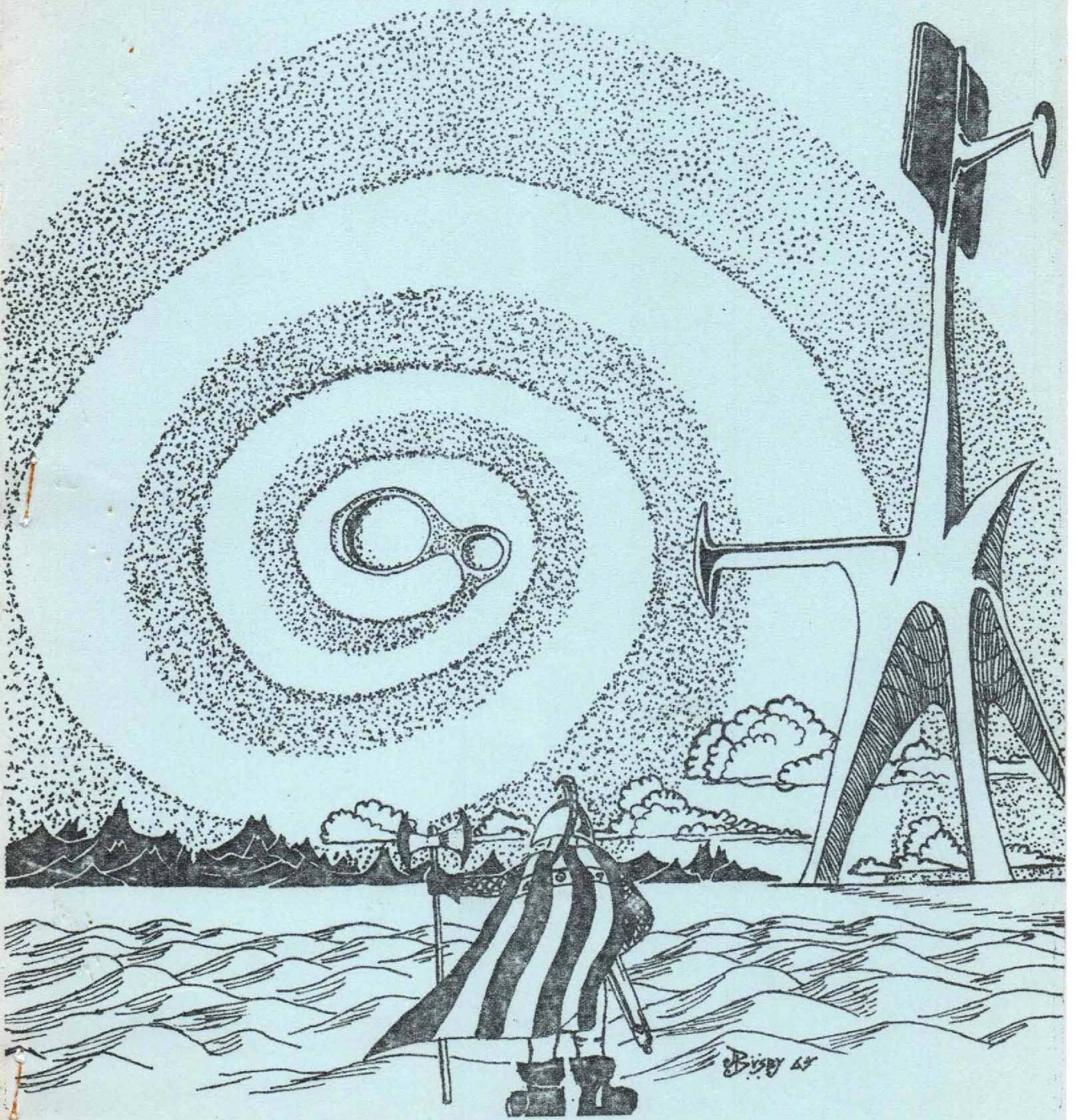


# VECTOR. 46



VECTOR 40

\* \* \* \* \*

VECTOR 46                      SEPTEMBER 1967                      Editor:PHIL MULDOWNNEY

The official Journal of the British Science Fiction Association.

\* \* \* \* \*

EDITORIAL . . . . . 2

INTIMATIONS OF MORTALITY ( Richard Poole ). . . 4

SYMPHONY No.5 ( Tony Sudbery ). . . . . 9

THE HARRISON LETTER ( Harry Harrison). . . . .I2

THE LITERARY WORLD ( News and Reviews ). . . . I5

    THE WINGED MEN ( Tom Jones ). . . . .I7

    NEW WRITINGS IN SF IO (.L.S.Malchett) I8

    THE POLITICS OF EXPERIENCE (Tony Sudbery)I9

    CITY OF ILLUSIONS ( P.L.Owings)            20

    MAKE ROOM! MAKE ROOM! (Phil Muldowney)22

    ANALOG August 1967 (Phil Muldowney)    23

    IF August 1967.                    "            "

    FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION. Aug 1967

    NEW WORLDS I74.

LETTERS OF COMMENT . . . . . 26

Neither the editor, nor the B.S.F.A. are necessarily in agreement with the opinions expressed within.

Copyright 1967 for the B.S.F.A.

ARTWORK.      Front cover: D.Busby.      Back cover:Ron McGuinness.

The editor would like to express his thanks to DOREEN PARKER and MARY REED for their assistance.

All communications concerning VECTOR should be sent to the new Publications Officer: Tony Sudbery, 14 Botolph Lane, CAMBRIDGE.

EDITORIAL

PHIL MULDOWNEY

\* \* \* \* \*

What is Science Fiction? A question that seems to have haunted critics and fans for a long, long time now. Definitions seem to float around on the air like long lost souls, ask any critic and you will probably get another definition.

Why this eternal quest for the ultimate definition? Well, I suppose the basic trouble is that it is so damn difficult to classify the Science fiction story. There is no need to define the mystery story, the western, or even the romantic story, they are self evident. But the Science Fiction story? Okay a story set in the future. What do you with the stories that cannot conceivably be, in light of today's knowledge. Science Fantasy? Or maybe that all inclusive umbrella term 'Speculative fiction' is the answer.

One point I wonder about, why is there always the need to limit. The critic has to have some boundaries to the field, if not he would not know where to start. Granted. However, there seems to have grown up within recent years, a more unhealthy desire to limit the scope of the genre. This is one of the main grievances I have with the 'new wave' typified by NEW WORLDS.

They say bring in new ways of writing, new styles of expression, fitted to the modern age. Very welcome, and to be applauded. But with it there seems to have come the attitude that a large part of the 'old type' (describe it as you will) is bad, useless, and should be jettisoned. It seems to be a case of throwing the baby out with the bath water.

To me, taking a purely personal viewpoint, this attitude is wrong. The very attraction of the genre is that its themes are so wide as to be unbounded. Pick up a Science fiction story and you do not know what you are going to come across. Pick up a mystery, or a western and you already have the plot line delineated. The subject is the future, anything in it. An exciting and fascinating prospect. Perhaps this has been the attraction for some of the authors.

There has been much talk of science fiction becoming hidebound and narrowed by conventions that have grown up during the years. The hyper drive, the ray/laser gun etc etc, you all know them. Whose fault is this? The writers, in their

Guise as critics, have blamed both the editors and readers, for keeping them tied to the conventions. Yet is this true today. Of the crusty old editors of old, only John Campbell is left. Ferman, Moorcock, and to some extent Pohl all seem to welcome the 'new' story that breaks with tradition and treads new ground. The writers cannot really blame anyone but themselves if they are confined by conventions. Of course in themselves they are attractive. They provide a very convenient crutch with which to support the story that is ailing somewhat.

Science fiction as a medium still has rich promise, and there is room and need for all. For all one might carp at Ballard, he is an author that is needed. He can develop and extend the medium into rich new fields. Yet there is also a need for the Edgar Rice Burroughs and Edmond Hamilton. While the Ballard's satisfy the intellect, there is also a vital need for stories that just entertain, satisfy that basic need for 'a good story.' If readers cannot find this within Science Fiction, then they will turn to other areas of fiction that satisfy this need. This Science fiction may lose a large part of its potential market.

There is room for both E.R. Burroughs and J.G. Ballard, there is a need, nay, a vital need for all the diverse strands, the writers, the techniques, and the stories that make up the Science fiction of today. The attempt to belittle, to detract, only weakens the whole.

Perhaps this point would be appropriate to sing a few verses of 'onward Christian soldiers' and march forward into the future with SF banners flying. The above does sound rather like a long Sunday sermon. Still I think it is valid. How about a little more tolerance all around?

INTIMATIONS OF MORTALITY

(This being the most irrelevant title I could find)

BY

RICHARD POOLE

\* \* \* \* \*

I Trout

In Kurt Vonnegut's ' God Bless You, Mr Rosewater ' there is a science fiction writer named Kilgore Trout. In his novel 2BRO2B all serious disease is conquered and death is voluntary; there is a choice of fourteen painless ways to die. The suicide parlors are busy places.

"One of the characters asked a death stewardess if he would go to heaven, and she told him that of course he would. He asked if he would see God, and she said, " Certainly , honey."

And he said, " I sure hope so. I want to ask Him something I never was able to find out down here."

" What's that? " she said, strapping him in.

" What in hell are people for? " '

II Subversive

In an article on science fiction in ANARCHY 34 (December 1963) John Pilgrim states: '. . . . sf is the medium in which most of the genuinely subversive thought of our time is set down.' He instances the anti-McCarthyism of Campbell's ASTOUNDING at a time when the accepted organs of public opinion were terrified of making the 'slightest criticism ' of the obtaining social order. ' It is this constant examination of moral, ethical, and social questions that makes science fiction so important in popular literature.'

Nice, nice, very nice.

Thus 1963.

III Restricted

Thus 1966: ' Why should science fiction have been for so long a restricted medium, self-censoring, never dealing

realistically with certain important aspects of our lives? ' (Michael Moorcock NEW WORLDS 166)

And thus 1967: ' . . . sf can be seen as a part of the propaganda machine of American capitalism, accepting the ideals proposed by the boss class and never questioning the capitalist interpretation of them.' (Tony Sudbery, VECTOR 42)

Do I detect a note of disagreement between '63 and now?

#### IV Asides

First: Why should pigs not fly? (or sparrows provide us with sausage).

Second: What is the ideal of the boss class? Answer: making as much money as is humanly possible, i.e. capitalism. If we deign to insert this down-at-heel, knock-kneed word for 'them' in the above we get: ' and never questioning the capitalist interpretation of capitalism'.

Eh?

Or perhaps I'm playing with words again. Oh to be an artist in a scientific world.

#### V Rumpus

Recently there has been much evidence of the Amis Syndrome. A new image for sf! Lead it into the light of day, to the fold of honoured acceptance, relate it to the mainstream, laud its gods, wage inter-science war on its account, destroy its critics (bandy about such names as Golding, Burroughs, Huxley, Tolkien - anyone who's ever been seen to crook a finger in sf's sacred direction)

Mouths have clattered and tongues have clicked, whistled and hissed assertions of sf's saintliness into heavens of dubious promise where globe-headed cosmonauts gaily cavort - and daily invade the universe.

Whilst our dedicated band of writers labours above its MSS far into the diligent night.

#### VI How it is

Such claims will come, such claims will go. Some people will buy the paperbacks and some enjoy them; some will subscribe to the magazines (and see their fall); some will even make written observations of the mental health of the scene - these things having always taken place.

There will always be problems of definition.

There will always be cries for full recognition.  
There will always be controversy.  
(Thank God.)

#### VII Didactic

Would it be true, I wonder, if I was to say: 'Sf is the only confirmed didactic genus of popular literature' - far more didactic in fact than the best of mainstream novelese (say Bellow - Nabokov - Beckett . . .)?

'Sf' writers have always been overtly - nay lad, obsessively! - concerned with putting the world to rights: the Utopian novel . . . that one-man early warning system, Wells. . . the explicit socio-political commentaries of the Heinleins, Pohl and Kornbluths. . . the barbed satires of Vonnegut. . .

This didacticism extends from the writing into the editing, the endless discussing, the letter-writing and the rest (and even into this article).

Why should people be so willing to read (and often so voluble in praise of) the catalogue of their own stupidities?

Sf man is a self-critical animal.

?

#### VIII Examples

At random.

One. Perhaps -

'The human brain could have been meant for something else; not to promulgate one war after another for hundreds of centuries as we've done; not to promulgate ideas of shame and guilt either as has been done in the name of Christ for two thousand years; not to scrape up and waste every usable molecule of matter on the planet, as has been done since history shows a record . . . (Philip Wylie, 'The Disappearance')

Two.

'But it was a long trail yet, a long and a lonesome way, before the brightness of real peace would live in the hearts of man.

Until no man ran howling, wild with fear (any kind of fear), would there be actual peace. Until the last man threw away his weapon (any kind of weapon), the tribe of Man could not be at peace.' (Clifford Simak, 'Way Station')

Three.



" Aunt Victoria?"

" Yes, Charles?"

" If someone is doing something bad, and nobody else says anything about it, and I see it, what should I do?"

Aunt Victoria didn't have to think about that at all: "You must do the right thing, and you must stop people from doing the wrong thing."

" Aunt Victoria, is war wrong?"

" Yes, Charles war is always wrong (Thomas.M. Disch, 'Io2 H-Bombs')

Get me?

### IX Niggers

It has been demonstrated (by a scientist called Time) that man cannot trust himself.

Sf writers seem to distrust him more than most.

Some distrust man's attitude to man (Charles Platt 'The Garbage World' - an exceedingly funny tale); some his attitude to aliens (Aldiss, 'The Dark Light Years').

Some show concern for the human condition (Keyes, 'Flowers For Algernon').

Some worry about how man goes about ordering his political world, others his religious world, others his world of science. And here, latterly, a misunderstanding seems to have crept in: to say (with it happens, John Carnell) -

' Extend technology to an ultimate degree and it will eventually cancel out individualism' is manifestly a non sequitur. Science-technical progress - is not in the wrong - it is how it is implemented that must be suspect. Vonnegut in ' Player Piano' is not so much knocking automation as the way in which man's foolishness would allow it to rule his life. After an entertaining spot of Luddism, one man begins to repair a machine he has just smashed. When unemployed (due to a low IQ) -

' The man who had been desperately unhappy. . . Now he was proud and smiling because his hands were busy doing what they liked to do best - replacing men like himself with machines.

Man is the nigger in his carefully balanced woodpile.

### X Communism

A. ' . . .we've yet to read an American sf story written explicitly in support of modern Communism' (Moorcock

VECTOR 46/SEPTEMBER 1967

NEW WORLDS 166).

B. ' . . . he might have generalised his comment by substituting " any form of socialism" for " modern communism " (Sudbery, VECTOR 42).

Now A. may or may not be true; I haven't read all the American sf ever penned. But presuming its validity, it surprises me not in the least. Critical sf (or critical writing of any nature) bases its reservations either upon dissatisfaction with part or whole of the status quo, that is - with the state of experienced living - or upon an extrapolated (sorry if you wince) trend of a factor in living. While a writer has argument with the way life is he isn't going to trouble himself with something outside his sphere of reference. If the U.S.A. were a communist state then no doubt we would have sf critical of it (that is if it wasn't censored out of town).

Hm.

XI Eliot

In Kurt Vonnegut's 'God Bless You, Mr Rosewater' there is a millionaire who lends the book its name. He crashes a convention of sf writers in a hotel in Milford, Pennsylvania. He tells them, among other equally valid things, this:

" I love you sons of bitches."

SYMPHONY No. 5

A notion BY TONY SUDBERY

Variety is the spice of life they say, so VECTOR casts  
off the carping air, with a piece of fiction.

\* \* \* \* \*

The first painting to catch my eye was in the middle of one of the end walls of the long, cornerless chamber; a large green, brown and blue canvas. Yes, canvas; these paintings were little different at first sight from what we would have expected to see in an art gallery on Earth. Indeed, they were less alien than some of the more extreme nihilistic extravagances of the twentieth century.

This first work was an intricate, though well-organised abstract giving a general impression of peace and serenity. The medium, smoother than oils but firmer than water colour, gave the main movements of colour a slow, graceful strength. These broad passages were analysed by many pen strokes and complemented by transition areas full of fine detail of colour and line. This structure alone would be enough to make the piece a major work of art; but five minutes after my first sight of it, the details began to suggest familiar shapes, and I found myself looking from a grassy hill at an English village on a Sunday afternoon, a concrete representation of the peace that the abstract elements of the painting had seemed to portray. Peace was the meaning of the chord murmured by the hazy air; the abundant cornfields reassured the resting villagers on the plentiful harvest soon to come.

After a while the shapes again changed their significance. The cornfields took on the glow of human flesh and their arrangements suggested the human form; a willow tree, yellow with catkins, became a fall of golden hair, and there before me was a reclining nude, a young girl in the full, serene content that comes after love. Even my interpretation of the colour of certain areas had changed; a patch of mingled brown and green, previously a copse of evergreens in the distance, was now the tangled locks of the girl's lover's hair as he leaned over her, smiling.

The light areas lost their importance and the shadows became more prominent; the girl disappeared and the picture was of a group of friends round a fire with pipes and mugs of beer. Again, and again, the subject changed, but the

theme of quiet joy continued , amplifying the initial impression given by the work.

Suddenly, with an abrupt transition from a contented elderly couple to a whirling African dancer, the quiet mood was disrupted. All at once the canvas seemed to blaze with light. Several images of energy and gaiety, of active happiness expressed in dance and sport, were presented to my beguiled eye. However, these exhilarating scenes did not last long; this really was " a tiny, tiny wisp of scherzo."

It was followed by a sombre passage as portrayals of sadness supported by great emotional strength emerged from the paint: Previous images returned; the village contemplated the destruction wrought by a storm, the girl was pregnant, ill and suffering, but with the full dignity of that condition. The mood of this section was that of the last act of Tudor's 'Dark Elegies', of Hopkins' 'Felix Randal', of Armstrong's first solo in the 1927 'Savoy Blues'. Some of the scenes reminded me of Degas's 'Au Cafe' in their confrontation of compassion and despair; but for Ghur'ut compassion was the victor.

In the remaining images the melancholy receded and the sense of power grew. If the movements had names the next would be 'Endeavour' - the villagers rebuilding, the girl in labour - and the last 'Achievement'. The love scene was black, almost unchanged, but now a family group; I could see no difference in the village as it reappeared, but it felt like an entirely different picture. There the flow of images ended, giving a firm foundation to the calm joy in the abstract design which, once again, was all that the eye could find in the canvas; but now much more beautiful by virtue of the scenes discovered in it.

At this point one would normally shake oneself, blink, and return to earth; but I sat in thought for a little, marvelling at the structure of the temporal succession, realising that the painting parted with its secrets in a well-controlled order. I began to wonder about the technique; how could images have changed so to order without some physical change in the canvas? I could credit anything to the Thorian technology; had someone pressed a button as I approached the wall?

I put the question to Elthar, who had been sitting beside me for some time. He had remained considerably quiet while I experienced the painting, but now he fervently expressed his envy of me, meeting a Ghur'ut symphony for the first time. The old cliché was more appropriate than ever; on subsequent viewings I would know in advance what scenes were latent in the paint , so that I could see them as I remembered them and the temporal order would be to some extent lost.

Answering my question , Elthar insisted that

there were no physical changes in the canvas; the ordering of the images was induced psychologically. The mind of the watcher was prepared by the mood and certain key details in one image to change his interpretation of the pattern in the correct way and reach the appropriate succeeding image. Thus every viewer saw the images in the same order, but as a large part of each image was supplied by the imagination, one's interpretation was always close to one's own experience. This explained how I had been able to find scenes of Earth.

Merely to have accomplished the construction of the succession of pictures struck me as an amazing technical feat; but to have invested the whole with such beauty and significance was little short of miraculous. Regarded as a film, the structure and flow might, to modern terrestrial eyes, seem naively straightforward, perhaps foursquare; but a moment's thought convinced me that this monumental work would have been weaker under any other treatment. The technique had been Ghur'ut's own invention, and he had no successful . . . His works were much more powerful than if he had simply . . . made films, for, just as the scenes has a large subjective element, so did their flow, and each viewer found the tempo and proportions of the symphony to be exactly right.

Ghur'ut lived at a time when a storm on Thor was still a disaster, and pregnant women has a hard time of it. He died 15,000 years ago.

THE HARRISON LETTER

BY

HARRY HARRISON

\* \* \* \* \*

It's hot here in the U.S., both with the weather and on the fannish scene. The Pacific is now 71 degrees F and even at its mildest sends immense rollers that have been building up for thousands of miles, that sweep you off your feet and suck you off in the direction of Hawaii with a tremendous undertow. Lifeguards pull in 20 or 30 struggling victims at every beach, every day. The conventions pull in the U.S. fen in great, well-heeled numbers. Let me tell you about the Westercon.

Entirely too early in the morning of July 2nd, I met G.C.Edmonson and fairwife in downtown San Diego. (I know the drill on a con report: you must always begin with transportation.) It was a quick two hour drive to Los Angeles, about 120 miles, on the monster freeway, and I dozed in the corner. We reached the hotel at a reasonable hour for breakfast, so we went to the dining room for an unreasonable breakfast. And you Engfen bitch about hotel prices. Wow! This hotel, the Sheraton West, had a most reasonable special price for a single room of 8 dollars (call that 57 bob) which is of course without breakfast. A good English breakfast costs about a quid. If you are planning to attend any cons over here you had better bring your own food.

But enough of that. There consuming an immense Viking breakfast (in lieu of a night's sleep, I later discovered) was Poul Anderson. We joined him, and the fair Karen, and the day was off. Things began to merge and run faster after this, since the bar opened upstairs. There were rounds of bloody marys and beer and shouts of happy greeting. Ron Ellik, a slightly tubbier and balder version than the one we knew from the British cons, appeared, still wearing his German leather shorts. I was sure he would have taken them off since the Loncon. A passle of BNPs thundered by and I met, for the first time, such greats as Rick Sneery and Alva Rogers. More thrills as I met the Charles Schneeman, master artist from the old ASTOUNDING. All of this was leavened by the appearance of tattered Harrison

books, well read - a good sign, which I signed cheerfully and the old egoboo expanded my soul. More drink flowed.

Around 2PM harsh cries announced that the banquet was on, a vile hour for this required occasion, and an even more vile arrangement. The food was good, mind you, but served in what was laughingly called "buffet style". Buffet my GI arse, if the editor will excuse a crudity, this was the old army chow line. And hundreds were there before me. And I never que . any more. If a function demands queing I don't go. Call it my personal war tragedy. And the culinary sods had the nerve to mount a great sign saying NO SECONDS. Civvy shades of TAKE WHAT YOU WANT, BUT EAT WHAT YOU TAKE, or IF YOU DIDN'T WANT IT, WHY DID YOU TAKE IT? ( I didn't know it would taste like this Sar'nt) But, right up there at the front of the line, was Phil Farmer and delectable wife Betty, and when the shouted greetings were through I found myself in the line and no protests from the hungry fen stretching out the doorway to oblivion. Or if there were complaints they were drowned out as Harlan Ellison appeared out of the woodwork and we instantly engaged in a shrill slanging match. The line moved and I clutched for a plate. ( PS to this meal madness. I was so offended by the arrangements - and so afraid I wouldn't get enough to eat in the true Aldiss-Harrison eating tradition - that I overloaded the plate and couldn't face food again for 30 hours.

A large round table held all of the members there present of the Order of St. Fantony, and we ate, drank and discussed in true St Fantonian manner. The required speeches made themselves felt, but more drink eased their blow. Bob Bloch waving his spinal-tap cigarette holder, was as enjoyable as always. Marion Zimmer Bradley made a speech in which she mentioned my name, and any speech that mentions my name can't be all bad. Speeches over I had the sharp pleasure of meeting the author of one of my favorite stories - TIME WANTS A SKELETON - Ross Rocklynne. Much good chat. Made thirsty by this I searched out a dim bar on the ground floor and met Fritz Leiber just coming in. Dragged him to the bar. Fritz now, with a great mane of greying hair, looks very much like his father, the late Shakesperian actor. (Movie buffs will recall Leiber Sr. as the top priest in the Laughton HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME. This picture was also graced by a young, thin, handsome, romantic Edmund O'Brien! It's true. The same balding, fattening puffing O'Brien we know now, looking, in fact, very much like an SF writer.) We had a good and concentrated chat - though we correspond we have not met in the flesh for 15 years or more - until we were dragged off to watch HMS TREK-A-STAR. This was an enjoyable G & S parody of STAR TREK that was masterminded by Dorothy Jones and Karen Anderson.

After this it was fanversation until dawn. An

VECTOR 46/SEPTEMBER 1967

endless series of stuffy rooms, whispered room numbers, running out of glasses and booze, interspersed with talk. Very enjoyable as it always is. But energy, booze and glasses all ran out as dawn struck the windows with a leaden, smog-filled light, and I staggered to bed.

That was it for me. I caught a bus back early the next morning and went back to work on a book with the quaint title of DEATHWORLD 3 (plug) while the world of fandom rolled on. Others, more blessed with time than I was, came a day earlier and stayed two days later. They enjoyed the heady pleasures of things like Harlan Ellison speeches, a costume ball, a tourney with swords and other sfish joys.

Conclusion: a convention is a convention is a convention, and there is no such thing as a bad one. The programs always start late and there is always a panic when a car is stolen, which later turns up elsewhere and forgotten. The best memory I carried away from this particular beanfest is of a busy session with Poul Anderson, George Scithers and other physics and engineering types. I caught them at the bar and most of them were half crooked which only added to the fun. I presented them with a problem that my durable hero, Jason DinAlt was then facing on a loathsome planet. He had to navigate by the sun and stars on a planet that had no axial tilt. The question was how? There was a brisk rattle of pens and paper, angles and cosines and muttered comment. They solved it all right, after a good 20 minutes of shouted conversation, and I made note. It is in the book. Only Jason will snap his fingers and solve it in 3 seconds flat.

COMMENTARY: It is easier to be an SF hero than anything. You think faster and better and you live forever.

PREDICTION: I'm off for New York and the worldcon in a few days. Watch these pages, breathlessly, for a full report.



THE LITERARY WORLD

## News and Reviews

\* \* \* \* \*

A most welcome piece of news is that Harry Harrison is to become editor of the American science fiction magazines, AMAZING and FANTASTIC. A policy statement from the man himself is that: 'I want good SF and will pay good money for it.'

Harry Harrison, contributor to VECTOR; long time attendee of British conventions; author of DEATHWORLD and BILL, THE GALACTIC HERO, is well known to British fandom, and I am sure that all B.S.F.A. members will want to wish him luck. Harry Harrison's most recent editorial experience was as the editor of the last few issues of the ill fated British SF magazine IMPULSE. We wish him better luck in his new job!

From a purely selfish point of view I think the change can be welcomed, if only for the fact that maybe now we will have some good science fiction from these magazines. While Sol Cohen's reprint policy - with little or no payment to the respective authors - may have made AMAZING and FANTASTIC economically viable, it produced some of the worst SF to be printed in recent years.

The addition of a further magazine market can only be of benefit to the field itself. With, at the most, only four magazine markets for SF, the field has been somewhat restricted.

\* \* \*

The August issue of the magazine of FANTASY & SCIENCE FICTION contains news of a 5000 dollar science fiction novel award. Pyramid books contribute 2500 dollars, F&SF 1500 dollars, and Kent productions 1000 dollars. Novels must be between 40,000 and 70,000 words.

By sparsely paid SF standards this looks a very attractive offer indeed. Furthermore there is a chance that Kent productions (whose Vice-President is Irwin Allen, of VOYAGE TO THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA, and LOST IN SPACE fame) will purchase the novel presumably for film or television production for 4000 dollars. Maybe some interesting SF novels will emerge

\* \* \*

The publishers lists for Autumn and Winter promise some very good SF. From Faber and Faber, comes Brian Aldiss's first full length novel since GREYBEARD, published three years ago. It is to be called AN AGE. From the publishers blurb it sounds fascinating. Faber are also reissuing the Hugo winning HOTHOUSE.

Also from Faber comes MISTER DA V and other stories by Kit Reed. They include 'To be Taken in a Strange country', 'Judas Bomb,' and 'Automatic Tiger.' BEST SCIENCE FICTION STORIES OF CLIFFORD SIMAK, chosen by Simak himself. THE SEEDLING STARS by James Blish, four stories concerned with seeding the galaxy with modified forms of man.

From Rupert Hart-Davis comes - at last - the joint Hugo winner for 1965, THIS IMMORTAL by Roger Zelazny. A superb book. Maybe it is a reflection on the speed which publishers work, that this book was first published two years ago in F&SF. Also THE DEVIL HIS DUE, edited by Douglas Hill, a collection with a new slant, the Devil in science fiction and fantasy. IMPLOSION by D.F.Jones, 'the water of Great Britain has been treated with a substance that has left nearly 100% of British women sterile.' This authors first book COLOSSUS has been bought by UNIVERSAL and is to be made into a film. In early 1968 Hart-Davis are also publishing THE DREAM MASTER by Roger Zelazny, and GATH by E.C.Tubb

From Dobson comes THE MOON IS A HARSH MISTRESS by R.A.Heinlein among others, from Gollancz TURNING ON fourteen stories by Damon Knight, from Sidgwick and Jackson, A SENSE OF WONDER edited by Sam Moskowitz.

It seems that at last the British paperback publishers may be following the American publishers, in original paperback publication. Penguin at least have started this. In the last few months they have published DESTINATION VOID by Frank Herbert, A PLAGUE OF DEMONS by Keith Laumer, and MAKE ROOM! MAKE ROOM! by Harry Harrison. All of which were published for the first time in Great Britain.

\* \* \*

The quote of the month comes from Thom Keyes in an interview in the Atticus column of the Sunday Times:

'I went to Oxford, and read Germanic philology. I wanted to write, but after a few SF stories published I saw there was no bread in it.'

\* \* \*

There seems to be a group of 'kinky' sf films coming up. There is BARBARELLA with the Roger Vadim-Jane Fonda circus. In the Sunday Mirror a couple of weeks ago there was a picture of girl in Bikini, and Indian headdress, appearing in 'an SF Western.'

THE WINGED MEN by A.E. Van Vogt and E. Mayne Hull

Pub: Sidgwick & Jackson  
I6s I90pp

Reviewed by ...  
Tom Jones

First a point of information, for those who don't know, E. Mayne Hull is Van Vogt's wife.

The story starts with a winged man attaching two devices to the US Atomic submarine Sea Serpent. This winged man is captured, but before the submarine crew can find out what is happening they are transported along with the sub, 25,000 years into the future.

After an encounter with a treacherous island, the submarine is set on course for the home of the winged man. Whilst on this journey the hero, the second in command Kenlon, manages to learn the language of the winged man.

The story the winged man tells is that the world's surface suddenly started to become treacherous, and so the men of that time developed into two new types of human, the winged men and the seamen. Since then, conflict has arisen between the two races. The more aggressive seamen are trying to destroy the winged men by submerging their floating island. The submarine has been brought into this time to destroy the city of the seamen.

Arriving at the winged men's floating island, Kenlon and the others discover they are not the only vessel to have been brought forward, but it seems that theirs is the only military vessel. The commander of the submarine is carried off and apparently killed by the seamen, so Kenlon takes charge. He comes under pressure from the others, to do as the winged men say, because none of them will be returned to their own time unless the threat of the seamen is destroyed.

The plot then takes a twist as Kenlon discovers why the land became treacherous, and this takes up most of the rest of the book.

This is basically an adventure story, and as such is an excellent one. It suffers from the same thing that all sf stories written in 1944 suffer from, ie lack of characterisation, and with some of the minor characters one finds oneself thinking "And who's he?". This book has none of the devious twistings and turnings of the plot that one tends to associate with Van Vogt, for which I am grateful.

There are one or two inconsistencies, like how come if it's an atomic sub they do not have a weapon bigger than a torpedo? So it was first written in 1944, but it must have been revised, and surely the authors could have done something about it. But it is a minor point.

VECTOR 46/ SEPTEMBER 1967

The one thing that strikes me about this book is that none of the characters, or groups of characters, are portrayed as bad; not even the seamen. Even the good-type winged men did underhand things. This realism somehow makes up for the shortage of characterisation.

This book is recommended.

NEW WRITINGS IN SF IO Edited by John Carnell

Corgi books. 3/6. 189 pp.

Reviewed by L.S.Melchett

I think it is about time that the blurb writers dropped the wildly enthusiastic claims for NEW WRITINGS, 'It is the next step forward in the exciting expansion of SF from the limitations it has suffered in the last thirty years..' etc, it has not only become boring, but irritating. Competent and entertaining these collections are. But brilliant????

To the collection in hand. The lead novelette is 'The Imagination Trap' by that old NEW WORLDS regular, Colin Kapp. A Tau space story, only this time the voyage is not through Earth, but to the stars. The inter atom paradox of 'Tau' space travel causes strange effects, an exploration ship comes back twenty two inches long with a pilot one and a half inches high. This is the story of the last attempt to succeed by a four man special exploration team. The theme has fascinating possibilities, unfortunately Kapp fails to explore half of them. He is all right on the 'hardware' side, he explains Tau space, and the technical side very convincingly. He fails, as usual, on the human side. The characterisation is terrible, with the barest of cardboard substitutes. In a fascinating situation in which the four men are stretched to their limits, he hardly touches - except superficially - on their emotional development. Tau space has strange psychological effects, but he only touches on these, not giving them the depth treatment that would make a fascinating story. Perhaps one expects too much, it is competent, but no more.

'Apple' by John Baxter. A fascinating macabre story of nature gone mad in atomic chaos. A huge apple, an insect-human 'moth' and the man come to kill it. A beautiful frightening mood, very good indeed.

'Robot's Dozen,' by G.L.Lack. It is incredible that such stories as this and the previous one can appear in the same collection. A 'humorous' robot story in letter form. I have read better in the fanzines.

'Birth of a Butterfly,' by Joseph.L.Green. A potentially interesting theme of a totally alien life form, in this case in the form of a small sun. Only the whole story is

spoilt by the 'cute' treatment reminiscent of the worst women's magazine fiction.

'The Affluence of Edwin Lollard,' by Thomas Disch. A very good, and extremely funny story, of the welfare state carried to the ultimate extreme. When everybody is affluent, and the greatest crime is poverty. One man wants to escape from society, and get into the cocoon of prison. This is mainly the story of his trial. There is a beautiful punch line. Another good, solid story.

'A Taste For Dostoevsky' by Brian Aldiss. Has Brian Aldiss ever written a bad story? A few maybe, not many. An unusual time travel story. From the far future creatures travel back in time feeding on the dark emotions, like Dostoevsky characters they live their parts. The usual Aldiss skill makes it the best story in the collection.

'Image of Destruction' by John Rankine. Again a story that would have been at home in the old Carnell magazines, this one is almost straight out of the old SCIENCE FICTION ADVENTURES. Dag Fletcher (and isn't that a typical SF hero name) of the Inter Galactic Organisation on an emergency rescue mission. The usual SF adventure cliches, characterisation is there, but you have to search for it. Not a bad story, just an indifferent one.

So there it is, three good stories, two average, two terrible. A little up on the average issue of a magazine, but not much. It is well worth the money though.

As yet the hardback edition published by Dobson, has not appeared.

THE POLITICS OF EXPERIENCE and THE BIRD OF PARADISE

Pub: Penguin

Reviewed by Tony Sudbery.

This is less a review than a notice; an appeal for a discussion, not itself much of a discussion. It may seem odd to find this book mentioned in VECTOR; in fact I had rejected the idea of writing about it here, but my mind was changed by seeing it in a local bookseller's SF display. Perhaps someone's eye was caught by the comment:

I would not too readily discount these possibilities attached to a schizophrenic's report

". . . I used to sit in my bed and make him lie down by sort of locking at him and thinking about it, and he used to lie down."

However, the main relevance to SF is less traditional in its reference. It lies in the close affinity that

I find between Laing and J.G. Ballard. Their occupations, though different, seem to stem from a similar basic outlook, and certainly they share the same language; Laing gives a long discourse on 'inner space'. But Ballard is never as explicit as Laing is here, and I would like to see the relation between their attitudes examined by someone sympathetic to them both. I am surprised that the book has not been mentioned in NEW WORLDS.

Laing's work on schizophrenia is fairly well known. By talking of schizophrenic families and environments rather than schizophrenic individuals he has built a valuable tool for discussions of madness and sanity. In *THE POLITICS OF EXPERIENCE* he extends these considerations to the whole of modern society and everyone in it, "mad" or not, and again there are admirable insights and welcome new concepts, together now with angry, anguished protests against modern life which I, for one, fully endorse. The idea that schizophrenia is a natural process, healing the wounds inflicted on the personality by our way of life, is worth thinking about; it gives sense to the idea, not unfamiliar to SF readers, that those we call mad may have some lessons for the rest of us. Unfortunately Laing's ideas dissolve at this point into a mushy mysticism and romanticism, with talk of ancient wisdom, lost powers and spiritual journeys. The foundations might be there, in his psychiatric insights, for some such thesis, but he doesn't succeed in building anything that would stand up to the slightest gust of sceptical wind. The book is further weakened by Laing's attempts, interspersed with the elements I have described, to construct a philosophical theory on his particular empirical and clinical successes; this only makes it hard to read, not because profound, but because confused and self-contradictory.

In this book Laing has erected a metaphysical fence, he complains:

"...the very existence of inner realities is now called into question."

Indeed yes. Even, as by me, denied. Which side of the fence are you on?

CITY OF ILLUSIONS by Ursula.K.Leguin.

Acc. 50 cents. 160 pp

Reviewed by

--R.L. Owings

An sf adventure novel. Visions of space opera, papier mache characters and the rest. Not so with this one, a good book, a very good book.

The setting is on Earth ruled by the Shing, who keep mankind in a state of semi-barbarity, allowing no development at all. Their redeeming feature is, that they can never kill, although they use all other forms of lying and trickery to get

their ends. Most important however, in a time of universal telepathy, they are a race who can lie, and still remain undetected.

The story. A man is found wandering in the forest, he has been mind-raised, has no memory, and is like a babe. He is accepted into a sort of family group, who try to keep some of the remnants of civilisation. He is educated and accepted, but his past is an ever tormenting enigma, moreover, he is not quite human, with strange amber cat-like eyes. Eventually he leaves the family, and the woman he loves, to go to Es Toch, the city of the Shing, to find who and what he is. The journey is a long odyssey, through the forests, and along the rivers of a different Earth. He has adventures, and rescues a woman who becomes close to him, and who leads him to Es Toch. There he finds that the woman is an instrument of the Shing, and he is faced with the dilemma of the themselves, are they what they have been painted, and what is he himself? He rediscovers his true identity, that he is from an alien-human community from the stars, who the Shing fear because his race can tell when they are lying telepathically. The Shing try to trick him into revealing the position of his planet, but he discovers what is happening, and eventually escapes to warn his race.

From a plot synopsis, it sounds rather hackneyed, a run-of-the-mill SF book. It is not. The characters are something rare in SF interesting, believable and human. Even the hero one feels is a whole character. He wins through in the end, and yet he wins nothing for himself. He leaves the roots he has, to return to a planet that does not know him. He does not win the girl, but has to leave one, and is betrayed by one. Not an easy success with the hero conquering all, but hard and bleak with few rewards. There is the feeling that this is the way it would be in life itself. The female characters are among the best I have come across in SF. They are real, alive and interesting. That in itself is a thing to marvel at in the SF field. The writing itself is very good, especially the description of the hero's journeys, there is a sense of beauty, of that rare sense of wonder.

The book succeeds on two levels. The old pulp level, of a good purely adventure novel. Second by modern standards, of good characterisation and very good writing, both descriptive and otherwise.

A book that should be read. Michael Moorcock has said amongst other things, that there is not much good conventional SF being written. Such as this disprove that particular theory.

VECTOR 46/ SEPTEMBER 1967

MAKE ROOM! MAKE ROOM! by Harry Harrison.

Pub: Penguin, 224 pp. 4/6 Reviewed by Phil Muldowney

To anyone who associates Harry Harrison with fast moving adventure SF like DEATHWORLD and THE STAINLESS STEEL RAT, this book will come as a complete surprise. It is a harsh, almost documentary like book at times, with no happy endings, in a very downbeat style.

The time is 1999, the place a New York with 35 million inhabitants, in a U.S.A. with a population of 344 million. An overcrowded hell, people crammed together like sardines, living on lentils and soya beans, and nutritional diseases rampant. The main character is a overworked policeman, Andy Rush. Mike O'Brien, a shady character involved in the rackets, is murdered by a chinese boy, when he has been disturbed in stealing some jewellery. Rush is assigned to the case, and is kept on it by political pressure from those who suspect other gangs are moving in on New York. As a side benefit Rush gets involved with Rush's girl friend, Shirl Greene. When the lease of O'Brien's luxury apartment is up, Shirl moves into Rush's one room. The story is simple, Rush's search for the chinese boy, Billy Chung, through a frightening New York; Rush's other police duties; the relationship with the girl, and his friend Sol, an old man; and the portrayal of a slowly decaying New York.

It is a complete departure in subject matter, and style for Harrison - even down to the sex scenes, which fall into the modern pattern, and makes one wonder if he has not been constrained by the SF limitations more than we realised. The style is downbeat, Harrison illustrates the results of overpopulation quite frighteningly, hammering the message home with a bludgeon like intensity. It is a superb style, and very good writing producing a bleak and depressing mood. It is meant as a message, and it certainly is that.

It might be assumed that Harry Harrison has made the mistake that so often happens with the 'message' novel, subordinating the main duty of a story - to entertain - to the message that he is trying to get over. He does not do this, and this is perhaps what makes the book so good. The story is interesting and carries one along well; Andy Rush and Shirl Greene, and the minor characters as well, are full and interesting, and among the best characters that Harrison has created.

This review begins to sound like a paean of praise, hold, there are some quibbles. Some of the arguments that Sol, the oldman, advances in favour of birth control and against the establishment viewpoint, seem to be argued from the context of the present. One would have thought that things would have



in thirty years. Again the society itself is little more than the middle 1960's society with a far larger population, and the consequent developments that this would entail. Would there not be some technical developments in the next thirty years, especially going at the present rate? The characters seem to have little motivation. Rush is hard worked, doing an unrewarding and demanding job, popular with none, the butt of all. Yet he does it with very little complaint, apart from the normal. Why? What is his motivation, his philosophy? It cannot be that of the facile 'good cop' cliché of the detective novels. The girl Shirl Greene wanders off with Rush, and there does not seem to be enough development of the reasons of their relationship. But as I said these are quibbles.

There will be those who will ask 'is it SF?' I don't really know, because a novel set in the future is it necessarily SF? It would be sad though, if such a good novel as this does not reach the audience it deserves because of the SF label.

\* \* \*

ANALOG. August 1967. Ed. John Campbell

WORLDS OF IF. August 1967. Ed. Frederik Pohl.

FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION. Ed Edward Ferman.

NEW WORLDS. No. 174. August 1967. Ed. Michael Moorcock.

Reviewed by Phil Muldowney.

Reading the SF magazines together, for the purpose of this review, they have a fascinating - and healthy - divergence in editorial policy and actual fiction printed.

First ANALOG, Science Fact-- Science Fiction, to give it its full title. The grand old man of the SF magazines, with an enviable sale, and with a strong technical and 'scientific' science fiction bias.

The August ANALOG Starts with a 'short novel' - whether 50 pages is a short novel is open to debate - STARFOG by Poul, Anderson. A story of the commalty, a merchant association of planets that is reminiscent of the old Van Rijn stories. A spaceship comes across thousands of light years, from a place where stars crowded within half a light year. Daven Laure a young commalty officer - Anderson seems to have a penchant for this type of character - is sent to investigate. After some romantic entanglement with the daughter of the captain, the two ships retrace the lost craft's steps, and eventually find themselves in a strange part of the universe, where the stars crowd together, and physical laws are changed. Laure eventually

works out a way of finding the stranger's home planet. The story suffers from the same old faults that seem to plague ANALOG stories. The technical details and descriptions are first class, but the characters and human relationships - even down to the romantic cliché - are stereotyped, and seem to be done to formula. Poul Anderson is still as good as ever at describing different societies though.

The rest adds up to a disappointment. THE FEATHERBEDDERS a novelette by Frank Herbert on the old 'aliens among us' theme, although it has a nice little twist it is nothing unusual. The short stories. BABEL II by Christopher Anvil, a very funny, and true to life story, on the language difficulties that specialisation is getting us into. COWS CAN'T EAT GRASS, By Walt and Leigh Richmond. A nice little gimmick story on bacteria, and how they enable an explorer to survive on a planet. DEPRESSION OR BUST by Mack Reynolds, another regular ANALOG writer. A rather poor story, of how one little incident can snowball into an economic crisis. The story reads suspiciously like one of Campbell's pet fads, and is a bad story from a good writer. That is all the fiction, and it does not add up to much.

There is a long, long fact article (30 pages in all) THE MISERS By William E. Powers. This sort of article may interest the scientists amongst us, but it does not interest me. But to be fair, for the audience that ANALOG is slanted at, the young scientist technologist who likes to imagine, then it is probably great fun. A Campbell editorial a Schuyler-Miller book column as good as ever, and Brass Tacks the letter column that is more a technical discussion panel. That completes the magazine.

An average issue. ANALOG seems to be in a rut, of stereotyped characters, too technically slanted stories, etc etc. Campbell's presence is always there. Yet make no mistake, it is successful, and it must be what a lot of Sf readers want.

WORLDS OF IF SCIENCE FICTION, the August edition has two serials. There is the final installment of EDGE OF NIGHT by A. Bertram Chandler. Another of the Rim series stories. Captain Grimes and his wife Sonya fight intelligent rats from another dimension. Chandler has been writing good adventure since ASTOUNDING of the early 40's, and his professional competence shows through here. No great characterisation or imagery, but a fast moving, solid adventure story.

The second serial is the start of SNOW WHITE AND THE GIANTS by J.T. McIntosh. On a hot summer day in Shuteley, a sleepy English country town, a group of very tall young people. The girls in the party wear dresses that disappear from time to time, and they have an unusual knowledge of what is going on in the town, and what will happen. The hero the local insurance

agent, suspects dark doings, and goes out to the teenagers camp with a friend..... One cannot judge from just one part, but like most McIntosh stories there is the beginning of some good characterisation, and a fast moving story. The characters seem to be in the McIntosh mould, and the female ones especially resemble the stereotype that William.F.Temple once called 'a sort of semi-intellectual sex kitten.'

There are four novelettes. NEUTRON STAR by Larry Niven. The exploration of a neutron star by an explorer, and of a force that can splatter a man to pulp. A disappointment, hardly entertaining, and a waste of the writers' talents. TUNNEL WARRIOR by Joseph.P.Martino, of a future war, fought underground. Does not promote much reaction. A five minute time waster. ON THE EDGE OF THE GALAXY by Ernest Hill, a harmless little story of a planet where the general comes to visit the survey team, and the effect that the planet has on both. IN THE BONE by Gordon.R. Dickson, how an unarmed man conquers the mighty alien, and how the man himself is changed. The best of the novelettes, but Dickson can write much better.

Two short stories. YOUR SOLDIERS UNTO DEATH by Michael Walker. What do you do with your soldiers when the war is over, and they are no longer quite human. A good story. THE SPY GAME by R.C.Payes, an amusing little tale on the ultimate in realistic toys. An editorial, a very irritating fan column, and a letter column complete the magazine. IF seems to concentrate mainly on fast paced adventure stories, aimed at the teenage market. If you like the type, then it is your magazine.

The lead story in the August FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION is REDUCTION IN ARMS. by Tom Purdom, an examination of the actual practicability and mechanics of disarmament. A thought provoking and well written story, with some good characters. The other novelette is THE BUBBLE by J.W.Schutz. What would happen if the U.S.A. suddenly gave up its space programme due to an accident. Would private enterprise continue? Some good points, but not great science fiction, and there is an irritatingly bright secretary who you would assume was a top scientist.

A whole clutch of rich and rewarding short stories. THE CONFLICT by Ilya Varshavsky. A short Russian SF story that considers what might happen if we make robots the complete equals of men, in every respect. THE BARON'S LOG, a humorous one, of a love affair between a werewolf and a beautiful girl. Very funny. SOFT COME THE DRAGONS by Dean.R.Koontz an ambitious and partially successful story, concerning space exploration only developing along a mythic track. What will be the effect of alien life forms on the mind of man when those life forms are not physical. A very good story. EARTHWOMAN by R.Bretner, a very warm, human little story of a love affair between an alien and an Earthwoman. Another very good story. BUGS by Charles Harness when insects are used to carry bugging devices, but can the devices

VECTOR 46/ SEPTEMBER 1967

get even smaller? MOONDUST, THE SMELL OF HAY, AND DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM by Thomas Disch, a very impressive a thought provoking story, that crams a lot in. A space man dies on the moon, but what is he dying for? ARGENT BLOOD, a different Vampire story at least. QUICK WITH HIS HANDS, by Avram Davidson. A short one of a kid brother who tags along, but as it is on airless Mars, he dies. Once F&SF was the home of the boring/pointless/sentimental short story, if these stories are a typical example, then there has been a very good change.

A Gahan Wilson cartoon, a Judith Merrill book review column, and the usual fascinating science column by Isaac Asimov completes the line up.

If F&SF has ceased to be the home of the baffling and boring short story, then maybe NEW WORLDS has taken over the mantle. Michael Moorcock seems to have a penchant for stories which are very good stylistically, but are all too often a waste of time to read. NEW WORLDS 174 has its due share of these. After the great promise of 173, it is a let-down.

The Disch serial, CAMP CONCENTRATION is again the high point of the magazine. It continues along the same unusual and fascinating stylistic path of the first part of the serial. It is such an interesting serial that it would be unfair to judge the whole by a part. Besides, maybe I will understand it completely by the time it finishes!

What else? MULTI-VALUE MOTORWAY a Brian Aldiss that was stimulating, but I did not connect with half of it. THE GREEN WALL SAID by Gene Wolfe; aliens try to contact a cross-group of human beings, they fail. Nothing much to it. KAZOO by James Sallis, this one reads like a stylistic exercise, like someone rambling under the effects of LSD or something, and just as meaningless. MARS PASTORALE by Peter Tate, a better one, of man on Mars, of a community, and of an unusual parasite. Very well written, and interesting. CONCENTRATE I by Michael Butterworth, maybe the fault lies with me, but another stylistic exercise that is completely. Maybe it is too much to ask for, but is it impossible to have some sort of story? Stylistic developments are all very well, but in my own misguided way I thought that the job of fiction was to entertain. oh well.....

The articles and criticism are very good. An examination of the work of Eduardo Paolozzi by Christopher Finch. The glossy paper enables a lot of photographic plates, very interesting indeed. An article on NEW DIRECTIONS IN MEDICINE by Brig-Gen T.H., not particularly interesting. A leading article GOING DOWN, BEING THERE, AND COMING BACK, again interesting, but not exciting. Criticism from Thomas Disch, Brian Aldiss and J.Cawthorn finish the issue off. A disappointing issue, I hope the next one will be better.

LETTERS OF COMMENT

(Which are welcomed/ appreciated  
and edited)

\* \* \* \* \*

A.B.Ackerman, PO.Box 6, Daggafontein, Transvaal, South Africa.

I was afraid that the B.S.F.A. would not be able to maintain VECTOR at the high standard of No. 44, and this fear has been manifest in VECTOR 45.

The drop is not so much evident in the articles as in the printing and binding which are beyond redemption. The superb colour headings of No.44 are replaced with crude typed headings, two pages Nos II and 20 are completely blank, thereby the articles are cruelly mutilated. And last, but by no means least, the stapling and/or guillotining was so badly done that hardly any of the sheets is even with its fellows. Also, why the multicoloured paper? I have no objection to using a coloured paper, but please use only one colour!

Of the articles. The editorial was interesting and informative. Now that NEW WORLDS has been dragged back from the brink, it only needs the wholehearted support of fandom to carry on the (good?) fight. Audrey Walton's article is also worth reading, and contains a good many plot ideas, but is a bit breathless and confused.

The fan column by Malcolm Edwards deserves a great deal of praise. It is readable and manages to instil something new into my head, without bludgeoning one with large gobs of his own cleverness. This is more than can be said for CONSIDERING HOW TO RUN. If I may quote Mr Sudbery- "what does he mean? If anyone knows will he please tell me?" This one gets my thumbs down, sounds like nit picking. THE HARRISON LETTER is good, and I hope it will continue. THE DEFENCE OF DAVY I enjoyed because I thought Dan Morgan was wrong about DAVY. The reviews are patchy but readable. I think the opinion of a review depends on whether one liked the book (or the reviewers style) THE SALIVA TREE is not worth reading.

\*\* I think that a reply is necessary. I am very sorry for the inadequacies of your copy of VECTOR 45 Mr Ackerman, and for the faults there may be in other copies. I freely admit that normally I would never have taken on VECTOR, having neither the time nor the experience. But it was a case of the magazine sinking without trace. So I took it on. My apologies !

VECTOR 46/ SEPTEMBER 1967

Chas Legg, 5, Park Close, Longmeadow, Stevenage, Herts.

The more I see the recent issues of VECTOR the more I am convinced that it is turning into a normal type fanzine. As to whether this is a good thing or not is another matter. Primarily VECTOR should be concerned with the bringing together of members and with providing them with news and views of the whole SF scene not just the limited (albeit, interesting) field of fandom.

Audrey Walton's article was both slightly hysterical and illogical in its conception. Firstly, many of the ideas she points out have been used before in SF stories. The point about the farming man taking away the need to eat animal flesh is slightly ludicrous when one comes to think of it. It is, in effect, denying the essential fact of life that human beings are animals. What has to be faced up to, for all the platitudes, is that nature is in essence cruel. Animals do eat each other, and were we not to kill them humanely, they would probably fall prey to some other form of animal life that would be just as cruel. Brian Aldiss's BUT WHO CAN REPLACE A MAN has summed up the arguments about machines taking over the world. The whole point is that machines are man made and limited by this fact. The only thing that will ruin this planet is man, not the machines he makes.

Who is Malcolm Edwards? I'm sure that he is not real. Would the real Malcolm Edwards please own up? Now he has produced some fan news (albeit American and readable in other fanzines) I should have little to complain about. But one point that did stick slightly in my throat, that little tirade against Padzines. As an (ex) Pads editor I feel that the points he makes should be slightly corrected. Padzines are not produced for the great literary quality of their contents. They are produced because their editors feel they want to produce a fanzine. I would like to remind all critics that a fan editor can only publish the material he is provided with. No more. Before anyone else removes his poison tipped pen from the inkwell, just remember it is up to you to provide material. My heartfelt good wishes to Darroll in his travels in America, and may he return to produce more copies of LES SPINGE. Any fanzine contributions will be welcome at the address at the head of this letter!

Whatever anyone says, DAVY is a good book, but it not such good SF as THE WANDERER. And this is for the simple reason that the writer takes a normal SF plot, and then proceeds to write a normal story around it. As a novel it is a very fine book, but as a piece of SF (which is what the Hugo nominations are based upon) it came a long way behind THE WANDERER.

Archie Mercer, 9 Cotswold Rd, Bedminster, Bristol 3.

In appearance VECTOR 45 does leave something to be desired. The artwork could I think, well have been dispensed

with. The text looks somewhat messy, and could well have done with some proofreading. On the other hand it's all at least legibly-presented, and the contents are of considerable interest. Pity about the appearance, though I do recognise that you've had to do hell of a lot of work at short notice and feel I can't be too hard on your efforts. (And I couldn't guarantee all that much neater a job if I were to do it single-handed either.)

The notion that a given acreage could feed more people if it was entirely devoted to vegetable-production, rather than mixed vegetables and animals, is a new one to me. I've always assumed that if mankind were to turn vegetarian overnight there would not be enough food to go around. I'm still not sure that Audrey Walton's pamphleteering informants are right, for one obvious reason food animals provide not only food (and skins, soap etc) but fertiliser. Guano is all very well, but deposits are by no means limitless; likewise with mineral fertilisers. Human sewage of course is a long term possibility if they could ever get that much organised. There are doubtless umpteen hidden snags. Anyway I like some of your contributor's turns of phrase ("no meat-axe to grind") and land in general applaud her humane attitude.

I also applaud Tony Sudbery, who throws some much-needed light into the murkier corners of Mike Moorcock's editorial mind. His definition of escapism is brilliant - this is one of those matters that, so obvious once it has been pointed out, requires somebody like Tony Sudbery to come along and point it out in the first place. I look forward to the threatened continuation of this series.

The Harrison letter doesn't actually say much apart from dropping a whole sheaf of N+A+M+E+S, but I'm glad of this belated evidence that he is still alive and aware.

The not-very-linear way in which DAVY is written makes it hard to tell just what point should properly be considered as "the end" Incidentally, without necessarily having any particular bearing on what either Tom Jones or Dan Morgan thinks of the book, I'd like to mention that I found it enthralling and/or damned good fun in spite of the above mentioned not-very-linear format.

Tom Jones, 27 Lansbury Avenue, Rossington, Doncaster, Yorks.

( Tom begins his LOC with a long discussion on Dan Morgan's pieces in VECTOR 45, which I do not propose to print. Enough is enough! PM.)

I see that we have a new comedy duo in fandom, Reje and Vic. Though their letter contained nothing with which I specifically disagree with, it just seemed to be written in such an overbearing manner, they seemed so condescending about everything. I am glad that they are glad to see articles by the 'newer' members, in fact it seems that most of the articles

VECTOR 46/ SEPTEMBER 1967

are by the 'newer members'. I would be pleased to see some articles by the 'older' members.

Once again Malcolm Edwards strikes, by the way you can come out behind that pseudonym, hiding behind a mask of anonymity will do you no good. The feud in PROTEUS is over, it is only to be expected that you would not like any of the stories, being well known for your somewhat reactionary viewpoint.

Audrey Walton's article suggested some good plot lines. There is no real lack of growing space, properly cultivated the Amazon basin could solve all the food problems. Overall not a bad issue, perhaps with the more fanzine looking VECTOR people will start to take an interest in it. Finally, if VECTOR dies then so does the B.S.F.A. For VECTOR is the only link with the B.S.F.A. that some members have. Perhaps the Committee would get more volunteers if they dispensed with the rule that committee members must be over 21 and let any full member be on the committee.

Richard Poole, Caedderwen Villa, College Rd, Bangor, Caerns.

VECTOR 45 was enjoyably innocuous. Mr Sudbery succeeded in splitting even more hairs than Mr Moorcock and being all the more amusing for it. Harry Harrison was very homely - but I would advise him to lay off the Draught Guinness as I have it on top-level confidence from an Irishman that it slays your stomach lining (bottled is best). Whoever DAVY is he gets my vote as the most controversial, least-read SF lad of '67.

Personally I like my SF journals incisive and biased towards criticism (as VECTOR was under Rog Peyton). However this is a personal opinion and if most members prefer their VECTORS to be chatty then that is, I suppose, how they should be. I can always get my SF HORIZONS.

\* \* \*

We also heard from Roy Grey, Bryn Forrey, and Carlo Pagetti. Thank you gentlemen! Sorry there is not enough room to print all the Letters of Comment, but they were appreciated.

Please remember that all LOCs on this issue and all material for the next issue, should be sent to the new Publications officer.

Tony Sudbery,  
14 Botolph Lane,  
CAMBRIDGE.

VECTOR cannot survive without contributions, so if you have anything to say by way of SF, why not try to formulate your opinions into an article? They will be appreciated.



