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LIEN

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In Brief -- (Still needed for TWJ 84 LoC's on #83.)

This issue constitutes a mad rush to complete publishing before Don's return August 15th. We are a few days behind but hopefully will mail this ish before that date.

Some good news, and some bad news -- #80 is all printed, but not yet fully collated. This task will be completed asap and mailed. However, issue #84 will have to be held in abeyance until after the Worldcon. This is due to impossible work schedules and necessary duties in preparation for DISCON II. We would still like to hear from you all concerning opinions, criticisms, etc., concerning the Hugo nominations reviews in the last issue.

From this point on all materials can be mailed to Don's address for SOTWJ

SOTWJ is approx. weekly; 25¢ ea. 9/\$2.00 (10 p ea., 12 L 1); subs incl. any issue(s) of TWJ pubbed during sub, prorated vs. sub according to length (TWJ on own is 4/\$5 or 4/L2). For info on ads, Overseas Agents, Trade-Subs, etc., write ed. Address Code: A, Overseas Agent; C, Contributor; H, L, M, WSFA Honorary, Life, or Regular Member, resp. (# = # of WSFA ish left on sub); K, something of yours mentioned/reviewed w/in; N, you're mentioned w/in; R, for review; S, sample; T, Trade; W or Y, Subber via 1st or 3rd-class mail, resp. (# = # of ish left on sub); X, last issue, unless...

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THE CLUB CIRCUIT

ESFA REPORT -- Minutes of Eastern S. F. Assoc. meeting of July 7, 1974:

The meeting was opened at 3:05 PM; there were 13 in attendance. The first guest, Robert Weinberg, described some of his pending publishing ventures in the pulp field. He suggested that the increased interest in amateur publishing is related to the interest in comic book amateur publishing and that comic book fandom is wealthier than SF fandom.

His publishing ventures include: "Far Below," a hardcover anthology of 10 stories reprinted from Weird Tales; A book on Weird Tales; A collection of articles -- "The Great Pulps"; A Famous Fantastic Classics series of reprints from the Munsey Magazines.

Robert Sheckley, our second guest, answered questions. He has been living in Spain. He indicated that he has not read much SF in the last 6-8 years. He talked about Gold as an editor and about his early work, indicating that he had been influenced by O. Henry and de Maupassant. He does not write stories for particular markets -- decides after they are written. He has signed a contract with Bantam for a novel and a book of shorts collected from older anthologies. A new novel entitled "Options" has been bought by Pyramid. He described this as a "very strange book", unlike what he has done before.

The meeting adjourned at 5:10 PM.

NICHOLAS G. LORDI, Treasurer, ESFA

MINN-STF REPORT -- The Amazing Colossal Minn-SFT Business Meeting Minutes That Ate Minneapolis; Meeting held June 22, 1974.

The meeting was called to order at 3:14 PM by Denny Lien, Secretary, in absence of President or Vice President.

It was announced that the July 13 meeting would definitely be held at the Hobbitat, as previously announced. (As it turned out, it wasn't.)

Meeting adjourned at 3:15 PM by unanimous consent and to scattered applause.

DENNY LIEN, Secretary

WSFA REPORT -- Minutes of Washington Science Fiction Assoc. meeting of July 5, 1974:

The meeting was called to order at 9:10 PM. Acting Secretary Susan Applegate. Committee Reports:

Publications -- WSFA #80 is in the folder and 1r pages short. It is not yet reproduced. It will be ready by...? Mailed by...? Bill has all the journal including art folio which he showed us. 25 or 30 copies will be set aside at \$1.25 each for those who are not on the mailing list. (People on the list include paid-up members when #80 was supposed to come out.) Bill also quoted excerpts from #80's editorial.

WSFA #84 has some "neat" fiction and book reviews but no letters. Bill told all us "Turkeys" who received #83 to write letters about it. Joe Maheu has fiction in this upcoming issue. #84 will be ready by DISCON??????

SOTWJ has been changed by Bill Hixon who is doing the next issues of it. In short, the publications committee gave a multi-minute report with nothing new.

Treasury -- WSFA has \$537.51. (Let's have a party.) -- The Odyssey fund has \$85.97. -- Doll says someone can donate a TV set but it needs repair. (I have no ideas what this is doing in the treasury report but here it is.)

Membership -- New members: David Kogelman and Lisa Ivey.

(dissecting)

THE HEART OF THE MATTER

operational procedures supervised by: Richard Delap

magazines for February 1974

F&SF again has the best selection of material, both fiction and non-fiction, and while passably good stories are scattered among the other magazines, they average out on the weak side.

Contributing to the low average, Vertex, completing its first year, published ten stories in this issue, all of them failures, some of them so dreadful that even a good article by Joanna Russ and an interview with Philip K. Dick cannot wash away the sour taste the magazine leaves behind. I find it very difficult to accept that people are shelling out \$1.50 for each issue yet are rewarded only with poor stories and even poorer writing. As editor, Don Pfeil has a duty to sell magazines. Dope pushers have an equally pressing duty. It doesn't make those duties just or ethical ones, and both are sure to go down the drain when consumers find the merchandise is being cut with cheap substitutes. Pfeil is publishing crap, loads of it, and the magazine has no right to continued survival in this sorry state.

I've talked with several fans on this subject -- all of them seem to agree Vertex is awful, and all of them admit they keep buying it. Perhaps this optimism will keep fans buying for a time, but it won't hook the casual readers and will reduce Vertex's audience to the small, hard-core readership in the end. As for me, I read it only to complete my column here, a self-proscribed duty that is becoming very hard to maintain when I pick up each new issue of super-bad Vertex.

AMAZING STORIES - February:

Short Novel:

Father - Pamela Sargent.

This latest story in Sargent's "clone" series (later to be published as a novel, Cloned Lives) fills in the beginning of the story with considerable detail and quite a bit of interest. Previously published stories have dealt with the cloned 'children' of scientist Paul Swenson, and with their difficulties in a suspicious, fearful world that outlawed cloning soon after the their birth. In going back to the beginning Sargent gives details of the clone experiment: the rush made by the scientists to finish this groundbreaking venture before such work is banned; problems that arise from within and without the laboratory; and, most importantly, a close look at 'father' Swenson, worried by doubts (about both himself and the experiment) but convinced of the ultimate worth of the project. Sargent does her best to minimize moments of potentially awkward melodrama -- the inquisitive reporter, the death of one fetus, the highway incident -- and it is a credit to her writing skill that these moments are never overemphasized but simply occur as the story moves smoothly along. Of itself the story is not outstanding, but with its sequels in mind the reader will find it an important and revealing setpiece for what will surely be a fine novel. Well done.

Short Stories:

Warship -- David Redd.

The most interesting part of this quiet story is the background, a European zone of "Free Territories" some years after a devastating atomic war. Life has become simpler, both in its pleasures and its hardships, honed down once again to a scale that men can handle. But problems remain, such as weapons and a great seafaring warship left from pre-war days, and these technological remnants are the basis for one man's decision that hangs precariously between friendship and morality. The plot holds promise that Redd

THE HEART OF THE MATTER (continued)

never fulfills as he alternates between the protagonist's introspection and foreground melodrama with a nervous writing style that never captures the best of either. Fair. Annapolis Town -- Grant Carrington.

Richard Radcliffe is a young man who has a talent for musical composition but has failed to fully develop it. One day he meets a strange girl with a talent for classical guitar (on an odd eight-string instrument of her own design) who puzzles him with her refusal to elaborate on the music she plays on her own unknown background. Carrington drops such broad hints at the girl's true origin that his story never reads as anything more than a pseudo-puzzle for the simpleminded. His characters and dialogue likewise are trivial and without surprise. Mediocre.

Man in a Vice -- Gregory Benford.

In Ross City, a "free port" city on Antarctica, the story's narrator follows a scarred man whose furtive actions attract his attention. This seemingly random grasp at mystery and adventure leads to a barroom conversation and a story of two men's clever scheme to rake off a giant profit from the controlling combine in computers. Benford's writing is brisk but it isn't quite enough to cover the contrivances that bring all the story elements together. The plot is so slick and fast-paced, however, that it almost doesn't matter that it eventually falls apart. A failure, but a reasonably pleasant one, all things considered.

No Deposit * No Refill -- Robert F. Young.

Living in a world in which many items are specifically created to be used once or twice and then disposed -- this is the world we know; and the future we can expect, forecasts Young, is the one in which we necessarily cannot become emotionally attached to such items, even when those items are robot companions who fulfill our desires for companionship and sex. Young's story is a conversation between a man and his "pseudo-girl" which is a rather boring way to present a social lecture that is, anyway, simplified and annoyingly flip.

Mama Loves You -- Dale Randles, Jr.

Here's another look at a future in which children are educated by machines on the theory that "programmed instruction is the easiest, most efficient method of learning." But six year old Jimmy is a clever boy who wants to get himself and his younger sister away from this boring program, his natural 'instinct' obviously more sound than the program itself. Randles apparently doesn't understand that this complicated can of worms cannot be sorted as easily as he'd like, so that his downbeat ending is even more preposterous than optimism would have been. Like the can of worms, its all loose ends.

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ANALOG - February:

Serial:

Earth, Air, Fire and Water (part one) -- Stephen Nemeth and William Walling.

Novelettes:

Wet Blanket - P.J. Plauger.

Physicist Fred Hahnemann, a graduate of the Rheims Institute which trains its students in "ways to help one's subconscious mind solve problems," makes brilliant use of his training when he develops the theory of a bistable universe that proposes "two sets of laws re energy levels our universe can obey." On his own authority he realizes the theory in an experiment which transfers our world from one set of laws to the other, the result being that heavy elements are affected and fission bombs no longer work. Obviously the effect on international power and political balances are in for drastic changes. Although the governmental wheeler-dealing is an integral and important part of the story, Plauger is also concerned with Hahnemann as a man convinced of his own

THE HEART OF THE MATTER (continued)

motives and determined to protect the world from foolish decisions of men with less concern. The story has a few rough edges and employs rather obvious emotional tactics, but it juggles some fascinating ideas with a stead hand. Good of a kind.

A Bonus for Dr. Hardwick -- Brian C. Coad.

P. Procyon Smith is hired as a scientist at the City of Long Life, a secluded corporation laboratory complex isolated in the Nevada desert. The corporation uses the Schlagle Process to produce the "Essence of Vitality" (an 'elixir,' isolated from human blood, which promotes longevity) and employees receive the Essence as a bonus for good work. Smith, however, is a stubborn and independent young man whose desire to do some productive scientific investigation is directly opposed to the mickey-mouse requirements of the position he is given. Finding the whole setup shot through with ugly dehumanizing regulations and a notable smell of immorality, Smith gets himself deeper and deeper into trouble. Coad lets his story end on an unsatisfying and incomplete note that cries for a sequel, but otherwise he builds tension well and gives his characters a sheen of individuality (especially Smith, with his air of smug superiority and selfishness) that is engaging. Okay of a kind.

Short Stories:

A Mind of His Own - Joe Haldeman.

As technology advances the problems of the individual increase, the old difficulties not so much answered as obscured by new overlays. In the case of Dr. Leonard Shays, a veteran of the "Lebanese conflict" who now sports two prosthetics, the problems of finance, keeping a crumbling marriage intact, and adjusting to physical infirmity are complicated by a therapy, forced on him by his family, to "graft certain basic behavioral traits." Haldeman's theme is a solid one, frightening and intense, but after a swift development he side-steps the insistent moral questions in a poorly explained climactic shock that veers away from truly examining either Shays or the problem he faces.

Disappointing.

Violence on TV -- Glenn L. Gillette.

A suburban couple, longing to get out for a little nightlift but tied to their home by the presence of a baby, finally find an answer when the husband invents an electronic babysitter complete with a TV unit that allows the parents to watch the child while away from the house. The crisis develops when the baby becomes the subject of an attempted kidnap, but the story plays off illogic (both in its social assumptions and in the contrivance of its basement-scientist ploy) that makes its so-called drama asinine. Mediocre.

The Amphibious Cavalry Gap -- J. J. Trembly, as told to James E. Thompson.

An ANALOG staple has been (and continues to be) those short little satirical snipes at various aspects of science. This one concerns itself with the application of statistics and logic concerning the number of horses in the U. S. S. R. and how these beasts form a threat to the security of our country. The sad part of it is that one doesn't have to read fiction to find such nonsense today -- try the morning newspaper's editorial column! Even sadder is that this story isn't at all amusing, but, rather, depressing (sigh).

Science:

The Artist and the Computer -- David L. Heiserman.

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 * Special thanks to the NOLACON and TRICON bidding committees *
 * on receipt of their beautiful information packets. Both are just *
 * stuffed with accurate, detailed information concerning both *
 * possible sites for the 1976 Worldcon. *

THE HEART OF THE MATTER (continued)

FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION - February:

Novella:

Mouthpiece -- Edward Wellen.

Mr. Wellen is another of those very talented yet far too unnoticed writers, year after year turning out inventive, expertly written stories that can be appreciated on many levels. His sf spoof of the Mafia, "Hijack," and his Marx Brothers extravaganza, "Down by the Old Maelstrom," are but two examples of his highly literate, excruciatingly funny modern classics, and the present story hopefully will gain Wellen the reputation he deserves as one of the very best humorists in science fiction. Here we find him cracking the satiric whip at all sorts of literary beasts -- the current nostalgia craze for the romanticized violence of the past (the gangland killings of the 30s); the mystery-suspense tale wherein a total innocent gets caught up in a web of intrigue in which a cryptic puzzle (the 'senseless' monologue of a 1935 murder victim) must be deciphered; the revenge plot, with the aforementioned victim, Kraut Schwartz, re-created in the depths of the computer and proceeding to pick up his criminal deeds where he left off 40 years before; and an old-fashioned romance modernized with a kinky, very contemporary heroine who hasn't the least interest in demure innuendo. Wellen delights in taking those beloved stereotypes and building them back into real people again, getting full mileage out of the often ironic humor of their remarkable dialogues, all of it even further enhanced by hotshot gangland slang and sidesplitting Jewish humor. It's a winner all the way -- read it!

Short Stories:

A Game of Vlet -- Joanna Russ.

A political parable in fantasy-dress, Russ' story is one of those damnably difficult things to pull off successfully, where the drama of the situation is so symbolic that the characters must struggle to become more than mere agents of plot. The mythical land of Ourdh -- which is caught up in a raging battle between the Governor's ruling class and the common people, as a magical game of Vlet dictates the events of reality -- is a colorful gameboard for the oddities of power play, with a new slant on an old line ('like flies in treacle,' as Russ phrases it). Nicely done.

In Rubble, Pleading -- Michael Bishop:

While the characters occasionally seem to be acting out scenes from a talky-one-act play, the seeming pretentiousness of their conversation carries a tone of distance that somehow enhances the subtle sense of unease that Bishop creates. He tells about the tornadoes which terroize Kansas -- and as a resident of that state, I can tell you he doesn't exaggerate -- and from an oddly offhand slant emphasises the possibility that those violent twisters are following a pattern of organized destruction. A strange item, difficult to fully grasp, hard to describe, but interesting.

A Delightful Comedic Premise -- Barry N. Malzberg

A sort of super "in" joke, this story is a self-satirizing piece that will leave Malzberg fans laughing aloud and hopefully will acquaint others with the special flavor of witty humor that Malzberg has often displayed but for which he has too seldom been noted. Here we see a series of letters between editor Ferman and the author, Ferman pleading for a funny story while Malzberg replies with plots of gloom-and-doom. The windup is, as usual, a jumble of exasperations for everyone but the reader, who will find the premise indeed comedic. Very good.

THE HEART OF THE MATTER (continued)The Mountains of Sunset, the Mountains of Dawn -- Vonda N. McIntyre.

While not as emotionally powerful as the story to which it is a sequel ("Wings," The Alien Condition, Ballantine, 1973), this story will interest those who found the winged creatures of the first tale fascinating in their obsessive approach to both sex and death. Here McIntyre tells of those creatures who abandoned their home planet and travel in search of a new world, the main character the cynical 'old one,' the only one who actually remembers the home world and who wants to survive only long enough to fly again above the landscape of a real planet and die an honorable traditional death. McIntyre's setup is as before, involving a youngster's fascination with age and death, and while the story doesn't expand the theme by very much it is still readable.

Shoes -- Raylyn Moore.

A young girl finds herself always in trouble with adults -- her adopted aunt and her schoolteacher threaten her with severe discipline for getting off the schoolbus before reaching home. But as we find her past is filled with troublesome little stubbornnesses and begin to understand the child's reasons for her actions, we also find that Moore gives away the story's punch too soon. There is, however, a second shock which helps offset the predetermined conclusion, and Mrs. Moore's writing is, as ever, impeccable.

The Graveyard Blues -- Dennis Etchison.

Young Marston, repeatedly drawn to the graveyard where he has begun to experience a very odd "dream," finds that not only is his experience foreseen by his family but is part of a tradition that began with his grandfather and now embraces all the family. In reaching for quiet terror, Etchison seems fearful of spoiling the mood with too much explanation, and as a result his story dissipates its tension in vagueness and a reluctance to be explicit. The idea is interesting, with the odd opening scene very creepy and evocative, but in the end it simply doesn't do anything. Fair.

A Star Is Born -- Joseph Green.

A crisis in space, like a crisis in a coal mine or an airplane or a factory, carries a built-in benefit/cliche in the will-they-or-won't-they survive question. Green tries to give his crisis story an added benefit of sf, the excitement of a scene impossible on Earth (here the view of two stars at the stage of creation); but as with so many of these stories, the human characters are empty puppets, dullish and wooden, who succeed only in accenting the contrivances of the plot while diminishing the beauty and terror of gargantuan visions. Routine.

Science:

Dance of the Luminaries -- Isaac Asimov.

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GALAXY - February:

Serial:

Inverted World (part three) -- Christopher Priest.

Novellas:

Created Equal -- Bill Higgins

Mr. Higgins takes a jump eighteen years into the future to present us with the story of a man on trial for his life for killing HOPE -- Heuristically Optimized Program Encoder -- a machine so lifelike in its thinking ability that the man who destroyed it is charged with murder. After the opening 'murder,' the story quickly segues into a lengthy trial scene in which the author examines the personality and legal maneuvers of the defense attorney, Sam Beneke. The pompous rhetoric of courtroom speeches comes off much better than the rest of the story, for Higgins displays a regrettable tendency to overwrite simple dialogue and observations, often at very tiring length (especially in the opening section). While Beneke, as a character, has points of interest, those points have little to do with the plot -- for example, his romantic involvement with a

THE HEART OF THE MATTER (continued)

young woman neither hinders nor advances the plot and is relatively pointless. Good courtroom melodrama, whether hinging on an sf pivot or not, cannot afford to divert the reader in legal and moral sidetrips while leaving essentials (like motive) a haze of suppositions. It may be realistic in a way, but it doesn't make for good drama, despite the plot irony of "justice." Fair.

Deathsong -- Sydney J. Van Scyoc.

Having produced a number of stories about strange planets and alien cultures the past few years, Van Scyoc has another one here that is brimful of colorful visions. A crew of human explorers is puzzled by a world whose inhabitants are a meager clutch of starving aborigines that live near the undamaged temples of an obviously once-great race. The abos, though mindless and dull, gather at night in the temples to play music on intricate flutes (which they obviously could not themselves have made), and the humans soon discover the music conjures captivating light-creatures who dance through the air and relive the days of glory they once had on this world. Fascinated, the humans too take up flute-playing, only to discover why the abos live in such a sorry state and how the danger to their own welfare approaches surreptitiously. While there is a convincing feeling of alienness to these proceedings, Van Scyoc has trouble with her human characters. The antagonism between the Commander and the professors in his crew is crudely developed, a stock tension device that is hollow and entirely false. The plot, never as intricate as the background, builds painfully slowly while the humans fritter away pages with empty emotions and proscribed actions. If the author doesn't one day soon discard such frivolous human characters, she will find she's wasted a lot of fascinating, imaginative backgrounds on stories that will not survive a single magazine publication. Van Scyoc is much too talented to allow this to continue. Very Disappointing.

Novelette:

Rivers of Damascus -- R. A. Lafferty.

The "para-archeological probe" consists of four men who "by a combination of electronics and human minds" have found a way to examine past history, bypassing the "polarized" information we have inherited from accepted science. Their goal is the Arab seizure of Damascus in 635, an 'impossible' historical incident at which they discover the whys and wherefores of reality. Lafferty's put-down of scientific rationality, which rejects the unexplainable presence of Fortian events and historical oddities, is amusing; but the story's entertainment value is blunted when the author stretches the philosophical musing into fuzzy and overlong paragraphs that try to point in too many directions at once. Occasionally funny, but not really one of Lafferty's better efforts.

Short Story:

Protest -- Peter Tate.

At the end of this century the world has become a voracious consumer of mass entertainment, with television programming centered on visions of death, hopelessness and agony. Tate reflects this overall social illness in a closeup view of two men, one a down-and-outer protest singer living poor and alone, the other a desperate reporter seeking to bolster his own career by encouraging the singer's death so he can film it for TV. The point of the story's climax is that the ugly conditions continue but can, on occasion, be touched by small bits of sardonicism. The message is troweled with a heavy hand, grim but not very surprising or original. Fair.

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WORLDS OF IF - January-February:

Serial:

The Ginger Star (part one) -- Leigh Brackett.

THE HEART OF THE MATTER (continued)

Novella:

Mistaken for Granted -- Hal Clement.

Rick Suspee, a teenager from Earth on his first visit to Wilsonburg, an underground city on the moon, is an accomplished young man who sports many shirt badges for his Earthside skills. But living on the moon requires not only knowledge but an ability to apply it correctly to situations where logic can be easily misdirected. And so Rick's confusion, though seemingly trivial, escalates to a crisis in which he becomes lost on the moon's surface and the effort to track him down commences on a needle-in-a-haystack basis. Clement's story is the type we see regularly in sf but one which is more often than not badly fumbled by writers who think the crisis itself is sufficient drama. Clement professionally softens this sort of dryness, interspersing intriguing little emotional snippets (like comments on characters' future actions resulting from the crisis) that salve the lengthy interlude of the search and the necessarily non-hysterical attitudes of the searchers. Smooth and serene, Clement guides the plot easily to a high point of suspense without once manipulating his characters or situation for nonsensical excitement. Well done.

Short Stories:

If Ever I Should Leave You -- Pamela Sargent.

Nanette and Yuri have had a rich, full life--or rather, lives, for they have lived in many times and places, traveling from the Time Station and repeatedly being rejuvenated. They are a bit unusual, for in a time of extended lives and non-extended relationships their love for one another has carried them through it all together. They are not immortal, however, and Yuri's death brings a problem, both psychological and physical, as Nanette becomes desperate for moments in the past with her love. Sargent's story is romantic but not saccharine, and she even manages to make the contrivance at story's end pleasant rather than corny. Nice.

Eye of the Storm-- Norman Spinrad.

A biker, traveling across the Rockies on his way to L.A., is hit by a bolt of lightning and is apparently transported to a future where the landscape is horribly mutated from pollution and where a group of murderous bikers (who look like humanoid giant grasshoppers) close in on him for the kill. Spinrad's seeming obsession with violence and gore has no discernable purpose, and his deadpan approach to cliches is neither revealing nor amusing, merely dumb. Flash-trash idiocy, irredeemably awful.

Transplant -- Christopher Priest.

Mr. Knowland's world is strange indeed. He lives in the one well-tended house and yard in a neighborhood decrepit and empty of people. Isolated but not entirely alone, his world is puzzlingly inconsistent until Priest ties in the counterpoint plotline of a medical discussion about transplants and definition of the moment of death. Although the reader is always two steps ahead of the author, who is careless both with medical science and in giving away his story's direction much too quickly, there is a gripping psychological surety to Knowland that holds the attention in spite of the varied failings. Flawed but interesting nevertheless.

Continuous Performance -- Gordon Eklund.

Traveling about the country in a beat-up station wagon, Phobias the magician exchanges magic shows for gasoline and continues on his lonely way. In a world where humans have died from a plague brought back to Earth from Ganymede, Phobias is the last man in a world of androids, a former astronaut who has had longevity treatments and has lived for hundreds of years. His dream is to find another surviving human, but when he does Eklund's story begins to deteriorate, contriving explanations, forcing drama, and in the end forcefeeding it all to the reader so rapidly that he goes down choking. Fair.

THE HEART OF THE MATTER (continued)

VERTEX - February:

Novelette:

Mission for a Veteran -- Neil Shapiro.

Pension Day on Jacob's World is an annual celebration and the day when Captain Yost, planetary representative of the Galactic Federation, must make his annual report to the nearest Fleet cruiser, a surfacely meaningless rite which is part of Yost's so-called mission. An old and crippled man, Yost is still unaware of what his mission on this world actually is, and his thoughts continually drift back to his early days in the Fleet and the fateful outerspace battle which took him away from his lover who perished when, in his absence, her homeworld was destroyed by the alien enemy. Shapiro doesn't really seem able to decide exactly how to present his rather simple tale, but his writing is so poor that it hardly matters. If one can plow through the poor sentence structure ("It was the middle of the Aldebaran battle... that Ainson's memories returned him to"), idiotic aphorisms ("Hindsight seldom works in advance"), and dullish symbolisms ("she had offered light, he had taken the night"), one will find at the end a quicksand of blubbery sentiment with enough suction to drain every drop of patience and leave the reader bitter with disgust.

Short Stories:

Heisenberg Is Dead -- Richard Ashby.

Ben Loamba, Ph.D., graduate of Oxford, is a brilliant black whose talent has fit him snugly into a predominantly white environment, though his background is primitive, tribal Africa. But his world-shaking discovery in genetic manipulation turns out to be inapplicable for it is only successful in conjunction with Loamba's "magic" inherited mental power. While Ashby tackles the problems of technology and sociology with vigor, he washes out the dramatic structure of his tale with a slushy climax of tired horror.

And No Potatoes -- Walt Liebscher.

O, no, not again! Yes, folks, the surface of the Earth is ravaged by radiation. A group of people are cryonically preserved for future restoration. The first man and woman awake in 2198, make passionate love, then discover the surface is still uninhabitable -- they are the new Adam and Eve of a hopeless world. And all this to build to a single line of dialogue corny enough for a farmer's dinner. Whatever happened to those zinger endings we used to get? Nowadays those zingers have gone all weak and rubbery...

Guilty as Charged -- Alice Laurence and William Carlson.

Chief Justice Kleinfeld tells his wife of the odd and unsettling dream he had during the night, a dream in which the people of Earth are placed on trial by aliens for "eaves-dropping" on alien communications. I suppose the theme is considered 'timely' -- there is little other excuse for printing such a poorly executed inanity which juggles the vagaries of human law for a quick but bungled attempt at paranoid horror. Yech.

The Mars Stone -- Paul Bond.

The first manned landing on Mars is astounded and shocked to discover a message carved into a rock, and Mr. Bond ends this dreadful short-short with the translation of that message. Feeble, futile, and light-years away from funny, it's too poor to even be forgiven for the little space it takes to print it.

One Little Room an Everywhere -- Joseph F. Patrouch, Jr.

Editor Pfeil apparently thinks his readers are mature enough to appreciate a little sex in their sf, but he was foolish to underestimate their literary maturity and to give them this peurile junk about two aliens who listen in (over the telephone!!) on two humans in the throes of sexual ecstasy. The aliens, you see, have discarded sex in their technological advance, but one session of Earthside heavy breathing and they're immediately ready to rut once again. This might amuse some child who's just discovering the world

THE HEART OF THE MATTER (continued)

of sex; anyone else will see it for the sheer drivel it is.

A Matter of Taste -- Mary McClellan Johnson.

Escaping from an Arkansas jail, Darien Jones uses a stolen credit card to gain his first objective -- not a woman, as one might assume, but food. But you know how food tastes at those chain restaurants, and when Jones discovers he's trapped in some time-traveling shuffle, transported from one International Breakfast Barn to another for an endless succession of plastic meals, he learns what suffering really means. It's simple-minded fluff but a wry sense of humor might have made it palatable (oops, pardon that pun). Johnson's idea of humor, however, falls along the line of a TV soap commercial -- fast bad dialogue and not a lick of sense.

The Schlemihl Hypothesis -- Leonard Tushnet.

Dr. Tushnet's story of schlemihls, those unfortunate people whose lives are an endless series of irrational accidents, proposes an amusing theory of "negative psychokinesis," an indecipherable force that centers around the accident-prone. There are some quite funny incidents in which, to test the theory, the schlemihls are grouped together to see how dreadful things will get, but the story concludes weakly when Tushnet abruptly stops as all the characters just drop or are injured. Too bad.

Nobody Lives Around There -- Gregory Benford.

SF has speculated for years on the potential use of androids, and Benford's addition to the theme chooses a familiar form -- use them to fulfill robotic functions and playact roles that cater to the less controllable human aggressions. Build a street where unhappy people can loot, burn and kill to their heart's content, with android police and firemen the disposable victims of the melee. While Benford mildly questions the morality and usefulness of such a plan, his story is much too short to build drama around a concept that isn't very convincing anyway. Fair

Vampire's Lament -- Don Kerr.

Writing a letter to his Transylvanian cousin, an immigrant vampire, Joe, reports that conditions in America are terrible for bloodsuckers. The straights fear venturing out into the streets at night and their homes are bolted shut. The street people are often drug addicts, which once had Joe with "two monkeys on my back." Popular entertainment's vampire tales are getting overviolent, and the neighborhood is just "going to hell." Vaguely amusing short-short, never quite as funny as it could or should have been.

Articles:

The Unhuman Explorers -- James Sutherland.

Selenography -- Jay Arrow.

The Image of Women in Science Fiction -- Joanna Russ.

Designs for Outer Space -- Don Pfeil.

Interview:

Vertex Interviews Philip K. Dick -- Arthur Byron Cover.

(Sorry this is so late, but it was received with apologies from the writer, and add to that the lateness in preparation and the general insanity ... WJH)

BOOKWORLD

BOOK REVIEWS -- SF/Fantasy/History

Reviewer, MICHAEL T. SHOEMAKER

Universe 3, edited by Terry Carr (Random House; SF Book Club; 1973; 180 pp). The previous two volumes in this series of anthologies of original stories have both contained some outstanding stories regardless of the general quality of each volume, be it the mediocrity of Universe 1 or the excellence of Universe 2. It seemed that one could count on each volume in the series to present at least one exceptionally fine story. It is thus disappointing to find that Universe 3 has three total busts, two mediocre stories, two good stories, and not a single great story to save the day.

The best story is also the longest, Gene Wolfe's novella, "The Death of Doctor Island," which has been nominated for a Hugo. An artificial satellite circling Jupiter serves as a bizarre, futuristic sanitarium. In this setting, and with a nice dollop of scientific background, Wolfe explores the characters of a motley group of patients. Thematically, Wolfe's intention seems to be to show the effect that a change of environment has on intrapersonal relationships, and he does this quite well. Unfortunately, the story is weakly plotted; it starts nowhere and never seems to go anywhere. Also, as in "The Fifth Head of Cerberus", it seems that the peculiarity of the conception mitigates the relevance of the theme's treatment.

"The Ghost Writer" by George Alec Effinger is an entertaining piece of ironic humor, with something important to say, that has a nice surprise ending. Effinger envisions a future where creativity has died, and has come up with an imaginative substitute for television as the opiate of the masses. He also takes some satirical pot-shots at critics, which are somewhat amusing.

Less successful is Edgar Pangborn's "The World is a Sphere," which seems to be an incomplete episode in the post-holocaust world of Davy. The story's great fault is its inability to stand on its own as a finished work of fiction, as indicated by the sketchy background and inconclusive plot. Its saving grace is the fine characterization of the protagonist, a good man frustrated by the realization that he is a cog in a dictatorial government. The other competent, though mediocre, story is "Free City Blues" by Gordom Eklund. This story is hampered mostly by its cliches. There is nothing in it that is new in conception or treatment: psi powers, mutation by radiation, and familiar glimpses of a future city. With the preeminence of plot over other elements, and the complete lack of any meaningful theme, this story is highly qualified for that old label: pot-boiling hackwork.

Another piece of hackwork, less competently done, is Robert Silverberg's "Many Mansions." Possibly written with the complexities of Gerrold's The Man Who Folded Himself in mind, this story is nothing more than a virtual rewrite of Up The Line, including even the non-serious burlesque tone of the original.

Once again, as in "Ching Witch," Ross Rocklynne disastrously adopts a flippant, pretentiously modern writing style for "Randy-Tandy Man." The incongruity of the style as contrasted with the Orwellian future of cathartic hate sessions elevates the story's believability no higher than a moralising fairy tale.

In "The Legend of Cougar Lou Landis," Ed Bryant returns to his exotic future city, Cinnabar, which he originated in "Jade Blue" in Universe 1. The extrapolative detail of Bryant's conception of Cinnabar is impressive, but his fascination for his setting is fatally detrimental to other facets of the story (such as plot, characterization, and theme, all of which are virtually non-existent).

Since the Wolfe story is bound to be reprinted, there is little point in getting this anthology, even when it appears in paperback.

(Over)

BOOKWORLD (continued) --

Reviewer, JIM GOLDFRANK

Prince of Scorpio, Akers (Daw Books, 1974). This is the last review I'll ever do on the Scorpio series, although I'll continue to grab each new book off the shelves, and place them at the head of my reading list. Why? Two reasons: Reviews of a series tend to get repetitious. Second: A reviewer wants to influence his readers, and most readers will have made up their minds by now that they like this sort of thing, or else that they want to avoid it like the plague.

David Stever (SOTWJ-146/8): "Scorpio is unrelenting swords and gore." Yeah, ain't it wonderful? Don D'Amassa (personal letter): "My opinion of the Scorpio books is, I'm afraid, rather low. A planet with 19 separate and distinct intelligent species... including porcupinemen, dinosaurmen, and oxmen! Come on now. That's stretching things a bit too far. And why this constant flashing back and forth between Earth (and Scorpio) without explaining the Star Lords' motives?"

My reply to Don is that Kregen, the planet of Scorpio, is preposterous. The novels are sheer escapism. The reader's key is "willing suspension of disbelief." If the author is a master storyteller, the reader doesn't give a damn how unreal the backprop is, if this is the kind of story that the reader likes. E.g., ERB wasn't much on ecology and wrote about six legged lions called "banths," that roamed the dead sea bottoms of ERB's Mars, without providing herbivores for them to feed upon. When someone asked ERB what they ate, the tongue in cheek answer was "Each other." And so it is with Kregen. 19 species? 100 wouldn't make any difference. As for the Star Lords, unless they should be further revealed in the forthcoming novels of the "Havilfar Cycle" of Scorpio books, they are nothing but the author himself. Whenever one plot line becomes too thin, a deus ex machina pulls the hero's strings and sets him down on another stage.

In this opus, Prescott finds himself naked and unarmed in the midst of a roaring battle with slavers, overcomes them and more of their kind, and sets an oppressed little country on its feet with himself as head of state. Quick switch to Earth, and back to a Kregen mountain top, where he must save the lives of two men who later appear as villains. He becomes a member of the canal folk of Vallia, Princess Delia's homeland, practically wins through to Delia, who has been doing a Penelope act. She refuses to marry anyone else while waiting for him. He fights a reptile that oozes ichor all over the place, but mostly on him, and as the fight concludes, is taken to be a canal boat hauling slave. Then: "And here I was, before the Emperor, swathed in chains like a wild beast, bearing the scars of floggings, the red blood running from open sores covered in vermin, filthy, with my hair stinking in my own nostrils." Delia greets this appetizing sight with: "Oh, my Dray. My Dray! I have found you at last!" Then this miserable wreck of a man flings back his head: "I am Dray Prescott. I claim your daughter Delia. She is mine! Before all the world she is mine!" What utter melodrama! What action! I don't profess to find literary merit here, but what utter joy to forget the computer program that doesn't work, the stack of bills to be paid, and the children's squabbling. What joy to live for a moment, Prescott's glorious adventures!

The rest of the novel deals in plot and counter-plot. Prescott lops off heads, and skewers borzoi-dogmen with arrows in defense of his prospective father-in-law who would have killed him. Just when all seems lost to superior forces, every friend and ally from the first four novels, on the planet, except for the dead ones, show up to save the day. How improbable!

(Over)

BOOKWORLD (continued)--

The novel ends with Dray's old banner flung on high, Delia in his arms, and a thousand voices acclaiming them. If I must own to having my childlike sense of wonder rekindled, then so be it!

The book concludes with a map of Kregen with great empty spaces, and print too packed and too small to read in small spaces. There is a glossary for those who have forgotten references to the rest of the series.

Cover and interior illos are by Jack Gaughan, and almost on a par with the Tim Kirk work in the previous books. Let's hear a cheer for the publisher Don Wollheim: the practice of interior illustrations in paper backs is not widespread.

The future of this series? Why, more of the same: vivid description and turbulent action. But no more reviews from yours truly, who has said enough.

Reviewer, JIM GOLDFRANK

The Voices of Masada, by David Kossoff (Ballantine, 1974, \$1.50). It was the cover that fooled me. A red-bearded man with sword and shield, the Star of David emblazoned on his tunic, stands between a plateau in flames and a Roman army. A Jewish Conan? I expected and did not find a novel of heroic adventure, but found something better.

I found a quiet novel of heroism. Masada was a city on a plateau near the Dead Sea. Ten thousand Romans crushed one thousand Zealot Jews there in AD 73. Two women, one named Ruth, and five children survived. Ruth's mission is to seek out the facts of what happened and write a history. Her interviews with Jew and Roman tell how it all came about, transpired, ... and ended. They tell how a minor Roman province was outraged into rebellion, by mismanagement, by tyranny, by outright provocation; how a little-known people needed the full force of the Empire of Rome to subdue it; how they cost Rome dearly in men and materiel.

The Romans killed them, enslaved them, and drove the survivors into a 1900 year exile. Yet three years after it was "all over," some remained to fight and die at Masada.

This is a book for those who may wish to vary their reading from sf/fantasy to mainstream, from pre-, future, or alternate history to real history. In "The Voices of Masada," the past comes alive!

* * * * *

CINEMA

Reviewer, SIMON

The Golden Voyage of Sinbad. There is an excellent movie in town. It has just started playing, so there's a good chance that it may still be around as you read about it. The movie is The Golden Voyage of Sinbad, and I can hardly say enough about it. For enthusiasts of the fantasy genre, it is a godsend, and for those of us who lament inane scripts and poor productions in most F & SF films, it is an example of what we would like to see more of.

Everyone connected with this film is competent, and seems to have done their homework. And it shows, in story, dialogue, costumes, sets, and most conspicuously in Ray Harryhausen's breathtaking animation. Whoever wrote the story knows something about fantasy. In many of these Baghdad Swashbucklers, one finds a melange of fantasy themes selected from a variety of times and places and thrown together as an excuse for a colorful action photography. That is not the case here. Most importantly, it is not overdone. They have not tried to have everything in one film. What they do have are a few features sadly lacking on other films. Like humor. Real, live humor, which is neither dry nor overdone, but sprinkled lightly throughout, and genuinely funny. And intelligent dialogue. They assume that the audience just might have heard of a gryphon before, or the goddess Kali, or the mythical isle of Lemuria. And if they haven't, then they are expected to

(Over)

CINEMA (continued) --

follow the story without having an encyclopedic description of such things spelled out for them, which most people are perfectly capable of doing. Production values such as casting and setting were outstanding. It appears to have been filmed on location somewhere in the middle east, because those piles of masonry would surely have been expensive sets. And little things like gestures and phrases conveyed an attitude which convinced me that someone knew a little about the Arab mind. John Phillip Lew makes an excellent Sinbad, and Tom Baker plays a definitive black sorcerer. Again, not overdone. But the absolutely most magnificent thing about this film, for me, was the animation. Anyone who is familiar with Harryhausen's Dynamation will know what I mean. But even old-time fans will be captivated by the graceful dance of the six-armed goddess Kali.

Whoever is responsible for this film is to be lauded, and next year it should definitely be in the running for a Hugo, because I am going to nominate it. It's not perfect, but it's miles ahead of anything else like it that I've seen.

MORE BOOKWORLD

BOOK REVIEWS -- Fantasy

Reviewer, JIM GOLDFRANK

Tolkien's World, by Randel Helms (Houghton Mifflin, 1974, \$5.95). If one is to criticize a volume of Tolkien criticism, it might be well to define the standards by which such a book may be judged. My first question is, how does it compare with other works trying to do the same thing? Then, does this book have anything new and unique to offer? The last, will I reread Tolkien with a better understanding for having read this book?

Let's take a brief look at three volumes of Tolkien criticism/reference. There are others, as well as a gaggle of pamphlets, so this is not intended as a complete list. What are they? What do they teach us?

Lin Carter's "Tolkien, A Look Behind the Lord of the Rings," provides us with a description of Tolkien and synthesizes the story. It shows Tolkien in relation to his fantasy author predecessors, contemporaries, and successors. It examines the myth sources Tolkien used, and throws in for good measure, a history of fantasy writing.

Robert Foster's "A Guide to Middle Earth" is not a book of criticism at all. It stands as the definitive "Middle Earth" reference. Being a concordance, it provides cross references, descriptions, biographical notes about characters, and histories as background to "The Hobbit" and LOTR. A study of the "Guide" allows the reader to follow his own train of thought to new insight.

Paul Kocker's "Master of Middle Earth" shows how the good beings of "Middle Earth" can understand Sauron, the lord of evil, but that his nature is so self-limiting that he cannot understand them, which leads to his downfall. It carries a wealth of detail about the peoples of "Middle Earth," and shows how Tolkien unfolds the character of Aragorn. His overview of Tolkien's minor works contains a quote that relates to one of the bases of the Helms book: In "Leaf by Niggle:" "The artist, in this case a painter named Niggle (he might equally have been a writer),..."

Obviously, a new volume of Tolkien criticism will cover much the same ground as those preceding it, so we question what is new, and is the new worthwhile? To answer this, I must describe some of the main themes. Helms shows the imaginative development of "Middle Earth" in parallel with the development of the author as he explored it. He demonstrates Bilbo's development from childhood into manhood as "The Hobbit" progresses. As Bilbo matures, so does Tolkien's concept of his world. For example, elves and orcs have quite different natures between "The Hobbit" and "Lord of the Rings."

MORE BOOKWORLD (continued)

Chapter III gives a Freudian analysis of Bilbo and Frodo. His points are perfectly valid: Bilbo's smial (or burrow) certainly can be construed as a womb symbol, the little dagger "that he wore inside his breeches," as a penis. But so what? When someone asked Papa Freud whether or not the cigar he was smoking was a feces symbol, he remarked "A cigar is also a cigar." I find Freudian analysis unprofitable in this instance, and not contributing to any new insights.

Chapter IV contains an important new concept, perhaps the most valuable in the book, and is entitled "Frodo Anti-Faust." Helms characterizes our civilization as Faustian: "Like Sauron, we can darken the sky, blast the vegetation..." and "remain the prisoners of our own assumptions, seeing no alternative to ever expanding our corrupting control." "Frodo anti-Faust, but by no means Frodo anit-hero" renounces the power that the ring could give him, wishing only "to return in peace...to the quiet little land ruled only by the swing of the seasons" (and harmony with nature).

Helms has worked out the internal laws of "Middle Earth" among which: 1) the cosmos is providentially controlled. 2) Moral and magical laws have physical existence. 3) Will and states of mind can have objective reality and physical energy. 4) Both good action with good intent, and evil action with evil intent will ultimately have good results. Tolkien's "Oft evil will evil mar." tends to substantiate this point.

We are given some insight into Tolkien himself as Helms shows how "Leaf by Niggle" and "Smith of Wooton Major" are autobiographical allegories, or Tolkien talking about himself. (Remember the Kocher quote about Niggle.) He shows how the poems in "The Adventures of Tom Bombadil" are parodies of and jokes at Tolkien's fellow scholars. The poems are delightful in and of themselves, but Helms' background may provide additional enjoyment.

Thus "Tolkien's World" takes its place among fine volumes of Tolkien criticism and reference, and deserves a place on the bookshelves of serious Tolkien enthusiasts.

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THE AMATEUR PRESS -- Note of Publications Received (weeks 20 July - 8 August)

Tightbeam -- Beth Slick

Notes from the Chemistry Department, #'s 5, 6 & 7 -- Denis Quane

Karass #6 -- Linda Bushyager

Fanew Sletter 11 -- Leigh Edmonds

Duffund Newsletter -- Lesleigh & Hank Luttrell

Sirius XIV #1 -- Frank Catalano & Mike Merenbach

Rune, 37-1/2 & 38 -- Minn. STF -- Bev Swansom

Gorbett VIII -- Taylor, Shoemaker, Glicksohn, Kinney, Gorman

South Of The Moon -- Richard Small

Kybeiv 8 -- Jeff Smith

Photron 11 -- Steve Beatty

Title #29 -- Don Brazier

Lorus #162 -- Dena & Charlie Brown

Forthcoming SF Books #20 -- Joanne Burger

Outworlds 20 -- Bill Bowers

Yandro 227 -- Bob and Juanita Coulson

(Editor's Note -- Last issue we misspelled Karass -- sorry!)

EN PASSANT: Lettercolumn

ERIC BENTCLIFFE, 17 Riverside Crescent, Holmes Chapel, Cheshire, CW4 7NR.

(30 July 1974)

Two new TV Science-Fiction series are in the process of being filmed here. THE SURVIVORS for BBCTV is to be a series of 13 one-hour plays produced by Dalek creator Terry Nation; the theme being that a variety of bubonic-plague causes world-wide catastrophe killing 98% of the world's population. The plays will be about the trials and tribulations of The Survivors, who will gradually gather in small communities and establish a new way of life. British Independent tv (i. e., commercial) have in hand an even more ambitious project; to be titled SPACE 1999, this will be a series of 24 one-hour episodes based, naturally, on life in space in 1999. Publicity hand-outs claim "This is the most expensive and exciting science-fiction series ever made for TV." Starring Martin Landau and Barbara Bain in lead roles, this series will also feature Peter Cushing, Christopher Lee, Richard Johnson, Cyd Hayman, Judy Gleason, Roy Dotrice and sundry other well-known bodies in individual roles. Producers are Gerry and Silvia Anderson who also produced UFO. According, again, to publicity handouts "Hollywood has never done anything like this. We have the most extraordinary adventures among the inhabitants of the planets of other solar systems, and the effects are out of this world." Your long-suffering reporter promises to look in on both these series when they appear, and may even don his rose-colored glasses for the occasion!

DON D'AMMASSA, 19 Angell Dr., E. Providence, RI 02914

(22 July 1974)

Some brief comments on the Hugo Review issue (#153-4).

David Weems points out that Michael Bishop's "White Otters of Childhood" starts out with a quote that "sounds like" it came from a CANTICLE FOR LEIBOWITZ. Not surprising when you consider that the novella is a direct sequel to Miller's novel, a point which seems to have escaped both your reviewers.

Wayne Piatt states that the Perfects who rule the Earth in "White Otters" have lost "the old inner spirit of humanity". I don't see that the novella portrays the Perfects sufficiently to justify this conclusion. Further, the similarity of their name to the word "perfect" suggests that the author may be favorably disposed toward them.

For what it's worth, my own choices are:

NOVEL: Write in TRULLION: ALASTOR -- Jack Vance

NOVELLA: "White Otters of Childhood" -- Michael Bishop

NOVELETTE: "The Deathbird" -- Harlan Ellison

Short Story: "Those Who Walk Away from the Omelas" -- Leguin

George Flynn's objection in issue #151-2 is based on a misunderstanding of my objection. If one is going to write a novel paralleling Vietnam -- or any issue for that matter -- it is intellectually dishonest to make it parallel only those incidents which substantiate your own point.

ROBERT SMOOT, Three Churches, West Virginia

(28 July 1974)

David Weems has done a relatively rare thing, to my knowledge. Not only does the interested reader have the comments within the review of the book itself to go by, but there is also this self-description by the critic to let the reader decide for himself even

Lettercolumn -- (continued)

further how justified the critic/reviewer is. (I called Weems a critic; he calls himself a reviewer. I nearly forgot the relevant commentary in WSFA Journal #83.) The reader can more clearly see what the reviewer means. Hats off to D. W.

It's an editor's custom to speak in first-person plural, I know, but don't you take it to extremes? In reply to Gil Gaier, says you (or somebody on your staff, Don): 'So many (fmz) came in while we were inactive because of our eye surgery...' How many folks there had eye surgery? Or is this the statement of an honest schizophrenic? (Only one: Don -- WJH) I am glad, tho, that the eye surgery had fruitful results.

THE CLUB CIRCUIT (continued) --

WSFA Report -- continued:

Old Business:

Disclave -- turns over \$495 to the WSFA treasury. (applause)

Doll brought out her soapbox and told us to remember that the president of WSFA runs Disclave. (phone rings). There is now over \$1,000 in treasury due to contribution from Disclave.

New Business:

The latest issue of Algol is available for \$1.25. It is up for best fanzine even though it isn't a fanzine). Mike Walsh also has other publications for sale.

There is a party at Don Pauley's on July 20. B.Y.O.B. He has maps (he lives in Virginia) and passed them out. (Hixon gets a long distance phone call.)

Meeting was adjourned at 9:25 PM. It goes on record as one of the shortest WSFA meetings.

P.S. This was the first meeting held in the Gillilands' new home and everyone seemed duly impressed with it.

SUSAN APPLGATE, Acting Secretary

ODDS & ENDS -- Miscellaneous comments and other extraneous ramblings:

This being the probable end of my publishing the SOTWJ I must say it has been an entirely enjoyable though exhausting experience. As I stated in numbers 153-154 we had neither the time or stamina to continue Don's weekly schedule, This point has been driven home with crushing accuracy. Between job, home and the insane preparations on the working committee for the DISCON we have found ourselves near endurance end.

For the above reasons I must thank all those who have sent such wonderful notes concerning the continuance of this 'zine during its main editor's absence.

Last thought before leaving -- all of you who have sent in with their new subscriptions requests for issue #80 please note: When you received issue 151 & 152 there was a note in the IN BRIEF section whether you would receive said issue. This was due to the abnormally small print run and cannot possibly be avoided. Perhaps at some future date after the Worldcon more copies of this issue might be available -- only a possibility -- for now, the situation remains as above.

-- WJH