (But you would be if the book had an index.)

THE JUPITER EFFECT, by John R. Gribbin and Stephen H. Plagemann [Walker, \$7.95] I got this one as research for an earthquake novel (now, if someone would just buy the novel...). This is the book that purports to prove that an alignment of planets can cause tidal effects including earthquakes on Earth. It's not been wholeheartedly accepted by scientists. (But that makes no difference if one wants it as a background for fiction.) It's written as popular science, but not too popular; the text is pretty dry for use as an afternopr's entertainment.

THE SECRETS OF SUPERSTITIONS, by Owen S. Rachleff [Doubleday, \$7.95] A grabby title; a more accurate one would be "the psychology of superstition". The author provides the origins of various superstitions and attempts a catalog of the types of people who are believers. I found it somewhat superficial (meaning he was telling me things I already knew. I suppose I'm better read on the subject than the average person, but not all that much better read than the average Yandro reader.). He runs into a snag when he tries to differentiate between the Christian religion and superstition; there is no way you can put the Witch of Endor in one column and Sybil Leek in another without looking silly. He also makes fun of the Druids ("reality improbably perceived by unsophisticated witnesses") for thinking that lightning "emanated upward" from oak trees during storms. Since lightning does emanate upward -- the so-called "return stroke" supplying most of the current and presumably most of the visibility -- maybe the Druids just had better eyesight than Mr. Rachleff. (See the Encyclopedia Americana or any good natural science book for "lightning" if you don't believe me.) With all this, I'm somewhat annoyed by his assertion that "intensive interest in fairy tales, myths, and science fiction literature" helps convert a "respectable religious attitude" into superstition. The people with the most intensive interest in fairy tales, myths, and science fiction are the science fiction fans, and most of the fans I know disbelieve in both superstition and religion and are pretty dubious about psychology. Rachleff has a good idea here, and presumably anyone with interest in and not much knowledge of the origin of superstitions would find it interesting. But there are too many unsupported assertions in it for my taste.

THE IRON MAN, by Robert E. Howard [Don Grant, \$7.00; Zebra, \$1.50] Three of Howard's boxing stories. Sports stories are pretty well restricted as to plot; Howard's are restricted as to style as well, and the dialogue sounds pretty silly in this day and age. Which won't matter to Howard fans, who only need to be apprised that a new book is out. Actually, the stories are about average for a sports pulp, maybe better than average. I should think the real Howard collectors would want the Grant hardcover, and I can't really see why a casual reader would want either one.

FOX, by Lee Hoffmann [Doubleday, \$5.95] A "different" Western. Fox is a con man who finds his work complicated by an attack of conscience. It's a humorous book, though there is the obligatory shoot-out at the end, and I thoroughly enjoyed it. (Go buy the book; keep a science fiction fan in spending money.)

TROUBLE VALLEY, by Lee Hoffman [Ballantine, \$1.25] A more standard variety Western. I'm not as intrigued by not-too-bright heroes as Lee is, though I have to admit they're more realistic. The book has some nice touches with weaponry, which I appreciate, and the characters are better drawn than usual.

THE KING AND FOUR QUEENS, by Theodore Sturgeon [secondhand] A novelization of the movie. It's a remarkably bad book, but the fact that it's by Sturgeon makes it of at least peripheral interest.

THE TRACER OF LOST PERSONS, by Robert W. Chambers [secondhand] In my youth there was

a radio program called "Mr Keen, Tracer of Lost Persons". (I never listened to it, but it came on just before one I did listen to, so I heard the tail end of a lot of the programs.) I'd never realized that the show was based on a book, but it was, and this is the book. From the copyright, I assume the stories were first published in the Saturday Evening Post, in the same year -- 1906 -- as the book publication. There are 5 stories included, all of them what passed for high-quality humorous romance in 1906. In addition one is an outright fantasy featuring suspended animation, and another has fantasy elements, so again it's of borderline interest.

THE DOOM TRAIL, by Arthur D. Howden Smith [secondhand] Smith was one of the prolific pulp writers of the 1920s, and apparently quite popular; this is the third printing of a Grosset & Dunlap edition, with previous copyrights by the Ridgeway Company and Brentano's. It's a historical novel set in the American Colonies, and replete with the imitation Indian dialogue popular at the time (and which is still used in some Boy Scout ceremonies). Lee Lavell practically went into hysterics on reading the prologue, but it's not really as bad as it starts out, though the plot is pretty ridiculous. Of somewhat more interest, it's the first book in a series featuring the villain Andrew Murray, who is a fascinating character. (The second book, FORTO BELLO GOLD, is the most interesting of the lot, being both a sequel to this volume and a prequel to Stevenson's TREASURE ISLAND. Now if I can pick up RETURN TO TREASURE ISLAND sometime, I'll have a 4-book series done by three different authors...)

THE GOLDEN KEEL, by Desmond Bagley [secondhand pb] A couple of thrillers. Bob Brin-
THE VIVERO LETTER, by Desmond Bagley [secondhand pb] ey wrote in, apropos of some review of other, to comment that Bagley was a far better adventure writer than Jack Higgins. I already had VIVERO, courtesy of Andy Zerbe, I believe, so I read it then instead of waiting a couple more years, and found that I agreed with Briney and Zerbe. KEEL is too long to be a good adventure novel, in my opinion; it's 300 pages, and for light reading I want something I can finish in a couple of hours or less, meaning about 200 pages maximum. But it includes an interesting gimmick.

MISTRESS WILDING, by Rafael Sabatini [Ballantine, \$1.50] An adventure story set against the background of the Monmouth Rebellion. Melodramatic, as is most of Sabatini, but it has a rather antique charm.

ONE JUST MAN, by James Mills [Pocket Books, \$1.95] A near-future thriller. A lawyer decides that the structure of the law must be pulled down in order to obtain justice, and is crushed by the Establishment. There's the obligatory sex and violence but not much else.

THREE PLOTS FOR ASEY MAYO, by Phoebe Atwood Taylor [Norton, \$5.95] Three novelets (which originally appeared in American magazine as "complete mystery novels"). Taylor isn't at her best in the short form, but they're adequate. "Headacre Plot" rests on an unusual murder weapon and is well handled. "Wander Bird Plot" involves a missing trailer; the little camping-type trailers weren't as common in 1940 as they are now, and they were in the news a lot more. "Swan Boat Plot" involves a murder aboard a swan boat in Boston's Public Garden (I'll bet these haven't been around for years) and include numerous funny chase scenes. It's probably the best of the lot.

MAN OF TWO TRIBES, by Arthur Upfield [Heinemann, \$1.80] Reissues of two of the
MYSTERY OF SWORDFISH REEF, by Arthur Upfield (Heinemann, \$1.50] "Napoleon Bonaparte" detective novels. Since I collect Upfield, I asked Ethel Lindsay to pick me up the ones I was missing, and I received these last year. (And since John Miesel was nagging me to get them read, I actually did.) SWORDFISH involves a missing boat and lots of details about swordfishing, which weren't quite as interesting to me since I'm not a fisherman. But it did cover a part of Australia I didn't know much about. TRIBES is located on the Nullarbor Plain and involves missing people and a totally fantastic plot. Which doesn't matter; Upfield was never strong on plots, anyway. One reads him for his characters and his backgrounds, and these are both good in TRIBES. I thought both books were good, but then I'm prejudiced.

interpretation; the whole thing reads a bit as though critics had suddenly discovered that Ron Foulart was a Great Writer. Fun, but I tend to keep looking for something that doesn't seem to be there.

LECHEROUS LIMERICKS, by Isaac Asimov [Fawcett, \$1.75] This sounded interesting, but turned out not to be. The limerick sessions at filksings turn out a higher quality limerick than these, not to mention dirtier ones. These are moderately entertaining, but not top quality. (John Boardman can turn out better limericks, but Asimov has the name required to sell a book.)

CAPTAIN'S WALK, by Elisabeth Welles [Fawcett, \$1.50] Seems to be a fairly standard gothic, aside from an ending more suited to the modern woman. Nothing exceptional about it. To be avoided.

THE IRRESISTIBLE BUCK, by Barbara Cartland [Pyramid] Rick Rostrum presented me with this one at Midwestcon. It's one of Cartland's usual lousy stories, but in this case it's only the title that's important.

A DARKNESS ON THE STAIRS, by Florence Stevenson [Signet, \$1.25] A sort of historical gothic; the heroine is a young woman determined to become a doctor, in the years before WWI when women Did Not Do That Sort Of Thing. The rest of the background is the usual household of neurotics and psychotics. It's rather enjoyable; a heroine who sneezes when she's pretending to be a ghost and overawe the villain is rather endearing, and one who saves the hero instead of vice versa is a refreshing change. But mostly, it's a pretty straight gothic.

PRIOR BETROTHAL, by Elsie Lee [Dell, \$1.50] A Regency romance, which seems to be the coming thing. I think Elsie attempts a bit much in juggling three romances; it doesn't leave room for character development or humor. (But then, I read these for the humor; I suppose those who read for the improbably romantic element wouldn't object to having more of it.) Much better than the average, anyway, if Barbara Cartland is the average.

THE FOUR MARYS, by Rinalda Roberts [Popular Library, \$1.25] As a folkmusic fan, I couldn't resist a title like that, particularly when the blurb mentions two brothers, the Caribbean, and an ancient curse of madness, which sounded remarkably like a different folksong. (And the heroine is Mary Hamilton, which gets us back to the title.) The plot, unfortunately, is typically gothic, with a typically wishy-washy heroine.

TEMPEST AT SUMMER'S END, by "Julia Thatcher" [Ballantine, \$1.25] Don must have had fun with this one. I don't recognize the heroine, not being very conversant with poison-penned movie critics, but the hero is an extremely thinly disguised Orson Welles, which is enough to provide sufficient excitement for a normal gothic all by itself. The plot is also a lot stronger than the usual halfwitted gothic. I rather surprised myself by enjoying it as much as I do Elsie Lee's books.

THE KING'S INDIAN, by John Gardner [Ballantine, \$2.25] I decided that I really didn't read enough Literature, so I'd try some. It's certainly hard enough to review. (There are excerpts from prestigious reviews inside the cover -- Time, various newspapers -- and I note with amusement that none of them say a thing, though they all do it with high-flown verbiage.) The title story is a short novel, peopled by totally improbable characters who, as far as I can tell, are manipulated solely by the author's whims. They may be Symbolic; they certainly don't suspend my disbelief. It's entertaining, despite all this. The short stories comprising the other two-thirds of the book are similar but not as interesting. His ideas are vague enough to allow everyone his own interpretation; the whole thing reads a bit as though critics had suddenly discovered that Ron Goulart was a Great Writer. Fun, but I tend to keep looking for something that doesn't seem to be there.

GRUMBLINGS

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

Yandro arriving today gave a lucky jolt to my memory. The discussion about Dor-sai uniforms prompted my usual reaction which is to wonder if the hypersensitive types would cringe from the sight of Chirp and Mite in their school uniforms. Then I remembered I was supposed to have been at school this morning ordering their new ones for next year. Hasty call to the school confirmed that the matter could be handled by phone. Sigh of relief. I couldn't have gone anyway because I have to be here waiting for the glass men. (i.e., the crew that'll replace our fogged patio door). I trust no Yandro readers will gasp at the notion of school uniforms. They're the most practical way to cover the little creatures' bods at this point.

The taboo against eating with the left hand holds all across the Arab world and also in India. Reasoning the same in both cultural areas. I'd assume the custom is followed by women as well as men. I know it is in India. Interesting thing is the traditional methods of serving food in the two places are entirely different. The Arabs gather around a communal bowl or platter while Indians serve individual trays holding each course in a separate small dish.

The question about hand-preference among Arabs has been dealt with in Chemical And Engineering News in the past year. They have the same ratio of left/right dominance as the rest of humanity but because their manner of writing runs against this they show an unusually high incidence of directional confusion. And by the way, studies prove that cats are "right-pawed" as much as humans are right-handed. (Don't you think Grundoon would prove to be an exception?)

Several people mention the monopole. At last report that appears to have been an experimental error. But the disproof seems not to have been mentioned in the papers.

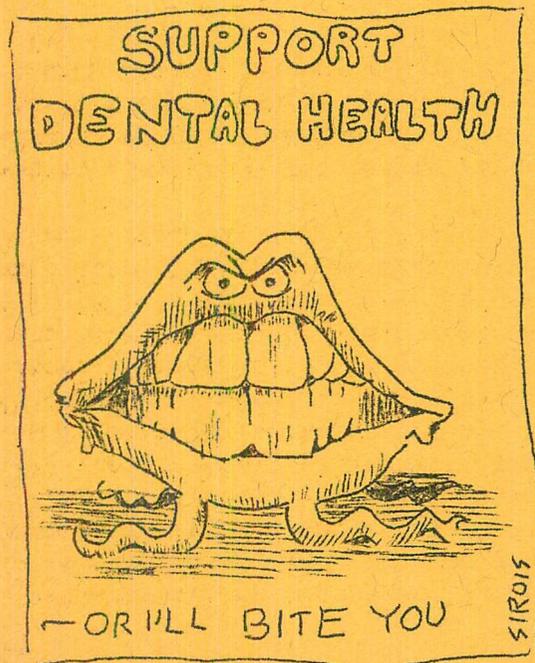
Everytime I see something funny in the paper I think of you...

With regard to Denny's vision of Don Thompson fandom, has he ever heard of the Jim Smith Society? One has to have that name to join. They have conventions and publications exactly like a fandom.

[[For the other side of school uniforms, let's hear from our long-suffering Indy neos, Carolyn and/or Anna.// I'm not sure that pawedness in cats is applicable to Grundoon. How about pawedness in possums? (For those confused by that exchange, we have this utterly stupid and masochistic cat...)// And as for that next-to-last paragraph -- it's certainly nice to have friends. RSC]]

Dainis Bisenieks, 2633 Dupont Ave. S.,
Minneapolis MN 55408

If you lived in the vicinity of a metropolitan library, you too would have a chance to read the British weekly New Scientist. It is for professionals and educated laymen and deals with new developments and questions of science policy. Much better than Science News not to mention ditto Digest, less technical than



Science. On the last page is the column "Ariadne," containing a photo with a speech balloon. The text progresses from almost serious to the fanciful: a wild scheme proposed by a certain Daedalus of DREADCO (Daedalus Research and Development). A science fiction writer could mine it for ideas.

On the inside pages of the April 1 issue was a three-page account of a strange theory indeed. There exist late Jewish texts which describe the

source of the manna in the desert. It has been perceived that this is the kind of vocabulary a tribesman might use to describe a product of technology, and a drawing of the hypothetical device has been provided: some sort of high-yield photosynthesizer? ...It is difficult in this field to distinguish dead serious writing from lightweight speculation or parody. I still don't know, but the date of publication is suspicious, don't you think?

Thought I: cafeteria service provided by mysterious alien beings? Carry-outs of the Gods?

A little postscript to "God Save The Mark". In a copy of THE HUDSON (Rivers of America Series) I found a ten-year old photo of a woman reading Private Eye, the British satirical weekly. (Did I once send you a copy?) And fallen out of some book at Goodwill was more bad verse: enclosed -- I don't want to see it again. Re J.A. Salmonson's comment: flowers are not documents, they are not suggestive of anything new. You've seen one, you've seen them all.

In the midst of the Bicentennial hoopla, it is instructive and entertaining to read such books as THE EVE OF THE REVOLUTION by Carl Becker (a nice short book in the Yale Chronicles of America). "Samuel Adams was born to serve on committees. He had the innate slant of mind that properly belongs to a moderator of mass meetings called to aggravate a crisis... After 1764...he acquired in a high degree the faculty of identifying reality with propositions about it..."

Joe Hensley, 2315 Blackmore, Madison IN 47250

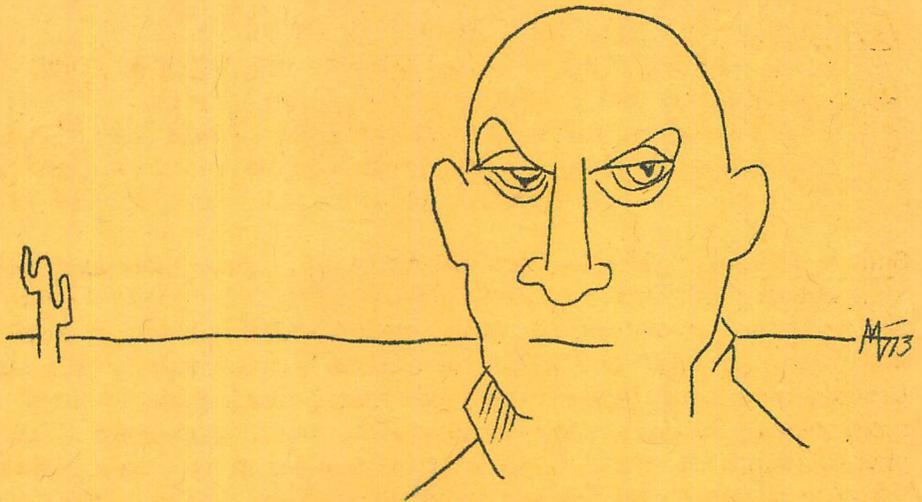
The sales figures on the Lasers sound encouraging. Hope they stay that way on the titles later in the line. And NYSHIT appears to be doing well also. I suspect, if they'd keep it in print, that it would continue to sell down the years to the fan population and nearbys. Not that it isn't of interest to others, but it's bound to become a sort of part of fan legend.

Lasers are very spotty around here, but they do appear to be getting into some places they weren't originally. There are some I've never seen and I'm a fanatic hunter of book stores.

I note from Bruce's editorial that he's going to have to get in line. I can hear three typers going at the Coulson house. Could be interesting if you wind up controlling more than 50 percent of Laser's output between the three of you.

A note from Virginia Kidd (and a later copy of a Western Union mailgram) says that Czech TV is going to buy THE POISON SUMMER for 5 emissions of 70 minutes each 1977-79. The money sounded good although I believe in money when the check has cleared.

FINAL went on to Julie Coopersmith at Rodell-Collin who thought it was all right. Her complaint was that it crosses categories and it does. Once it was a suspense with a smattering of SF and now it's SF with a smattering of suspense. But at least it's done and I'm now piddling with something else.



[[Editors do hate books that they can't conveniently categorize, don't they?]]

Dave Locke, 819 Edie Dr., Duarte CA 91010

You may be willing to read ZARKON: THE VOLCANO OBRE, but damned if I will. I opened it at random and found:

"Cripes, chief! A monster that crawls out o' the crater o' a live volcano, drippin' all over wid molten lava, an' kills folks with a touch o' his burnin' paws! Wow! Sure sounds like our sort o' case, all right."

The entire editorial staff at Doubleday must have had their fingers up their noses when that one came by.

However, after eleven losers they just sent me a novel by Mark Geston. I haven't read it yet, but at least the author's name makes it seem promising.

Got a letter today from Dave Rowe, asking me to do a column of fanzine reviews for him. Did you hear that, Schuyler? Fanzine reviews. He even had three special requirements. A fixed number of pages based on the lines being 62 spaces across. The zines reviewed must be no more than three weeks old at the time I air him the column. And, no swearing.

Even without all the special requirements, my ability to suspend disbelief was overwhelmed at being asked to do a fanzine review column. Before that happens they'll catch you reading convention reports and moving your lips as you sound out the words.

Other things are straining my credulity of late. Carl Bennett sent around a circular soliciting artwork for a Bruce Townley artfolio. Almost everyone nominated for the Faan Awards, except me, is on the committee or running for it (I wonder if this is a requirement for winning?). Cagle and I have decided, if we win the award for best single issue, that the best way to divide it would probably be to melt it down; from the descriptions I've heard it probably looks like the end result of a robot horse-fucking two pounds of Saran Wrap.

[[Oh, the FAT (Fan Award Trophy) doesn't look all that bad (or all that good). It's the Deep Meaning behind it that makes it Important. I see you noticed about the requirement for winning. (After all, it's presented for achievements in fandom; and what greater achievement is there than to be on the Fan Award Committee?) RSC]]

Brendan DuBois, 283 Dover Point Rd., Dover NH 03820

Sent my membership fee to the New England Science Fiction Association, Incorporated, a week or so ago, but haven't received any word yet. I don't know, but I feel kind of isolated up here in the wilds of New Hampshire. The only claim to fame that my little home state has is the White Mountains, first-in-the-nation primary, Meldrim Thomson (our distinguished governor. He once advocated having the National Guard armed with nukes. Under his command, of course.), and William Loeb, editor of the state's largest (and only!) statewide newspaper. There are no cons, clubs, or anything remotely associated with SF in New Hampshire. For all I know, I don't even think that there's even a zine pubbed in NH. The only sf fans I know are my older brother (one of them) and an attorney friend. They both aren't really what you'd call hard-core fans, since both of them actually (are you ready for this?) throw away any and all of the sf books or mags they've read! Of course, I soon put a stop to that. Any books that they are going to throw away (that I don't have in my collection, of course) ends up in my collection. But there are really no hard-core fans in this area of NH. I hang around the sf&fantasy section of our area's largest bookstore and try to strike up a conversation with anybody who seems to be intently browsing through the racks. Huh! I should stick to writing letters. The average conversation goes like this:

"Hey, there! Are you an sf fan?"

"A what?"

"Sf. You know, science fiction."

"Yeah, I guess so."

"Really? Hey, that's great. Who's your favorite author?"

"Uh-h-h, Blish and Alan Dean Foster?"

"Yeah, I like them too. Especially Blish's four books about the flying cities. It's a shame that he's dead. Did you read Foster's new book? It's called MIDWORLD and it's about..."

By this time, I'm greeted by a blank stare and then I notice the Star Trek books. Oh well.

[[Since the letter, Brendan has found another New Hampshire fan, but that feeling of isolation is very familiar, even to fans in cities, until they start getting acquainted in the field. RSC]]

Leah Fisher, 2220 E. Oklahoma Ave., Milwaukee WI 53207

About those Dover catalogs (Elsie Lee gave the address lastish) -- the publishers are very willing to send out the catalog. All full of classics in fantasy, children's books, math, sciences, etc., etc., printed in large paperback size with sewn signatures and laminated covers. Watch the covers, though. I recommend covering them with clear plastic contact-paper to keep them from peeling. Most large bookstores carry Dover publications and may be able to get a catalog for you. Publishers in general don't mind sending out catalogs once or twice without any purchases but after that second one, they do like to see something being bought. Naturally at the time of purchase it doesn't hurt to mention that you found it listed in the catalog and thought... Word somehow gets around that seeding catalogs like that DO sell books and are not only functioning as wishbooks.

Mary Schaub's question about the song about "the lily-white boys" -- I've answered in a note to her, but here's a brief for interested parties. The song is a very old English folksong of the cumulative type. ("Twelve Days of Christmas" is a cumulative, so is "The Hole In the Bottom of the Sea.") The catch arrangement was made in the 1400s or 1500s, but I suspect it's much older than that because some versions deal with pagan worship symbols through later versions use Christian symbols. Anyway, in most collections it goes by the name of "Green Grow the Rushes, O!" or "One is One and All Alone" or a similar name. There are dozens of versions. I've even got one called "The Dilly Song", presumably because it mentions a Dilly Hour and a Dilly Bird (whatever THEY are). Don't get it mixed up with the Negro Spiritual of a similar name ("The Rashes Oh!" or something like), which is about Moses in the bullrushes. As for what the English song MEANS...anyone's theory is as good as the next person's. Lots of children's songs have been adapted from political songs and just as many have been used for political purposes. I don't think I'll even try to explain obscure meanings in this one.

Charles Korbass, 816 Birch Street, Apt 103, Honolulu HI 96814

I know where those lines about the lily-white boys came from. I remember singing them back around 1965 or 1966 when I was at camp, as part of a song called "Green Grow the Rushes". The first three verses of the song went like this:

- 1) I'll sing you one, ho,
Green grow the rushes, oh!
One is one and all alone
And evermore shall be.
- 2) I'll sing you two, ho,
Green grow the rushes, oh!
Two, two, the lily-white boys
Clothed all in green-oh
One is one and all alone
And evermore shall be.
- 3) I'll sing you three, ho,
Green grow the rushes, oh!
Three, three, the rivals!
Two, two, the lily-white boys,

Clothed all in green-ol
One is one and all alone
And evermore will be.'

There were several more verses to it, taking the numbers mentioned up to twelve or thirteen, maybe more; I don't remember precisely. I don't remember what most of the later numbers were connected with, except that verse 10 added the line "Ten for the Ten Commandments" and 12 added "Twelve for the twelve apostles".

I don't know what the first three verses might mean. The songbook they came out of, whose title I can't recall, identified the rivals as the Trinity, and "One is one and all alone" as God.

Paul Anderson, 21 Mulga Road, Hawthorndene, South Australia, Australia 5051

SPACE 1999 is now running in Adelaide in prime time. However the prime time slot that it got just happened to be opposite the new series of UPSTAIRS, DOWNSTAIRS, which rates very well out here. I would not like to estimate the share of the audience that SPACE 1999 was pulling in on a regular basis, but I would say that it could be very great. I saw only the first few episodes before giving up in disgust. For the first few weeks it was a topic of conversation at the Friday night dinners that the local fans have arranged as fan activity. The previous Monday's show would be brought up and various scientific errors be brought to light. I appreciated the way that in one episode the floor of the moon base was rocked back and forth in a manner similar to that accident-prone sub in VOYAGE TO THE BOTTOM OF THE BARREL. It was due to an unknown type of radiation, I think, but it still looked ludicrous. Another fan did not appreciate, except as a joke, the way that the Moon still had the reflection of the Sun's light on it even after the Moon had been travelling out in deep space far beyond Pluto.

The stuff commented on in the review section is rather a mixture of some really good sf and some of the real junk that usually makes me wonder how it ever got printed. It is interesting to note that in a number of cases your comments differ markedly from those of other fan reviewers. On the face of it, you seem to be the only man who has been restrained in his comments on DHALGREN. That is, unless you are trying to damn

it with faint praise, which would not be what I expect from you. I am currently touting THE BIRTHGRAVE for an award this year if it gets on the ballot. I found it a bit long at 400 pages but mostly it was well written apart from the ending with its simplistic psychology. Possibly I would have preferred a tightening up of the middle section and more attention paid to the book's ending. Still she should get over that in future books which should be excellent. I liked TOTAL ECLIPSE but thought that the hero solved the problems far too quickly and easily. Basically, the SOLARIS theme with a happy ending of sorts. I hope that it turns out that I like John Collier; I bought both of the books by him that were listed by F&SF on the strength of your review and his short in Damon Knights' SF ARGOSY collection. With a book that size I should find at least a few things that I like. The only problem then being how to find more of his writings if it turns out that I like most of the stories!



[[Well, I saw at least part of what Delany was trying to do (even without finishing the book, I could see that). And it wasn't anything I'm interested in, which is not the same thing as

saying it was bad, so...(Actually, I didn't think it was very well done, either, but I'm not an expert on that sort of writing, so I didn't say much, publicly.) SPACE 1999 on the other hand is the sort of garbage that anyone can tell is bad. RSC]]
[[Matter of fact, I turned on the tv set too early one evening and caught the tail-end of a recent SPACE 1999 episode and was appalled to see they've accelerated the Moon up to at least 1C -- the star field in the background was zooming about merrily. Even in 1950, when George Pal made DESTINATION MOON, he didn't commit that error, and man had not even been into space yet at that early date. Bah. JWC]]



Mae Strelkov, C.C. 55, Jesus Maria 5220, Cordoba, Argentina

We too buy entire sheets of stamps, and the P.O. is so proud of me somehow. Isn't that cute? But then I'm a local yokel, long since. I get absolutely stacks of zines and letters and this awes them, and they worry when I take weeks without sending a reply; and if they see Vadim they ask anxiously about what's happened at my end. Real human dears. Actually, taken individually, Latin Americans are most lovable. They scare me only when they get together in some creed or slogan to blow-something-up, knock-something-down, carry-a-banner or the like. (I guess all humans are equally scary that way, but it's happening on a BIG scale here, because the Third-World types are soooo self-conscious. We all want "what-you've-got" washing machines included, see? I've none and never will have one and don't care. One learns to teach the kids to do their own washing, even sheets, and by gum they do! So I only do my own by now, though when the kids were smaller, boy, did I fly to get it all done.)

Oh gosh, yes, it's not "inflation", just, what we have. We are sinking into a pit so mirey that nobody even hopes any more. No one, but the eloquent on the air! (Hot air they sure can still yak!) As for whatever prices I quoted you last time, they're not in ruling now.

Ah, you did some figuring re how much a ream to me might cost in wages here? I've no idea what they're charging now, but will give you a current picture. The only real valuation to use is black-market exchange, which is all one can buy dollars on, unless cozily up in high circles here. So...black market dollars are soaring; I believe they've reached 40,000 old peses to the dollar right now. (Any price they pay, because your dollar is stable and a marvelous investment in our view.) Last month I calculated in modern reckoning, our earnings per month only reach 20 to 30 US dollars. When I went to the States the exchange was 1,500 to the dollar.

Lee Hoffman, 350 N.W. Harbor Blvd., Port Charlotte FL 33952

Had a little excitement around here last week. A drunken cat plunged through the roof of the screen enclosure around my pool cage. As my cat was prowling the cage at the time, she was quite taken aback. I was taken aback, too, at the idea of having to replace the screen. I called the cops.

They didn't have a cat catcher on duty on Sunday to take the besotted animal off my hands. (It had been rolling in my catnip patch, which I think must account for the incident. Cat's don't usually fall through roofs.) The officer on duty told me to let it go and request a cat trap on Monday.

After some delay, I got the trap and set it. In the morning I went out and was astonished to find a possum in it. I know raccoons range around here, and I did see a possum in the yard once, but I thought that was exceptional. I think there is more wild life prowling around here at night than I had realized.

Still haven't caught the offending cat.

Let the possum go.

A few weeks ago, my folks and I did a long weekend trip up to north Florida. Saw WeekiWachee, Silver Springs, Cypress Gardens, and some other stuff. I was impressed by the number of gators lying around. Now I hear on the radio that Florida has enough gators to consider reopening hunting of them. I would not be surprised to go out in the morning and discover one in the cat trap.

I hope a gator has eaten that cat that fell through the roof. He deserves it. Replacing the screen was a day's work. Hard work under a hot sun. Foosh!

Your comments on Louis L'Amour and the GOR books have made me realize just why I will never become Rich and Famous as a Western writer. My stuff just doesn't have enough male chauvinism.

Well, L'Amour may be right that the mainstream critics are snobs when it comes to Westerns. I know there are a lot of people who are snobs when it comes to Westerns. The Western is generally used as an example of the nadir of literature. I have one rather good friend in NY who refuses to read any Westerns on general principles, mine included. But if all these snobs did aboutface and try reading Westerns, I'm afraid they would feel their snobbery had been justified. Sturgeon's Law is very applicable to Westerns. I can't hardly find one I am willing to read myself. I very rarely find one I actually enjoy reading. Hardly any of us Western writers seem to be very skillful. I guess if we were, we'd be in more lucrative fields.

Juanita, I sympathize about the deteriorating stencils and the problems of getting typewriters serviced. If an aspiring young writer were to ask my advice on how to prepare for such a career, I would recommend studying typewriter repair. (Would that I had!) Besides enabling one to keep the tools of one's trade in operating condition, it would give one a skill with which to earn a living while trying to make it as a writer.

Bruce: I, too, was under the impression that it was illegal to deface currency, but recently I read that it is only illegal if there is intent to defraud. (Which is how come people are getting away with making so much jewelry out of coins these days.)

As a True Believer in Desmond Morris's Naked Ape, The Peter Principle, and Sturgeon's Law, I class the Official Prognosticators such as Economists and Political Scientists along with the Readers of Sheep Liver and Chicken Guts who served our ancient ancestors. Their function is the same, and they seem to be about equally accurate.

Buck: "Replica Black Powder"...Yes. But I am still croggled by "imitation margarine". (You don't suppose they make that out of butter, do you?)

Jessica Salmonson's "Know-It-All Encyclopedia" reminds me of an encyc advt on TV in NY some years ago. According to the commercials the book(s) contained "All the knowledge of man since the dawn of time". It was only twelve bucks, and I have long regretted never taking advantage of such a wonderful bargain. (Although, if they were using a strict interpretation of the word "knowledge" it might have contained nothing but blank pages.)

I suppose there are a lot of people who can offer Mary Schaub more information than I can, but here's my two-bits worth anyway: I asked my mother if she had ever heard of "larroes to catch meddlers". She said no, but she'd heard of "layovers to catch meddlers". She said when she was a child and inquired about some item, she was likely to be told "That's layovers to catch meddlers and if you touch it you'll get bit." She says the expression was quite common. That would have been in the first decade of the 20th Century, in central Florida. She undoubtedly heard it from her kinfolk, who were Southern Appalachian on both sides. Frankly, I doubt that they were much on reading, so I feel fairly certain the expression is an old folk one. She doesn't know what layovers were, though. (To me, they sound more like pitfalls than whip-lashes, even though pitfalls seldom bite.)

As to the lily-white boys, they are from the old British folksong, "Green Grow the Rushes-O". Not the one by Robert Burns, though the tune he set his verses to seems to be a variant of the version I'm most familiar with. A version using the lines about the rivals and the lily-white boys can be found in THE FIRESIDE BOOK OF FOLK SONGS (editor: Boni, pub. Simon & Schuster, c 1947). It goes something like this:

I'll sing you one-ho! Green grow the rushes-ho.

What is your one-ho? One is one and all alone and ever more shall be so.

I'll sing you two-ho! Green grow the rushes-ho.

What is your two-ho? Two, two, the lily white boys, clothed all in green-ho.

One is one and all alone and ever more shall be so...

Three, three the rivals...

Four, four the gospel makers...

Five for the symbols at your door...

Six for the six proud walkers...

Seven for the seven stars in the sky...

Eight for the April rainers...

Nine for the nine bright shiners...

Ten for the ten commandments...

Eleven for the eleven who went up to heaven...

Twelve for the twelve apostles...

There are variants, of course. In the SONG FEST version, they are "little white boys". Oscar Brand sings about two being Paul and Silas, three from the far country, four the gospel preachers, five the five who stayed alive, six the days of labor, seven the seven bright stars of heaven, eight the eight swift walkers, nine the nine that brightly shine, ten the ten commandments, eleven the eleven who went up to heaven, and twelve the twelve Apostles. Of course, Oscar makes no pretenses about the fact that he revises his material a lot, so I don't know how much of that might be his own creation.

Unfortunately, I have scanty little research material on old British folkmusic, and I'm not going through the record collection hunting jacket notes, so I can only quote Oscar's notes on the song: "It is believed that the old rhyme 'The House That Jack Built' comes from the Passover service. It is also believed that the song 'Green Grow the Rushes' is a paraphrase of that part of the Passover service which begins 'Who knoweth thirteen? 'I,' saith Israel, 'knoweth thirteen'...'"

Perhaps George Oshry can help. I was quite taken with his transliteration of that fanzine title. Could "A Heap of Ruins Comes" be further transliterated into a simple "Gardyloo?"

Anne & Bob Passovoy, POB 5093, Chicago IL 60680

Lucky us! We get to go to Midwestcon after all. The Dorsai contract with SFEXPO is cancelled, to the relief of all. Nobody on our crew really wanted to return to NY after Riotcon, not even to see the Ackerman Collection. I thought you might get a buzz out of the gory story, tho, so here goes...

The NY Hilton, twice shy after the Star Trek con mentioned above, announced that SFEXPO attendance would be limited to 8,000. Since they'd budgeted for 10,000 the con committee decided to move. New site is the Colosseum, which deals in percentages and wanted a big gate guarantee. This the committee hoped would be provided by Ticketron. But Ticketron looked the proposition over and was not at all impressed; sci-fi, who cares? SFEXPO retrenched. The authors were informed that about half the goodies they'd been promised were hereby cancelled. With the money thus freed, SFEXPO went out and hired themselves some by-God NAMES -- to be precise, Shatner-Takei-Doohan-Nichols-Koenig. Now that was a list Ticketron could go for. In fact, Ticketron said it could guarantee the sale of 50,000 in advance, easily. Even maybe 75,000 total gate; that's what the con told Kelly Freas. And they are all gonna fit in the NY Colosseum. Yes. That lovely place where at a Love New York Day dance 400 people were robbed on their way from the dance floor to the bleachers. There was a wine-and-cheese festival there recently which oversold a bit...they got three days of news coverage because the camera crew, with the rest of the audience, couldn't get back out.

That burning-rubber odor you smell is the Dorsai pulling out.

The Ackerman collection cancelled; nowhere to put it and no way to protect it. Committee wanted us to send a twelve-man goon squad. Their duties would have been to meet the Stars at the (outdoor) limo pickup point, escort them thru police cordons to the backstage area and Keep Them Happy. The con chairman was quite anxious that we go in there and get killed; and astounded that we refused. He said to Yang, "I don't understand you people. I can't bribe you, I can't buy you..."

Anyway, we are going to Cincinnati. That's as far east as I'll go that weekend.

Phyllis Eisenstein, 2061 W. Birchwood, Chicago IL 60645

Being born and bred in the Big City gives one a different perspective on life -- traffic, for one thing, does not seem such an overwhelming thing. Alex and I were up in Minneapolis for a few days after Minicon, and one afternoon we decided to go to a downtown art supply store for some mat board. It was 4 P.M. Mark Riley said, "You don't want to go down town -- it's rush hour." We went anyway and wondered where all the traffic was hiding. I'd like to set Mark Riley down at the corner of State and Randolph in Chicago at 4 P.M. and really blow his mind. Once again we were reminded that Minneapolis is just a sprawling small town.

"Green Grow the Rushes O" -- I recall that song from camp many many years ago. Unfortunately, verses 9 and 10 escape my memory, but 8 through 1 go more or less as follows:

(Same tune as "High Fly the Nazgul O")

I'll sing you eight O,

Green grow the rushes, O,

What is your eight O?

Eight for the April rainers,

Seven for the seven stars in the sky,

Six for the six white watchers,

Five for the symbols at your door,

Four for the four bright shiners,

Three, three the rivals,

(I'll sing you)

Two, two the lily white boys

Clothe them all in green O,

One is one and all alone and ever more shall be it so.

In camp, the counselors told us that it was a song with Christian references. Not being a Christian, I never questioned that. One is God, in that scheme -- which is either Jewish or Protestant, I suppose...more likely the latter, of course. The rest seems to be a jumble. The lily white boys don't conjure up anything by the princes in the Tower to me, but what does the rest of it mean? (Three could be the trinity -- from a Protestant viewpoint.) Who are the white watchers, what are the symbols? I have always wondered. And then there is the problem of corruption; the words of songs so often change in the mouths of children. I recall Art Linkletter's book, KIDS SAYS THE DARNDDEST THINGS, wherein he told the tale of the boy who sang "God Bless America" with the words, "Stand beside her and guide her through the night with the light from the bulb." Such metamorphoses are not uncommon among campers. I discovered this when I sang along with a crowd at Philcon last year; all those east coast people knew a slightly different version of "I've Got a Sixpence" from mine. Subtly different. Ah well, as Theodore Bikel once said, that's the folk process.

Robert E. Briney, 4 Forest Avenue, Salem MA 01970

The ENCYCLOPEDIA OF MYSTERY & DETECTION is now in print: \$19.95 from McGraw-Hill. A very attractive and informative book; even mentions a few sf writers. One of the Contributing Editors is a certain Robert "A." Briney. (I'm having bad luck with my middle initial. The business stationery printed up for the Mystery Library listed me as Robert "L." Briney. Perhaps I should change my middle initial to X -- since X is a mathematical variable, people could then assign it any value they chose...)