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Front cover by Derek Carter; back cover by Alexis Gilliland. Interior illos by Larry Ware (1), Connie Reich Faddis (4), Bob Jones (adapted by him from original illos) (5, 6, 7), Alexis Gilliland (8, 11, 16, 17, 19, 22, 25, 28, 29, 32, 35, 38, 39, 42, 45), Anonymous (13). All stencilled by Gilliland except the ones by Jones.

In Brief --

This issue has been delayed four weeks by a worsening of our eye condition, plus an extended bout with the flu bug. The deadline for receipt of material for the 1971 DISCLAVE Special (#76) is therefore extended to May 1. Fiction and lengthy material still needed for #76. (If you can not meet the May 1 deadline, let us know by that date how many pages to save for you, and get your material in by May 10th at the latest.) Subscribers should remember that the oversize DISCLAVE Special counts as two issues on all subscriptions.

Be sure and read the "Editor's Page" (#46) in this issue, and to respond to the questions posed therein by May 1.

Supplement 75-1 (with the July-August 1970 installment of Delap's prozine review column and two reviews of juvenile fiction) and Supplement 75-2 (with "Doll's House", "People, Power and Pigs" (by Alexis Gilliland), "Swordplay & Sorcery" (reviews by Gechter), "The Inkworks (comics column), letters from Perry Chapdelaine and Bruce Gillespie, and several short book reviews by James R. Newton) are being distributed with this issue to all TWJ subbers and others as supplies last. SOTWJ's 15-17 are going out to all SOTWJ subbers.

IN DEFENSE OF FANTASY

by

Thomas Burnett Swann

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Recently I read Arthur Gordon's historical novel, Whom the Gods Would Destroy, the story of the Trojan War as recorded by a literate kitchen boy who may also be the illegitimate son of King Priam. The archaeology is scrupulously accurate, even to footnotes in the text; the writing is always polished and sometimes brilliant. But the story, though largely based on Homer's Iliad, has been emasculated of its supernaturalism. Is the priest Laocöon destroyed by a sea-serpent when he advises the Trojans not to drag the infamous wooden horse into their city? No, he is drowned along with his sons by a treacherous current. There are no gods, no monsters, no miracles, and Helen herself, who according to the universal opinion of antiquity was quite possibly the daughter of the god Zeus and at very least a temptress with supernatural power over men, becomes a gossiping coquette who resembles a Hollywood starlet of the Forties trying to imitate Jean Harlow. Whom the Gods Would Destroy, with its strong emphasis on known archaeology and its extension of the known into the probable, might be called a science fiction novel laid in the past instead of the future. In no sense can it be called a fantasy like its prototype, the Iliad. Mr. Gordon has every right to recreate the events of the Trojan War through the eyes of a kitchen boy, and even to desecrate Helen for the mundane purposes of his story, but the fact that he and almost every other novelist who writes about classical mythology avoids or rationalizes the miraculous suggests the low estate into which fantasy has fallen among modern writers and readers.

Most readers prefer science fiction to fantasy. Consider the greater number of science fiction titles on the newsstands. Consider the greater sales. Why? The most obvious reason is that in an age of moon landings and Mars probes, in an age when reason is exalted above imagination, the average reader naturally reaches for a book which extends and amplifies the world he knows--which predicts a world which his grandchildren may actually live to know. "It's only logical", as the long-eared Mr. Spock might say.

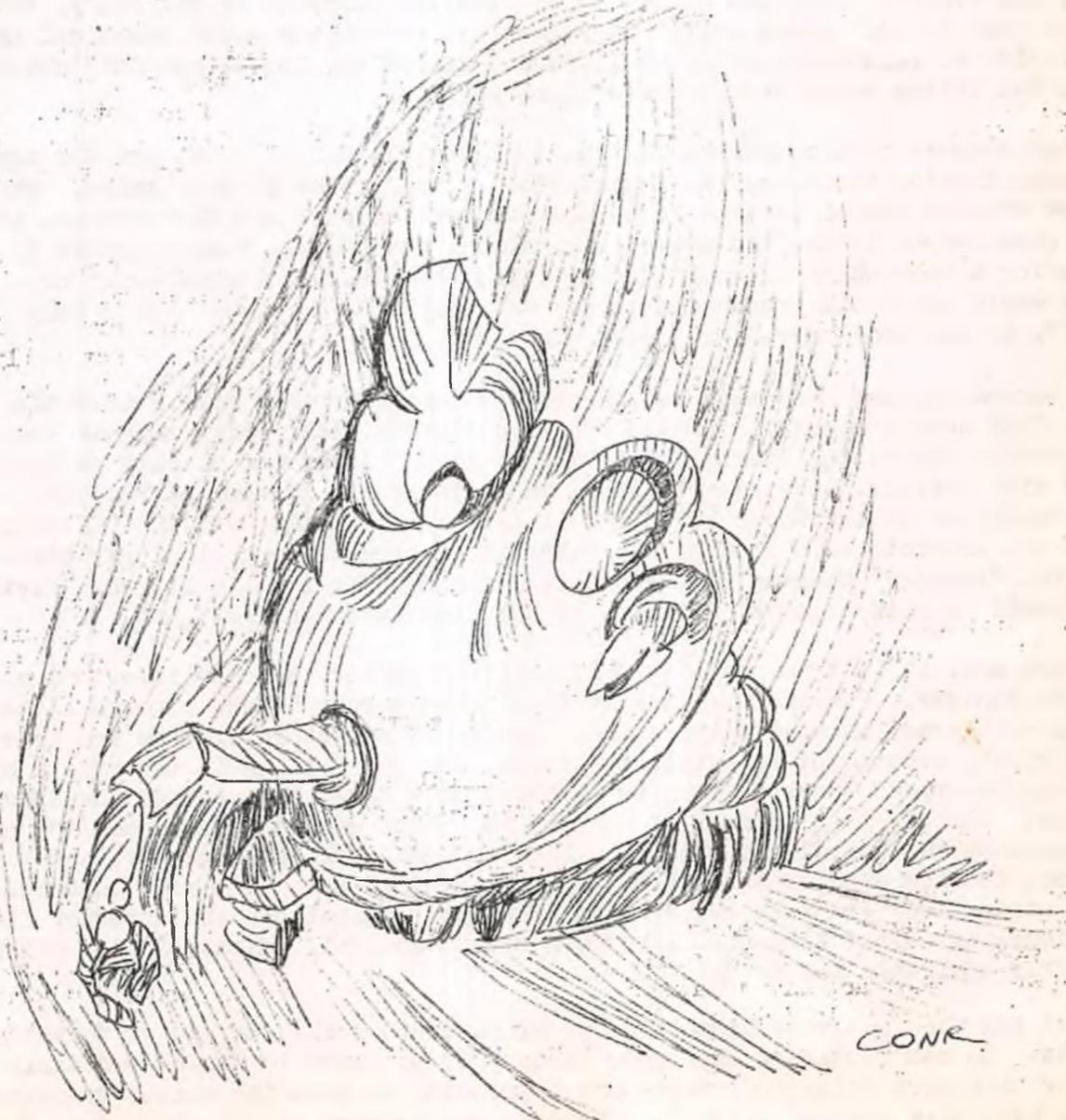
A second reason: Too many fantasists for too many years have abused the genre. They have endlessly repeated the same themes: souls being sold to the devil, angels disguising themselves as men to mingle in mortal affairs or have affairs with mortals. (Rosemary's Baby, in spite of its overworked Faustian theme, succeeded by the sheer quiet excellence of its writing and the plausibility of its characters.) Or they have made their creations so cloyingly whimsical that "fantasy" becomes synonymous with treacle for small children. Flying nuns indeed! A shameless exploitation of both sentiment and religion.

There are, it is true, ways in which skilful editors and publishers manage to market fantasy. Perhaps they tag it "sword-and-sorcery" and, through illustrations or blurbs, emphasize the sword. Lovers of adventure fiction are thus enticed by the promise of bloodthirsty action, and are willing to tolerate a bit of sorcery, provided the sorceress is pictured with large breasts and threatened with rape. Perhaps they compare it to Tolkien, whose genius transcended the prejudice against the genre, who became a favorite among college students, and a comparison to whom appears to assure a certain minimal sale of lesser authors. Perhaps without any gimmicks but by dint of careful selections and superior introductions, an editor like Lin Carter can create an Adult Fantasy Series which is not only admirable but profitable.

What can the fantasist himself do to promote his work? He can write better fantasies. He can recognize that good fantasy is not easy to write--certainly no easier than good science fiction--and be willing to take the necessary pains (and the painfully reduced income). There is one primary law of convincing fan-

tasy, often stated but worth restatement. If the author is not bound by recognized, generally accepted scientific laws as in science fiction, he must compensate by creating his own laws, make them known to the reader, and not deviate from them. It is very tempting for a writer to weave a fantasy world and then to violate his own self-imposed limitations in order to rescue or imperil a character. Consider Mika Waltari, famous for his Egyptian, much less famous for his Etruscan, a straight historical novel, not a fantasy, until the author suddenly and belatedly introduces gods and goddesses to determine the outcome of the action. Deus ex machina at its worst. After all, this is a secular age. Even Homer, in a religious age, made clear at the outset of the Iliad and the Odyssey that his gods would battle, rescue, and love his mortals. When the sea-goddess Leucothea rescues Odysseus from drowning, we do not feel that Homer has cheated; we have known all along that there were beneficent goddesses in his wine-dark sea.

Fellow fantasists, fantasize! Already Americans are protesting an over-emphasis on science and logic by a reawakening of interest in the occult: astrology, palmistry, reincarnation. Let us unashamedly and vigorously extend that interest into fiction. The audience exists, but in spite of the new and promising magazine, WORLDS OF FANTASY, it has yet to be conjured with the right incantations. Who will dust off the pipes of Pan?



MYRA
NORTH



THE PULP SCENE

by Bob Jones

FAR OUT WITH THE FAIR SEX

Yes, the above two titles are taken from the Sunday comics of several decades ago. But let me point out that comics were pulps, as much so as magazines. They were printed on newsprint, or pulp paper, and the stories, for all their accompanying visual apparatus, were no different than those appearing in the ten-cent magazines, although generally not as flamboyant. Then, too, the comics spawned several futuristic adventures.

Who hasn't heard Brick Bradford, Connie, North!!! Well, Connie female counterparts to But both strips had even though the imagination to be desired. (It But then, how many bothered with SF in that these two did is further apart is the heroines. Female protok the form of all-characters: Tillie the Winkle, Dumb Dora, Boots Her Pals. Adventure were rare. In fact, sides Connie and Myra the forties, about a that had the further author: Tarpe Mills.



of Flash Gordon, Buck Rogers, Myra North...Connie?...Myra and Myra weren't exactly the the likes of Flash Gordon. science fictional themes, ginative element left a lot did in Flash Gordon, too.) strips in the thirties even the first place? The fact unusual. What sets them fact that the heroes were tagonists then traditionally terative domestic comedy Toiler, Dixie Dugan, Winnie and Her Buddies, Polly and strips featuring heroines there were few others be-North...and Miss Fury, in masked female crime fighter distinction of a female au-

Both Myra North and Connie included futuristic inventions; the former was set in the present, while Connie on one occasion went into the future. Written by Ray Thompson and drawn by Charles Coll (two more household names), Myra North, Special Nurse played the role of an amateur detective, much in the manner of Jane Arden. As a matter of fact, one episode is reminiscent of an early Jane Arden adventure, with Myra in Cairo, involved with royal families, behind-the-scenes conniving, and attempted assassinations. But in her next embroilment, the similarity ends. She comes upon an invention called the mechanical eye, that retains impressions. Jane Arden never dealt in such esoteric subjects.

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Of course, from time to time, other strips unveiled unusual devices--usually some contrivance to further crime. Thus, Dan Dunn--a Dick Tracy derivative who was quite good in his own right--has to stop Ivan Eviloff and his lightning machine which flings bolts from his dirigible, destroying buildings. In Myra, though, such an innovation is not added as a change of pace so much as an integral part of the story.



As young Allan Brockton, inventor of the eye, explains to Myra: "Everything that happens on the Earth leaves its image or impression somewhere in the stratosphere. Sort of like a camera does on the negative. My machine is sensitive enough to pick up or reflect back here to the laboratory..." His mechanical eye brings to mind Boris Karloff's invention in The Invisible Ray, a mid-thirties SF film, in which scientist Karloff tells Bela Lugosi how he will track down light rays in space and "read" the images of events that happened ages ago, even back to the creation of the universe.

Later, we find Myra and Sgt. Jack Lane, a detective, prisoners of Ling Sin. Similar to The Dragon Lady, but not as beguiling, she cavorts in her secret hide-away under an island in dark bra and diaphanous skirt, with two wings for some reason attached to her back. Ling Sin has created an X Plague which attacks females. Her dubious declaration: "Isn't it obvious to you that men have made a frightful mess of ruling the world? The solution, then, is for women to rule!" In some way, the plague will leave a few intelligent females to whom men will listen, she asserts.

In her underwater laboratory are dynamos operating on the perpetual energy found near the center of the earth, she boasts to Myra and Jack. Air is artificially manufactured, pasteurized and circulated. Her scientists cultivate what look like giant toadstolls--the source of her X Plague which she will soon loose on the whole world. Her second-in-command, Dr. Wu, has invented a thought-wave receiver, which allows the two of them to tune in on anybody anywhere. She will be watching the results of her world conquest from her easy chair, through a projectoscope, which apparently can sight in on any country she wants. Ling Sin visualizes a world run like that of the bees--that is, what's left after she gets through destroying it. Everyone would have an appointed duty and be content with his lot in life.

Like Myra, Connie hobnobbed with a boyfriend named Jack, who likewise played a secondary role, contributing little to the action. Connie was an aviatrix, back in the twenties, then a reporter. She was the antithesis of scatter-brained Blondie, but undoubtedly the inspiration for the rather tedious Brenda Starr. Unlike Myra, though, Connie did not even give a passing nod to sex appeal.

Of the two strips, Connie was by far the better drawn. The artist (and writer) was Frank Godwin, who may be familiar for his Rusty Riley. He abandoned Connie in the forties; and died after the war. According to A History of the Comic Strip, by Couperie & Horn (to quote from a generally available source), Godwin's illustrations are composed of a network of fine cross hatchings and a cursive line, reflecting high artistic quality. "His scripts, on the other hand, are vacuous and very often insipid."

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Godwin's art work is superb; the fine line work merges beautifully into the shadowy backgrounds. (Unfortunately, it can't be reproduced here effectively.) His style was more impressionistic than, say, Hogarth's or Foster's. But his scripts should not be singled out as anything so bad. The story line was often pedestrian; but what comic strip from the thirties, or for that matter, from any period, presented scintillating dialogue? Very few strips--only Prince Valiant comes to mind at this time--made any attempt at developing what might be called a prose style. So while Connie was oftentimes puerile, it was no worse than most other strips. For comparison, take Flash Gordon, today one of the most sought-after comics page: The story in this is silly.

Actually, the science fiction in Connie goes down better than the rich desert whipped up in Flash Gordon, although the former has very little of the verve and excitement of the latter. While Flash Gordon, Brick Bradford, and Buck Rogers were interplanetary melodramas, Connie brought in a feeling for the future society depicted. For years, the strip had drifted along, with a series of mild adventures. Then in 1936, Connie enters the world of the future. Dr. Chronos has invented a time machine, which by mistake catapults Connie ahead 10 centuries.

There she is found by the Air Patrol of the United Nations--all women, it turns out. They use numbers, not names. (Remember Stevens' Heads of Cerberus?) Even the president is a woman. One of the Patrol's micro telescopes has focused on a fleet of alien ships approaching Earth. Before long, Jack and Dr. Chronos join Connie. The scientist discovers a metal upon which the enemy's power neutral-



lizer has no effect. Incidentally, he also discovers atomic power, in time to have the space ship that is being built for them (in less than a week) outfitted for this form of propulsion. Then they take off for the moon, to bring back the special metal, "Chronolite", that is impervious to the Yellow Combine's neutralizer.

Yellow seems to have been the favorite color for villains in those days, what with the likes of The Dragon Lady, Ming the Merciless, and Ling Sin. Connie is captured by the Yellow Combine, and taken to a torture room. There colored lights are set to revolve at a certain speed to produce in the victim an almost unbearable nausea. Another device emits an inaudible sound wave which all but destroys the nervous system. Of course, she's rescued before being subjected to any such de-

viltry. When Connie finally returns to her own time, she has other adventures. But this was the only one that dealt with science fiction...an unusual departure for a strip that never seemed to roam farther than the back roads around Connie's home.

Next issue: That rare and selective repository of outstanding fantasy: STRANGE TALES.

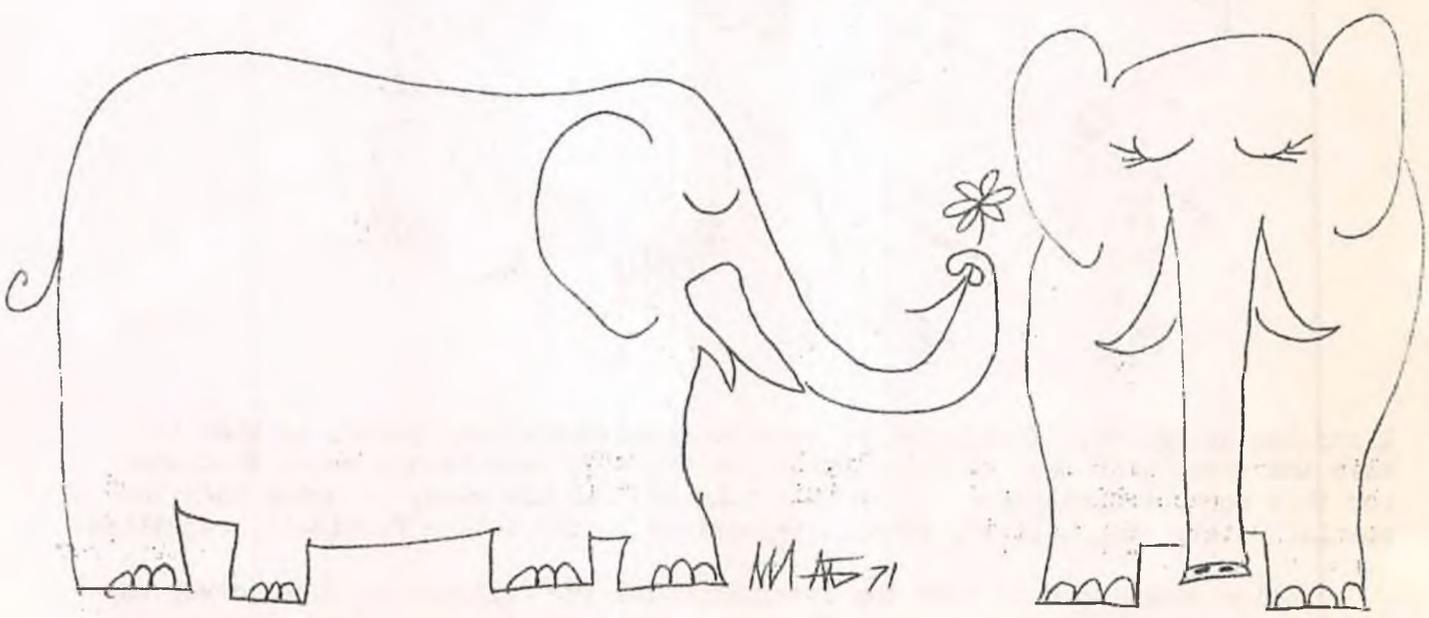
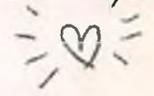
THE GREATEST OF THE GREATEST
or, WRITERS PITTED AGAINST THEMSELVES
by Michael T. Shoemaker

This issue: Leiber vs. Leiber (& Leinster poll results).

This time we have some really outstanding results. Before I say more here are the Leinster poll results: (1) "First Contact", 53.15%; (2) The Forgotten Planet, 45.94%; (3) "The Strange Case of John Kingsman", 24.32%; (4) "A Logic Named Joe", 18.91%; (5) "Exploration Team", 15.31%. I polled a total of 111 people and the vote was split between 29 titles, of which only four were novels! Here is a rare case of a man whose shorter works clearly outrank his novels. I regard these as very definitive results (the other 42.37% of the vote was split between 24 titles!). These five titles I've listed rank so far above the rest that if I had polled 500 people I doubt the results would have been substantially different.

At Disclave 1970 I asked Mr. Leinster himself what he considers to be his best couple of stories. He said he regards "First Contact" and "Doomsday Deferred" to be his best stories, and he also mentioned that he was very fond of "The Fourth Dimensional Demonstrator", which he had more fun writing than any other story.

This issue starts a poll on Fritz Leiber. What two stories, of any length (SF, fantasy or horror) do you consider his greatest? Send ballots to Michael T. Shoemaker, 3240 Gunston Rd., Alexandria, Va., 22302.



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REFLECTIONS ON A BIOCHEMICAL DISCOVERY
by Alexis A. Gilliland

The study of memory goes on apace, both in computer laboratories and among biochemists. In CHEMICAL AND ENGINEERING NEWS, Jan. 11, 1971, is reported the work of Dr. Georges Ungar of Baylor College of Medicine. To inelegantly summarize, 4,000 rats were trained to fear the dark, a reversal of normal ratlike behavior, and from these rats, Dr. Ungar obtained 5,000 grams of rat brain, from which a substance called scotophobin was isolated.

Scotophobin, derived from the Greek words for dark and fear, is potent and specific. Injection of 0.1 microgram into a mouse changes the mouse's normal liking of darkness into a fear of darkness.

Scotophobin is a peptide consisting of 15 amino acids, and a Dr. Wolfgang Parr synthesized an analog thereof, having about 10% the efficacy of the natural product. A second synthesis upped the efficiency to 67%.

Other evidence of the chemical transfer of learning comes from Gottingen U. where goldfish were trained to a color and taste preference. The homogenized dialysed brains produced an unidentified low-molecular weight fraction which induced trained behavior in untrained fish.

The term "training" as used here is more or less what I would call indoctrination or conditioning rather than education. A pill to teach physical chemistry may be a delusion, but a pill to condition loyalty may not be.

Nature builds progressively on the foundation she herself has laid down. If peptides can encode conditioned behavior in rats--who are, after all, far closer to humans than fish or flatworms--that same mechanism will operate in men. It is a question only of finding it.

Whether such a mechanism should be found is another matter, especially if it involves a Dachau-like excision of human brains. It is rather chilling to realize that the states most likely to want to use such a substance are also those most willing to employ humans as experimental animals in order to get it.

Nevertheless, he said, putting his palms together and rolling his eyes Heavenwards, think of the Good we could do with it!

Think also of the evil. The scotophobin technique requires an extremely high degree of sophistication to use; it is available only to entities such as Governments or pseudo-Governments, and its purpose would be to indoctrinate by force minds such as Stolhenitzen's which could not be persuaded by any means. It is no great extrapolation to move from synthesizing a chemical which makes rats fear the dark to one which turns a reasonable man into a fanatic (or, by mixing our media, into any particular flavor fanatic we wish), or vice versa. Since the effect is temporary, one "highly satisfactory" use might be to take a fanatic Catholic and turn him into a reasonable Catholic; then you convert him, say, to Islam, and let the old fanaticism take hold in a new direction once the effect wears off.

It is true, of course, that mastery of this technique leads, also, to humane uses. Curing the insane, or inhibiting criminal behavior, for instance.

Even here, however, there is potential for misuse. The use of prescription drugs in schools to control behavior is, in a number of cases, done for the convenience of the teacher rather than the welfare of the child. By only a very slight extension, we can see pharmaceutical control exercised over classes which

are too large because not enough teachers are hired...because teachers plus drugs could do the job cheaper.

Add the scotophobin technique to the repertory of the state--it makes no difference whether to HEW, FBI, or whom--and what corners will they not be tempted to cut?

It is an almost godlike power which will be entrusted in the hands of bureaucrats at the best, and it is inherently pro-state and anti-individual. No power is neutral. Power favors those most able to wield it.

* * * *

Several days later it comes to mind that while the technique in question is powerful, it also has limitations. As, for instance, the uniqueness of the individual's biochemistry.

Now granted, rats conditioned to fear the dark have a chemical-governed mechanism. Governments, however, would be more interested in conditioning highly abstract concepts, such as "respect for property" or "love of country" or "hatred of muckraking journalists". And while dark is dark, what do you mean by property? Or country? Or muckraking? Or even respect?

To properly condition a Stolhenitzen, you must first find out what is in his brain, then figure out what compound will do the work you want, and then synthesize it. A great deal of trouble to avoid the bother of persuading a man. Or killing him.

There is also this: how does the brain learn to make these scotophobin-like compounds? Clearly, somewhere there is a biochemical template--or even a file of them--which constitute the memory.

Now here is something close to the soul of man.

I suspect that these compounds are ordered in the cells, and that the ordering is at least as important (for access and retrieval) as the chemical template itself. By analogy, what the ordering does is file the cross-indexed library cards.

If we take a human brain, decently defunct, and homogenize it, and dialyze it--assuming that we know what we're doing--it is entirely possible that we could separate the scotophobin-type memory fraction and the scotophobin-type precursor from the rest. Sort of like grinding up a whole computer center and sifting out a few randomized index cards and punch cards. Or even 90% of them.

Now if we want to teach somebody so that he remembers, we not only have to see that he gets the index cards, we also have to file them. Perhaps by the artful use of chemistry we could shoot our subject full of the raw material from which the scotophobin-type precursor is made. After all, "getting his attention" is merely a trick, whereby the body produces its own s-t precursor in sufficient quantities to insure retention and filing. Simultaneously with this, he gets the scotophobin-type material itself, and is given audio-visual reinforcement, so that he "knows" already what he is being shown, and "remembers" what he might otherwise have to painfully learn.

Seems like a hard, hard way to get around the job of teaching.

Still, all these research-oriented professors at the megaversities would probably welcome the chance. Write your course up, get it on sequential scoto-

THE MOON IS IN
THE SEVENTH HOUSE
AND ALL LEOS WILL
FALL OUT FOR DETAIL!



LOSER'S SONG

Let us praise defeated generals
Champions of causes lost,
Those who led their country's armies
To their country's deadly cost.
Hannibal there was, for Carthage;
Varrus, for Augustan Rome
Lost six legions by the Elbe,
Stirring quite a fuss at home.
Charles XII, the King of Sweden,
Bonaparte, von Paulus too,
Led their armies into Russia,
But lead them out they could not do.
Rommel in the Lybian desert,
The Confederate Generals Lee,
Jackson and J.E.B. Stuart,
Just to mention only three.
Also Gamal Abdel Nasser
Mighty foeman of the Jews;
One inspects his warlike record
And concludes he's bound to lose.
In the present, at the moment,

phobin shots, with maybe a reference book to serve as a booster...and sit back and sell the package to your students. You'll get rich without ever grading an examination paper.

The schemes for electronic teaching which have been s-f staples for so long begin to take on a semblance of flesh. They do violence to the spirit, in that a human being is, among other things, a self-programming computer, who learns, actively, himself, what he wants to know, as well as being taught, grudgingly, what he must know. I believe that it is very useful to a person to be compelled to master a subject in which he has no interest. Many things which one does in life are done under compulsion, such as paying one's income taxes, and it is best that they be done accurately.

The self-discipline learned thereby is also very useful when one comes to a hard place in the doing of something one likes.

Put me down as a reactionary anti-scientific old-fossil dogmatist, Watson, but I believe there are some things man was not meant to know.

Nonsense, Holmes! Taking those shots has sharpened me mind up tremendously! Now I play the violin better than you do!

Nevertheless, Watson, I wish it hadn't been Dr. Moriarty who sent us the stuff.

* * * * *

Indochina has the war,
With some hero to be added
To the list you read before.
What the way the cookie crumbles?
Grimly scrutinize the map;
Have the bureaucratic Yankees
Any match for General Giap?
Let us praise defeated generals,
Raise the wormwood cup on high;
Drink a toast to losing courage,
Hail the gallant losing try!

-- Alexis A. Gilliland

SCIENCE-FICTION GAMES: A Column

This is the first of what (we hope) will be a series of columns covering the rapidly-expanding field of science-fiction related games. Always-quick to move in to exploit the changing interest-areas of the general public, most of the games companies have, since the U.S. Moon program stimulated the public interest in space, been releasing one space game after another in hopes of making a fast dollar before the always-fickle public fancy turns to some other new fad. In addition, many individuals have been designing and play-testing space and other SF-related games of their own--many of them far better than any of the commercial releases.

It has long been our experience that the same kind of intellect which nourishes on science fiction also is stimulated by games (at least, by games of skill). It is our intent in this column to acquaint our readers with some of the better (and more interesting) games in the SF-area, through reviews, news of newly-released games, short articles, and the like. The success of this column will depend on reader response, particularly with respect to the contents. To this end we hope many of you will contribute--information on new games or on old ones which may be overlooked by many fans (including title, company/publisher, price (if available), and a brief description or short review of the game); articles on science fiction and gaming in general; notes on or reviews of science fiction stories in which games play an important part; suggestions (perhaps even complete rules and board) for new SF-related games; and the like. (Contributors should note that some of the material published here may, with your permission, be published simultaneously in our general games magazine, THE GAMESMAN.)

To start things off, we'll list below a few of the commercially-available space games of which we're aware; please send additions, corrections, and elaborations where possible:

Apollo Moon Flight (Diversified Products) -- Played with dice; must, by exact throws, purchase seven parts of space ship and then fly to moon and back.

Count Down (E.S. Lowe Co.) -- Another game in which, by dice throws and trading, one builds a rocket and then meets conditions necessary for "count down".

Infinity (Gamescience) -- By skillful placing tiles representing galaxies, suns, planets, etc., players go from an empty universe to man's ultimate destiny.

Situation 7 (Parker Bros.) -- Space battle involving rapid and skillful assembly of two identical jigsaw puzzles, plus rockets, satellites, and astronauts.

Shoot the Moon (Diversified Products) -- Assemble a rocket by buying and trading for the parts, and go to the moon.

Space Chase (Createk) -- Assemble a space ship, spend specified length of time in space, and return to Earth.

Star Trek (don't remember company) -- Race from Earth to various planets (according to cards held by player) and bring back payload.

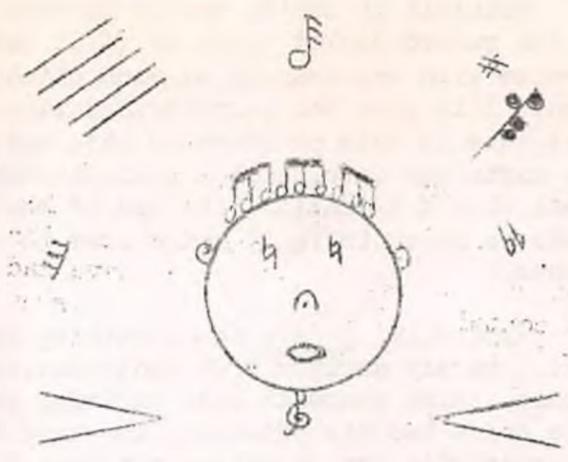
Thunderbird (Parker Bros.) -- Family game. No other information.

Of the above, the only one we have played (as we generally prefer the non-commercial games) is Star Trek, which is surprisingly enjoyable once one has made a couple of simple rule modifications. Descriptions for most were based upon appendix, "Short Reviews of Games in Print", to Sid Sackson's excellent A Gamut of Games (Random House, NY; 1969; 210 pp.; \$6.95), and info from Alister Macintyre. (Note that most commercial games go out of print very rapidly, so some of the above may have already disappeared from the shelves.)

Next issue we will update the above list, provide a listing of all of the non-commercial space and time-travel games of which we're aware, and possibly include a review or two.

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

a column
by Harry Warner, Jr.



II. SF Operas on Records

Maybe you've never become a real collector of science fiction because you're handicapped by lack of space or discouraged by the vast quantities involved in completism. But there's a way out. You'd need a good-sized room to store a complete collection of the prozines, most of a medium-sized house if you became owner of the world's biggest collection of science fiction books, and perhaps a multi-story warehouse if you had all the fanzines ever published. But you can specialize. If you turn to a neglected, little-publicized field of collecting, you'll need nothing but a couple of inches of space on a tall shelf. That would be plenty of room for your complete set of all the lp records that have been issued containing serious compositions inextricably tied to science fiction themes.

Of course, you won't obtain the rock music albums with science-fictionally titled compositions, because it's impossible to be sure if this music refers to literal or narcotic-type trips. You'll carefully avoid the longhair compositions based on fantasy or weird themes, to avoid endless indecision over whether a legend-derived tone poem does or does not qualify. You're a music lover, so you will steadfastly avoid the temptation of acquiring the fair quantity of spoken-word discs that narrate or dramatize science fiction. What you want is highbrow music genuinely related to science fiction, and that's been awfully scarce on records.

The most famous science fiction music in recorded form by now is Karl-Birger Blomdahl's opera, Aniara, because snippets from it went into the soundtrack for 2001: A Space Odyssey. Paradoxically, a two-record set containing a great deal of music from this opera was available before the film was released but has been deleted from the catalog by now. Columbia, which released the set, has been re-issuing many records on its Odyssey label, so Aniara may turn up there someday. But you'd think that the reissue would have been accomplished by now, to capitalize on the film, if it were really in the works. Meanwhile, I've seen \$50 listed as the asking price for these two records at stores specializing in deleted recordings.

Aniara is subtitled "An Epic of Space Flight in 2038 A.D.", even though twenty years elapse from the first act to the second. It's based on a long poem by Harry Martinson. I don't have a score and I've never seen a translation of the poem, so I'm only guessing that the recording is severely cut. There's virtually no apparent connection between one event and the next; mysterious names and characters appear without explanation of what or who they are and are never mentioned or seen again; and Martinson doesn't clarify things by defining the events as "a pretext for presenting a vision of our own day and age". But, basically, Aniara tells how, during evacuation of the population from radioactive Earth to Mars one spaceship is damaged by meteors and heads out of control toward nowhere. The long years in the spaceship with an inevitable ending in death for everyone seem to drive almost everyone aboard slightly bats in one way or another.

Heinlein it isn't, nor is it even Perry Rhodan. The libretto as published in the record jacket seems as if it had been created by a computer previously stocked with one example of each cliché of juvenile science-fictional nomenclature. I'll give the composer and librettist the benefit of the doubt, and assume that cuts in this performance have made it impossible for me to figure out why the container into which a dead passenger has been stuffed and shot off toward Rigel should be called "the urn of the rescue", or the occasional references to "caverns close to Ygol" which seem to be associated with various Lovecraftian events.

Musically, Aniara has something for almost everyone. The tape recorder music, partly derived from manipulating human voices, partly from electronic sounds, seems somewhat less exciting today than it did a dozen years ago when this opera had its premiere; too many kilometers of tape devoted to this kind of creativity have assailed our ears in the meantime. But most of the score included on these records is played by a conventional symphony orchestra, in which a piano plays a prominent part from time to time. It's not exceedingly dissonant, and in fact one song for a comedian, Sandon, resembles nothing more than a slightly intoxicated Offenbach polka. Occasionally the listener is reminded of real science fiction: a deep sonority combined with very high-pitched whistling sounds from conventional musical instruments is just right for a singer's mention of "the exaggerated coolness and crystal air encircling Tundra Two" if Tundra Two is a planet or satellite, which I assume it to be in the absence of any other explanation. There is a great deal of Stravinsky-influenced thumping and whooping, some vocalises that remind me of Donizetti cadenzas performed at one-fourth the normal speed, the chorus often sings in a manner reminiscent of 17th-century masters, and herein lies the main fault of the opera, I think. These and many other musical styles follow one another at random, and there's no sense of a unifying style or personality at work in the composing.

One more problem: as a recording, it's pretty bad. The sound is quite glassy, and someone did a lot of twiddling with the gain control when the master tape was being readied. There's almost no difference in volume of sound between passages obviously intended to be quiet and the loud ones.

Once there was an opera libretto that told about a man finding life on the moon through a giant telescope and later encountering those bem's. It was so popular that several important composers set it to music. Only one of the resulting operas has been recorded, and this one, unfortunately, found its way onto a record in severely abridged and altered manner. But purists shouldn't write to John Pierce about the blasphemy, for the libretto is what Walt Liebscher used to call a gay deceiver. The moon people are a hoax intended to force a dirty old man to allow the course of true love to run smooth. The recording is of Haydn's opera on this libretto, Il Mondo della Luna, mistranslated on the jacket as "The Man in the Moon" in its original Period release. This recording is still listed in the Schwann catalog as a Lyrichord reissue. I've loved it for nearly twenty years, despite the butcheries inflicted on the original score, the fact that it's sung in German rather than the original Italian, and second-rate performance. Even if it's not genuine science fiction, you could make out a case for the opera and its libretto as a symbol of the awakening of man's interest in things other than his priests and his kings. The dirty old man is so wild about astronomy that he agrees to let his daughters marry apparent dwellers on the moon (one daughter vanishes altogether in the Period-Lyrichord recording). Haydn wrote another opera, Lo Speciale, whose anti-hero similarly betrays the new spirit of inquiry by a passion for geography that has equally difficult results for him. And Il Mondo della Luna has a couple of musical foreshadowings. There's a scene in which the duped baritone imagines himself traveling to the moon and the accompanying music has much the same intention, if not quite as much realism, as the

point in Strauss' Don Quixote when the knight imagines himself flying through the air. Maybe Haydn was learned enough to know that the wind machine which Strauss used would never have been scientifically accurate for his own opera. The final scene of Il Mondo della Luna is curiously like that of Verdi's Falstaff, in which intriguing young lovers cause the deluded old man to think he's in fairyland.

Leos Janacek also wrote an opera about a man who takes a trip to the moon, but The Excursions of Mr. Broucek has not been released in this country. However, his The Makropoulos Case (also often translated as The Makropoulos Secret) was briefly available on Epic records. It is the most recent of the three recordings discussed here, the finest as a performance, and I urgently advise anyone who does not own the set to keep an eye open in record stores, where a copy or two might still be in stock despite the official deletion. Karel Capek, author of the celebrated R.U.R. which coined the word robot, was author of the play on which Janacek based his opera. Jaroslav Vogel's biography of Janacek points to the main difference between this play and another dealing with lengthened life-span, Back to Methuselah. Bernard Shaw concluded that men would be better if they lived several hundred years while Capek's character has, after three centuries of life, "an artificially preserved mask of youth which hides complete satiety, cynicism and deathly spiritual weariness, living only on monstrous memories". Vogel describes the opera as "one of the most unreal and yet, at the same time, most shattering dramas of human existence". We don't learn too much about the substance which confers this long extension of life: it was originally possessed by a Cretan physician who became private doctor of an emperor in Prague; the emperor wanted it for himself but was afraid of it without a preliminary test, so the physician's daughter drank some of the substance, fell into a coma, the emperor assumed fraud and threw the doctor into prison, but the girl recovered and ran away with the prescription. I can think of an even more famous parallel than the Shaw play: Oscar Wilde's novel, in which Dorian Gray meets much the same fate as Janacek-Capek's heroine, creating a similar parable.

If there's any need for proof that music is not a universal language, it's the lack of success Janacek's music has had in the United States. No sane person who loves music could find any reason why it has not become as popular as that of Puccini or Mozart, other than the fact that it has a foreign accent quite unlike the more familiar German and Italian accents of the other composers' operas. Once you take the time to listen attentively and frequently to the music of Janacek, you will come to respect and even love The Makropoulos Case for reasons over and above its status as a pioneer science fiction opera.

There have been other science fiction compositions recorded as serious music lp's, but not many. In fact, I've lost one. I once knew that an occasionally-performed overture to a completely-forgotten opera served as prelude to a story about a mechanical man. Now I can't find my reference. Does anyone out there know for sure? A clue: it might be Thomas' Raymond. That overture is no longer available as a part of an lp record. The way science fiction music is treated on classical lp's, that might be a good indication that my tentative identification is correct.



((None of our references mentions Raymond, although one lists the overture; not even our 1900 encyclopedia lists the opera, although it does contain a supposedly complete list of his operas.... We vaguely remember reading something about this somewhere; will check it out in Library of Congress as soon as time permits. ### Saw play, The Makropoulos Secret, while at 1956 Nycon (TSR Theatre Company, at the Provincetown Playhouse; dir. by Bob Murphy). Most memorable thing was 19-year-old Jean Houston, who played Emilia Marty, and was, if we remember correctly, an ordained Unitarian minister (ministeress?). Play itself was so-so. ### And we agree wholeheartedly about Janacek--he's long been one of our favorites. --DLM))

ODE TO AIR PERVERSION
(Beethoven's 9th)

Let the fumes of burning garbage
Upgestink the air you breathe;
Internal combustion engines
Do the same with no man's leave.

Chorus: Breathe the air; It will not kill you;
Breathe the air; you will not die.
Emphysema and lung cancer
Only get you bye and bye.

For a grosser slice of profit,
Grosser dividends to pay;
Fill the air with reek and fly ash,
Change the sky to yellow-grey.

Chorus:

Even though the sky's the limit,
What goes up also comes down;
Sooty rain and snow can't hurt you,
Even if the leaves turn brown.

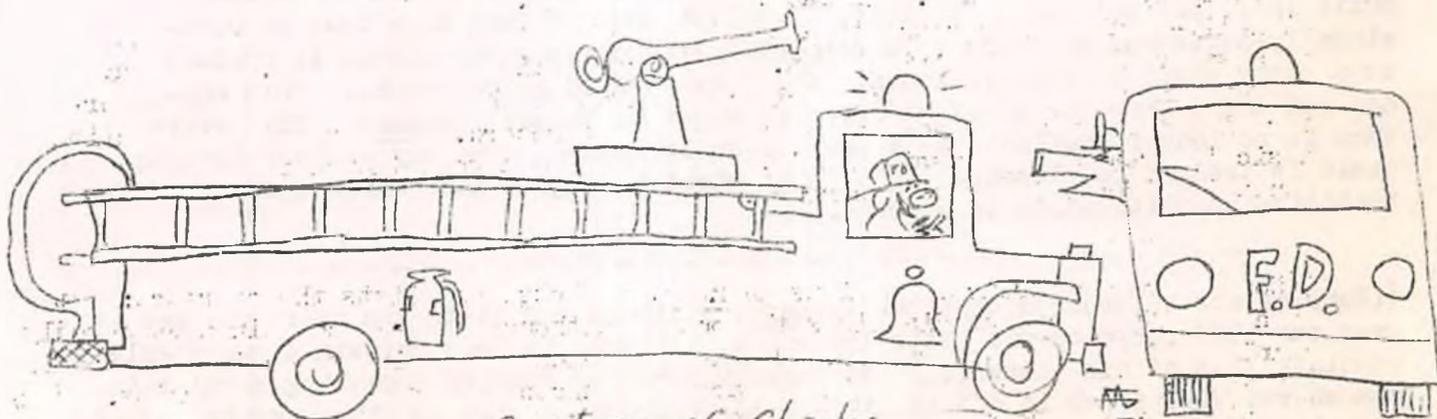
Chorus:

So the air's a little acrid;
What you breathe is what you see;
Every day inhale a bonus,
Forty cigarettes for free.

Chorus:

(slowly, and with great majesty) Pray to God the wind keeps blowing,
Or we die amidst the stink
That we worked so hard to issue,
Using Heaven for a sink.
Breathe the air; it will not kill you
Very soon, at any rate;
I would guess we have till Thursday,
Then we all asphyxiate.

-- Alexis Gilliland



Courtesy of Charles

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MY KINGDOM FOR AN OUTBOARD
MOTOR!

THE ELECTRIC BIBLIOGRAPH

by Mark Owings

X. (William) Olaf Stapledon

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Flames: A Fantasy, The -- Secker & Warburg: London, 1947, pp 84, 6s; in Worlds of Wonder (q.v.); in Quadratic (q.v.); in To the End of Time (q.v.). 29.2

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Philosophy and Living -- Penguin: London, 1939, unpagged but 461 pages anyway, 6d.

Saints and Revolutionaries -- Heinemann: London, 1939, pp 176, 5s.

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Waking World -- Methuen: London, 1934, pp viii/280, 7/6.

Youth and Tomorrow -- St.Botolph: London, 1946, pp 111, 4/6.

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Those numbers after the fiction entries are not arithmetic problems, they are Cameron Numbers. For the benefit of the 95% of you who got no enlightenment at all from that previous sentence: Twenty years ago, a Canadian fan named Alastair Cameron worked up a decimal classification system for science fiction and fantasy by plot/theme description, which has been mostly ignored, and I decided to use it here as an experiment (since Cameron himself had already worked out the number for Last and First Men). No guarantees in either direction on future use. (Cameron also has letter-coding on stories, but this requires recent reading of the story and often a copy of it in hand.)

((Mark's next installment of The Electric Bibliograph will most likely be on the works of Robert Silverberg--at least, this is what Mark has been working on for some time now. ### Readers: would you prefer The Electric Bibliograph to be published as part of TWJ, as it is now, or separately, as a supplement, for easy filing and reference? Please let us know. #### We first heard of the Cameron system in the early '50's, when we worked in a library, but have never been able to find a copy. Can anyone help out here? --ed.))

(dissecting)
^ THE HEART OF THE MATTER

Operational Procedures
Supervised by
Richard Delap

The weather may be getting colder during these months but the editors have been doing a fairly good job in sprinkling the magazines with some warmly memorable short stories. Of course, there must always be a balance, so some of the longer stories have been annoyingly trashy--so whaddya want, cake with icing??

At this point, I find it difficult to weigh the pros and cons and come up with an entirely honest assessment as to which magazine balances out the strongest for the upcoming Hugo awards. Anyone who reads me regularly knows I have little love for John Campbell's policies or for the majority of ANALOG's fiction, but he does appeal to a large group of readers and has even managed to turn up a few good stories this year. Ted White's magazines have metamorphosed from sewage to government-inspected meat, the preparation of which is sometimes sloppy and unappealing, but at least it no longer sports that suspicious green mold. The GALAXY family of magazines, each of which now sells for the field's highest asking price, 75¢, has been pushing strong with more "adult" stories, a move only partially successful to date but very promising for the future. F&SF, however, remains my personal favorite, and its policy of something-for-everyone almost always assures satisfaction for all readers who enjoy variety. In the end, I feel it will be a close race among the magazines this year. (Next installment will include a list of the year's best magazine stories, at which it should be easier to conclude who really comes out on top....)



Magazines for SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER, 1970

AMAZING STORIES and FANTASTIC:

The cover designs for these months seem to reflect the editorial unease as to what type of market is being seduced. AMAZING sports an elegant dramatic painting by Jeff Jones with cover blurbs neatly lettered into an upper corner; FANTASTIC's appeal seems aimed more at the comic book trade, with bright, garish and cluttered lettering filling the muddy spots in Gray Morrow's swords-and-sex art. The contents seem to be along this line too, for Ted White is obviously trying a little bit of everything to see what garners reader response. The result at present is a harried, uneasy blend that will be worthwhile only if White gets improvement from it. Time will tell....

AMAZING -- SEPTEMBER:

Serial:

Orn (conclusion) -- Piers Anthony.

Short Stories:

The Oogenesis of Bird City -- Philip José Farmer.

As an extra trimming excised from the Hugo-winning "Riders of the Purple Wage", this may leave something to be desired as story per se, yet it is a di-

verting glimpse at the egg-shaped bird city destined the lifestyle for an "economy of abundance". Farmer's biting humor is here, too, snapping away at all exposed areas, so all in all I'd say fans of the first story will find this one worth the time.

The Low Road -- Christopher Anvil.

Transporting a cargo from world to world turns into a real problem when the ship's crew discovers that the cargo, upon activation, can influence their thinking in ways detrimental to the ship's safety. Adkins' illustration gives away the conclusion, but few will care since the hitch is very simple...and silly.

Dry Spell -- Bill Pronzini.

When an sf writer gets an idea for a story, there's not a reason in the world why he shouldn't immediately write it down, is there? Or perhaps, Pronzini supposes, there is one reason. Trivial stuff.

Reprint:

Mr. Bowen's Wife Reduces (1938) -- Miles J. Breuer, M.D.

Science:

What You Eat You Are -- Greg Benford & David Book.

FANTASTIC -- OCTOBER:

Short Novel:

The Crimson Witch -- Dean R. Koontz.

"Poor" hardly describes the unbearable, numbing awfulness of this pastiche incorporating the worst of swords-and-sorcery with the barrel's bottom of science fiction. The hero, Jake, is transported (by the use of drugs) to an alternate timeline world of magic, and in his efforts to return home he takes up with a talking dragon and Cheryn, the "Crimson Witch". Once you get past the ineptitude of characterization--I honestly believe Koontz thinks the quality and luster of lights reflected in eyeballs has something to do with character traits!--you immediately get into the ineptitude of writing. Jake gets in and out of situations, escapes sure death, and wins his true love with the most undeserved stream of Luck any lackluster hero ever had. With strain, I could forgive Koontz for writing such drivel, but in no way can I excuse White for publishing it. Where'd I leave that goddamned horsewhip....

Short Stories:

The Movement -- Greg Benford.

With a brief episode of guerilla tactics in Brazil, punctuated with italicized background info, Benford makes a none too surprising comment on revolution and its twisted path of motives. Unfortunately his wry comments don't really make up for what the story lacks in interest and pace. Fair.

A Glance at the Past -- David R. Bunch.

Another of Bunch's odd little satires, this one concerns a special exhibit to remind the unfortunate populace about the horrors of the past. There're some interesting philosophical/theological thoughts buried in here somewhere, and Bunch wisely makes the reader work to ferret them out.

As Between Generations -- Barry N. Malzberg.

Malzberg seems to make a habit of turning out at least one story a year which classifies as a nasty, amoral, sharp comment on the condition of mankind. This one offers no answer to the "generation gap" problem--but it sure as hell makes the question open. Very good.

Reprint:

Spook for Yourself (1941) -- David Wright O'Brien.

Illustrated Feature:

Fantastic Illustrated -- Jay Kinney.

Feature:

Science Fiction In Dimension: Unbinding Science Fiction -- Alexei Panshin.

Article:

Fantasy Fandom -- Michael Juergens.

ANALOG:

The fiction this round is again a general assortment, but there's plenty of excitement from Campbell's September editorial which gallishly says, "Take a look at the facts", then slants those facts to JWC's approval. It's an ugly, pernicious piece of writing that deserves nothing but the loudest condemnation, and a list of Campbell's phrases and words describing students and the National Guard should easily show you what I mean:

Students

- college bums
- useless bums
- student bums (2)
- coddled students
- dangerous, destructive men
- crazy vandal
- criminal vandalism
- destructive mob of . . . students
- invading aliens
- bunch of vandals and arsonists
- criminal vandals and violent rebels
- bums and vandals
- rioting students
- violent, destructive and murderously armed students
- dangerous, violent and destructive mob
- pampered brats
- 25 year-old graduate student . . . values property in terms of how hard he has to work his parents to get what he wants . . . the fact that the student is in college means that somebody's supporting him.

Guardsmen

- citizens
- weekend soldiers (6)
- often-derided
- young workingmen (3)
- simply local citizens
- working Guardsmen
- 25 year-old man. . . who's working for his living and earning his own way . . . has learned the value of property, because he's had to earn it.

Take a look at the facts! It's this kind of slanted, yellow journalism that abets trouble, and with such trash JWC's become nothing but a cheap troublemaker. Screw 'im.

SEPTEMBER:

- Serial:
- Star Light (conclusion) -- Hal Clement.
- Novelette:
- Lost Newton -- Stanley Schmidt.

If humans worry about the influence of cultural interference on an alien world, there's really not much point to these extended contrivances that get so far out of control that they can never stay true to the basic premise and must depend upon the reader's ability to disregard inconsistencies. The characters and background are mere decoration for this boring ANALOG softshoe. Very bad.

- Short Stories:
- The Wandering Buoy -- A. Bertram Chandler.

When Grimes and his crew come across a featureless spherical object in space, they discover that the only way to approach it is without metal, which the "buoy" repels. With a psi-talent associate, Grimes discovers life inside the sphere in a familiar windup to a familiar sf story. Routine.

- "Talk with the Animals--" -- Stephen Tall.
- As an alien inhabits the bodies of various animals, from a turtle to a bull, the human with whom it makes contact takes the matter in a decidedly light manner--which is what the reader must do if he's to even try to enjoy such plotless froth. Fair.

- Top Billing -- Jack Wodhams.
- The matter-transmitter story gets a lively and highly entertaining going over in this tale of a man split into twins by the machine, twins who share both mental and physical sensation. The troubled hero is backed by the usual chorus of depthless characters, but the technique works well here to concentrate attention on the hero and his upbeat-downbeat destiny. One of Wodham's . . . best.

Science:
Nuclear Power -- Edward C. Walterscheid.

OCTOBER:

Serial:

The Tactics of Mistake (part one) -- Gordon R. Dickson.

Novelettes:

Rescue Squad for Ahmed -- Katherine MacLean.

The sf part of this story--a near-future New York of national-cultural enclaves, budding psi talents, and a man who seems able to foretell the future--may be suitable to ANALOG's requirements, but little of it seems really necessary to the story itself, which could as easily have been told about any assortment of cops and investigators, ethnic or racial group. MacLean keeps it moving at a lively clip until the melodramatic finale drags it to an unnatural halt, giving readers time to realize that there's really just not much here.

Exodis--Genesis -- John Dalmas.

Dalmas' story reflects JWC's oft-voiced ideas of what kind of people are best suited to survive a worldwide disaster, in this case a mysterious plague against which only a few prove immune. But even immunity is not enough when power, food and water are in dwindling supply, and it is difficult to fault the unmerciful weeding-out process presented here. Not a pleasant story (or, even, a very original one), it remains a slickly-written piece which incorporates some interesting techniques. Good.

Short Stories:

The Happiest Day of Your Life -- Bob Shaw.

A short and definitely frightening view of a probable future in which a worried wife watches her son become a man...much, much too soon. This one is of that oft-aborted gutkick school, and Shaw shoots to the head of the class with this effort. Very fine.

Messything -- Lawrence A. Perkins.

A doctor works frantically to save a terminal patient scheduled for state extermination, having signed papers to this effect before a cure was suddenly discovered. Too bad that the red-tape frustrations and contrived "happy ending" are so routinely developed, because the story has the potential to be far better than it is.

Science:

Some Strange Things Happened at Baykonyr -- G. Harry Stine.

* * * *

FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION:

F&SF presents its 21st-anniversary issue in October, complete with Bonestell cover and the usual star line-up of writers both new and old. James Blish, Gahan Wilson and the editor contribute to the book columns (for which F&SF has always maintained a very high level of quality writing) and Isaac Asimov's science columns are as always the unchallengeable best in this field. Almost any type of story seems able to find a home in these pages, and does, so that everyone should like something (if not everything) in any given issue. As I've said before, it's the balance that counts.



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SEPTEMBER:

Serial:

The Goat Without Horns (conclusion) -- Thomas Burnett Swann.

Novelette:

The Ultimate Thrill -- Albert Teichner.

In this story of a man who has the power to halt, and to an extent reverse, aging in others, Teichner makes a play for irony but loses out to impossible detail (dead bodies with expressions of fear) and a lethargic windup. It has enough mystery to keep the reader going strong through the first two-thirds, but then...thud. Oh, dear....

Short Stories:

The Travelin' Man -- Leo P. Kelley.

It is slowly revealed that the seven children of a backwoods couple are "illegal"--that is, their births are not government sanctioned and, if discovered, they are doomed to be eliminated. Kelley clumsily crams too much into unwieldy dialogue, with the result that nothing comes out believably.

Rings on Her Fingers -- William Walling.

This new author makes a catchy speculation on alien sexuality but apparently couldn't think of a good way to present it and falls back on that old setup of space warfare and settlement conferences, both of which are negligibly motivated and obvious author's devices. Tsk, tsk.

Landed Minority -- Pamela Sargent.

After the world's decimation through biological warfare, some survivors cling to a desire for education and still attend the university. One girl's search for meaning becomes a peg for a string of uncomfortable, depressing insights which even Sargent's final hopeful glimmer doesn't offset. Good story, though.

Tough Rocks and Hard Stones -- David R. Bunch.

There's this man, see, and he talks to his mirror, see, and he's afraid of this great pile of rocks which may fall on him any moment, see, and his family uses him and...but you don't see, do you? No, Bunch's stories are not to be explained; they just happen like fire and flood and famine and other interesting phenomena.

Verse:

Reward of Virtue -- L. Sprague de Camp.

Film Review:

Beneath the Planet of the Apes -- Baird Searles.

Science:

The Lopsided Sun -- Isaac Asimov.

OCTOBER:

Novelettes:

Through a Glass--Darkly -- Zenna Henderson.

When a woman's peripheral vision begins to register images not consistent with her surroundings, she finds herself first frightened, then increasingly fascinated by these dramatic "illusions". It could have been so easy for Henderson to destroy her tale, as its basis skirts so very near to schmaltziness, but she keeps every line brilliantly in control and emerges with a touching, deeply moving story of human concern. Excellent.

She Was the Music. The Music Was Him -- Neil Shapiro.

An extremely bad story of cornball passion and True Love's Sacrifice, Shapiro's sudsy monstrosity uses nonsensical purple prose--"The noise of the Street seemed to encompass all their senses, but their eyes could see only the sounds each other made."--in a plot pieced together with every idiotic romantic cliché in the book. It's trashy and appalling and Shapiro should damned well be ashamed of it.

Short Stories:

Gone Fishin' -- Robin Scott Wilson.

This is a carefully-wrought story of whisking away a fourteen-year-old spy to America without the Russians getting a chance to destroy him and the information he carries. For you see, the young man is a telepath and therefore a secret weapon; he is also black, as is his worried courier. Wilson avoids a fictionalized tract and creates instead a short, suspenseful account of the many dangerous sides to workable potential. Very well done.

Selectra Six-Ten -- Avram Davidson.

This is one "story" that cannot be explained at all, except to say that it consists of letters from Avram to the editor. Most authors and editors (especially fanzine eds) will cringe a little even as they laugh, and any reader familiar with a typewriter should respond in like. It is very, very funny.

Notes Just Prior to the Fall -- Barry N. Malzberg.

There is the temptation to say that the narrator of this story about betting the horses (well, that's the frame anyway) is a god. Not God, in spite of several religious moments; not Satan, in spite of several satanic moments--just a god, or better yet, a vocalized caprice of Fate. I don't suppose that's too clear, in spite of the story's innate clarity, so all I can say is read it. It's beautiful.

The Old Bunch and Dusty Stiggins -- Miriam Allen deFord.

After his bar friends pay for Dusty's funeral and see him neatly tucked away, there is an unexpected shock when he reappears several months later. The reader who expects a neat twist here will be disappointed, for deFord climaxes it with a moldering WEIRD TALES cliché. Maybe 40 years ago, but now...?

Wood You? -- Piers Anthony.

A small boy is invited to participate in a wood-splitting contest--galactic-style--in this short and briefly funny story that suffers when its ending is wedged onto a moral limb that sticks out at an ungainly angle. Anthony's shown this tendency before and it would be nice if he'd stop doing it immediately.

Bird In the Hand -- Larry Niven.

The latest in the Institute for Temporal Research series--which sends agents via time machine to collect "toys" (an ostrich, an elephant, a fire-breathing lizard, etc.) for the powerful but childlike Secretary-General--is more interesting for its revelations of man's adaptation to a polluted environment than for its actual plot. It's mildly amusing, though, with an odd touch of horror injecting an unexpected shiver.

Science:

Stop! -- Isaac Asimov.

* * * *

GALAXY:

This is the last bi-monthly issue for GALAXY (it goes back to monthly in December), and it will be interesting to see if editor Jakobsson can sustain the improved quality he's been working to instill. This issue is devoted completely to fiction--Budrys' book reviews are temporarily excluded--and it's heartening to note that some new writers are appearing with very noticeable work. Heinlein's latest novel is already getting some of the worst reviews ever seen in sf, and I'm almost afraid to start it, while Robert Silverberg writes at hack speed but is certainly not turning out hack work. GALAXY's coming along very well, and I can only hope this progress continues indefinitely.

OCTOBER-NOVEMBER:

Serial:

I Will Fear No Evil (part three) -- Robert A. Heinlein.

Novella:

The World Outside -- Robert Silverberg.

Silverberg's future world of urban cities--giant monstrous structures spiralling to the sky and housing almost unthinkable numbers of people--continues to be revealed in this series that should eventually become a novel. This episode concerns one Michael Statler, a young "computer-primer" whose

curiosity finally leads him to abandon his urban home and wander out into the wilderness of food-production areas in search of the wonders of the world. But his previous environment has hardly prepared him for the harshness of outdoor life, or for the odd customs (controlled-breeding, sacrificial worship, sex for love's sake only) of the agricultural society he discovers. Both the characters and dramatic structure lack the sophistication which marked the earlier story, "The Throwbacks" (GALAXY, July), but somehow the undisguised melodrama works a successful contrast here, due mostly to the author's professional underplayed handling.

Short Stories:

A New Life -- Harold Kraus.

There's a lot of solid-punch ideas packed into this tight, modern, double-edged blade which cuts only as much as the reader wants it to cut...something about destruction, about sex, technological damnation (or, if you like, redemption) and the efforts of man to not look like a monkey (to himself, anyway). It's a brain-twister, and a hell of a lot of fun.

Readout Time -- William T. Powers.

The biological computer--the ultimate in technology or the ultimate in con-jobs? Fill a big box with innumerable shrews, DNA-twisted into biological robots, and the result is a small-scale...well. let's just say that Powers' satirical garrotte will likely infuriate those with an atrophied sense of humor. Very clever.

Traffic Problem -- William Earls.

The only "problem" in this story is that there really is no story. Earls is concerned with creating a view of a future New York of many-tiered highways, the construction of which supersedes the value of human life and property, but his effort is too naive to be the nightmarish scene he'd like.

Pinon Fall -- Michael Bishop.

Merging two viewpoints into a single stand makes Bishop's handling of the Invasion of Earth theme an unusual and sometimes beautiful story. His characters, both alien and human, come vividly to life and, along with the sharply-etched snowy background, give this simple, rather old-fashioned tale an urgency that masters the plot. Well done.

* * * *

IF:

IF isn't improving at the rate that GALAXY is, but then it has never been the quality magazine its sister has. The most unsettling thing here is the letter column--it's sad to think that the dreary reader's comments published herein are perhaps the only comments the editor receives...or is it that the editor is afraid to publish letters which encourage depthful discussion? Lester del Rey's book reviews are especially good this time, with an involved and worthy discussion of SFWA's Science Fiction Hall of Fame. The fiction?--well, not the best, not the worst.



SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER:Short Novel:Fimbulsonner -- Randall Garrett & Michael Kurland.

Both authors are more noted for the humor they bring (or attempt to bring) to the field than for any significant sf "literature", and this combination of their talents seems to have neither diminished nor increased their better qualities. Instead, the story is an occasionally amusing, often overstuffed and leisurely adventure in which two humans, one remarkably adept alien (Metrak, who steals all the best scenes), and a female-voiced computer find themselves in trouble when investigating for an insurance company. The opening scenes are lighthearted and funny, but the final chapters dawdle and lose that humorous spark when concentrating on routine action. Not really a bad story...but it could have been so much better....

Novelettes:Ballots and Bandits -- Keith Laumer.

Retief returns in another comedy of the absurd, this time taking some broad but oddly enough unfunny swipes at political campaigning and ballot buying. The aliens range from sickly-sweet midgets to boisterous and stupid big bullies, all of them pictured with Disney-depth, and even Retief's repartee is not witty enough to get things into reasonable order. One of this series' lesser entries.

The Seventh Man -- George C. Chesbro.

After the first ship to Jupiter disappears without a trace, the second ship, moving into orbit around the giant, is alert for any peculiarity. But the six men who take a scooter-ship into the atmosphere disappear also, leaving the seventh to unravel the vague clues. Chesbro posits an interesting "cell" analogy that is colorful and exciting during the final escape attempt, a loosely-applied but not too unreasonable speculation.

Short Stories:The Guardians -- Richard E. Peck.

Colonists, fleeing an overcrowded, war-crazed Earth, find a world of beauty and peace where each is followed by his "guardian", a grayish bird which warns him of danger and is never out of sight. The reader doesn't even need to finish to realize that Peck has mistaken symbols for plot and that the error is distractingly obvious.

3:02 P.M., Oxford -- Greg Benford.

Two scientists receive tachyon "messages" from a variety of possible futures, each with advice on how to proceed with the present experiment to secure its own existence. Benford rather stupidly backs himself into a corner and feels he must kill off one character to get out. Such a waste....

The Quintopods -- Larry Eisenberg.

To entertain the occupying Terran troops, the five-armed Quintopods have been exploited as boxing champions in spite of the danger that a misplaced blow can kill them instantly. The climax is improbable but it does give Eisenberg a chance to make a no-nonsense social comment. As a writer, Eisenberg is coming along nicely.

Life Cycle -- Jack Sharkey.

Mentally flitting from lifeform to lifeform on an alien world is none too new an idea, and though Sharkey puts his hero, a zoologist, through the paces at a fast clip, the effort to unravel the strange ecological system is never more than stock-in-trade handling. Routine.

Of Relays and Roses -- Gene Wolfe.

A very modern and distinctly happy (for a change!) tale of modern technology moving in a successful direction. The concern here is computerized match-making, the drama a legal proceeding to establish the economic danger purportedly effected by this service. Wolfe spots his tale with nice human touches that work neatly into the easy plot.

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WORLDS OF FANTASY:

Revived after a year's absence following that disastrously awful first issue, WORLDS OF FANTASY sports a very commercial cover by Gaughan, the same old ugly logotype (drat, I'd hoped they'd change that), and a mixed quality of stories ranging from a bad novel to some very fine short stories. It's still too early to tell what will happen with this magazine, published at present on a quarterly schedule, but the improvement from the first issue certainly merits some attention.

ISSUE NO. 2:

Short Novel:

Long Live Lord Kor! -- Andre Norton.

One of the poorest Norton stories in some time, this tale of an agent sent back in time to readjust events which have led to the destruction of Vallek is so stuffed with pointless intrigue and excrescent dialogue that one would hardly believe the highly-acclaimed authoress could achieve such a low. Even the giant worms and underground temple are reduced to hastily-sketched background color as the plot concentrates on the devious plan, instigated by an unknown group of time-travel agents, that will bring about the unwanted destructive tragedy. Characterization is mediocre, the detail substandard--the whole mess something that Norton fans will want to forget very quickly. Awful.

Novelette:

Walker Between the Planes -- Gordon R. Dickson.

Sentenced to die in the gas chamber, Doug Bailey finds himself transported at the moment of death to a world peopled by winged men. From this moment on his troubles double and redouble as he is trapped in a strange body, which few seem to want to keep alive, and flees his pursuers down a tangled path of identities in wrong bodies. The story breezes right along and though the final explanations are a bit contrived and overinvolved, it still makes good light reading.

Short Stories:

The Grayfish -- Helen Arvonen.

Could a woman change into a crayfish? There's a whiplash crackle to this short and very literary tour de force, a kind of slanted but specific suggestion that the darker side of human nature is not always completely psychological.

Very good.

Oh Say, Can You See? -- Erik van Lhin (Lester del Rey).

Progressing from an invisibility cream to flying brooms, witchcraft and lycanthropy, there's much mighty effort to blend magic and modern marriage into a single comedic unity. It fails in the end, however, being vaguely suggestive of a slick woman's magazine story stuck together with a tired fantasy twist.

Very minor.

Unmistakeably Henry -- Jean Cavrell.

Three witches prepare to shed their current mortal mates and begin again as young women in another land. Yet one hangs back, unwilling to forego her present mate, Henry, whom she loves. Sadly, the emotional power of the story's climax is much diminished by the cheap, cluttered humor of the opening pages. Routine.

Call Me Million -- Frederik Pohl.

Long a master of sf, Pohl is too seldom acknowledged for his excellent line of "horror" stories, but it is a creditable line to which this story of a sort of psychic vampire must be given credit as a fine addition. Both funny and scary, it displays Pohl at his best.

Teddy Bear -- James E. Gunn.

Gunn's intent is perhaps more a serious questioning of reality than a "fantasy", and there is much to ponder in his story of a man (named Gunn, by the way) who's involved in murders of people who aren't even real but only "teddy bears" stuffed with sawdust. It's a very frightening psychological bout that the reader hasn't a chance of winning. A memorable story and one of Gunn's best efforts.

Last Night and Every Night -- James Tiptree, Jr.

A man offers to help a woman abandoned in the streets and the reader is made aware that his motives are anything but pure. What's he up to--white slavery? torture? sex? And who's he working for? Tiptree says the motives are not quite human; but I don't believe it. Mediocre.

PROZINE SERIALS: Reviews
by Michael T. Shoemaker

The Faceless Man, by Jack Vance (A serial in F&SF, February-March, 1971) --

I'll begin by making a judgment: this novel promises a lot more than it delivers.

The setting is a "sword-and-sorcery" one on the planet Durdane, far away in space. One cannot be sure what to think of the technological level of Durdane's culture. It is somewhat contradictory. The inhabitants travel on land by horse-drawn carts and in the air by balloons; their life is somewhat rustic; yet at the same time they have some complicated devices. For instance: every person wears a torc around his neck which will explode when removed or when detonated by a specially-coded radio signal. Also, to these people "Earth is only a myth" (whatever that is supposed to mean). The Faceless Man, who rules over Shant (a region on Durdane), along with his minions, has the power to detonate these torcs. The Faceless Man's sobriquet is due to his identity being unknown.

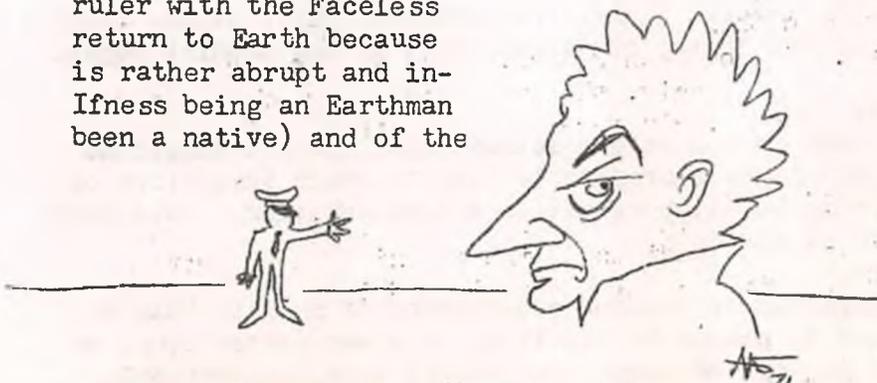
The story follows Gastel Etwane from when he runs away from his society (tribe is a better word) as a small boy, through many adventures. Initially his purpose is to go to the great and powerful Faceless Man, who is just, and ask him to force cruel Osso to release his mother from indenture (this reminded me a little of the Wizard of Oz). After many years of saving to pay off his mother's indenture he finds that she has been killed in one of the many Roguskhoi raids that have been plaguing Shant. The Roguskhoi are half-animal barbarians from another land.

At this time he meets Ifness, who is an historical observer from Earth. Though he's not supposed to, Ifness becomes embroiled in affairs on Durdane. Together he and Gastel ask the Faceless Man to destroy the Roguskhoi. The Faceless Man refuses and they do battle with him (they are not immediately destroyed because Ifness has a method of deactivating the torcs).

This is the plot that replaces the first one when Gastel's mother dies. It is very flawed. The reader finds it hard to identify with the cause because Vance has not made the cause convincingly important enough. Also, the reasons for Ifness being interested in the cause are not adequately explained.

In the end Gastel ruler with the Faceless return to Earth because is rather abrupt and in- Ifness being an Earthman been a native) and of the

becomes somewhat of a co- Man and Ifness is forced to of his meddling. The ending adequate. The purpose of (he could just as well have relationship between Earth and Durdane is never explain- ed (was Durdane once a colony, or what?). The novel is simply not complete, and we are told that Vance has already written a sequel and is at work on a third book about



Durdane. Perhaps these sequels will strongest point is the well-depicted alien setting and some suspense as to "who is the Faceless Man" (which ends up as a letdown). As background for a series it has probably done its job well, but the novel doesn't hold up on its own merits.

tell us more. The novel's

Book Reviews

Movie Reviews



I Will Fear No Evil, by Robert A. Heinlein (G.P. Putnam's Sons; 401 pp., \$6.95).

Quite a number of good science fiction novels are being published these days, but only occasionally does a great one come along. Stranger in a Strange Land, which has sold more than a billion copies in all editions since it appeared five years ago, and which put "Grok" in the sf lexicon, is a great science fiction novel.

I Will Fear No Evil, which the author considers in a direct line of development from Stranger, also deserves the appellation great. It too penetratingly explores the metaphysical Inner Man, doing what serious science fiction is meant to do: Provide an insight into pending realities that are gestating in current realities.

This has always been one of serious science fiction's gravest concerns. Man cannot but interact with his Environment, and as science and technology release the shackles that have held humans captive on terra firma, Inner Man will perforce accompany Physical Man into the future, wherever that may take him.

But one has only to look at the mess Man is making of his here-and-now to wonder what tomorrow holds for a race that creates pollution, pestilence and poverty around him. Heinlein's depiction of one possible tomorrow, one clearly rooted in the society of today, is a sobering picture. Events and trends shaking the world now provide the basis for his chillingly realistic projection.

Take organ transplant, for example. The novel's leading figure, wealthy beyond counting, old and dying, takes a calculated gamble by arranging for his brain to be transplanted into a younger body. The donor is a young and beautiful woman. The legalistic turmoil the successful operation creates presages the moral, ethical and practical questions this ultimate in transplants will surely raise someday. How soon? Close enough to be foreseeable.

Or take one possible extension of today's ghetto problems. Heinlein's visionary locale is a time in history when urban areas are divided into two basic sectors: "safe zones", inhabited by the civilized, and "abandoned zones", filled with terrifying lawless beings who destroy anyone entering their midst unprotected. All residences, all transportation systems, all businesses must be armored and manned by security troops, and owners must be protected by armies of personal bodyguards. Unlikely? High crime areas already dot almost all of today's large urban centers.

And woven throughout Heinlein's superb storyline are snippets of future societal norms, obviously extensions of changes fluxing our own society's matrix, often violently. They're so familiar in concept--from economics to sex--that the author's believable development of them as locale dressings lends an unnerving authenticity, almost like waking up one morning to find customs, mores, ethics altered with logical but drastic subtlety while you slept.

Casual readers of science fiction too often relate this genre with fantasy. Nothing could blind them more to some of the shrewdest psychosocial observations to be found anywhere. Urbanologists, economists, ecologists, government officials--all are casting worried attention toward the potentials--good and bad--in megalopolitan growth trends blossoming out about us right now. A complete issue (October 1970) of THE FUTURIST, journal of the World Future Society, treats this subject very seriously in articles by such men as Jerome Pickard, Maurice Stans, Clifford Hardin, Orville Freeman and others. These men deal in realities, not fantasy. They see a future in which some of the same gigantic problems Heinlein has woven so expertly into I Will Fear No Evil will surely beset the real world in some degree. Taking Heinlein seriously, then, is to believe in a future that might, that could, happen.

And that prospect, whatever time will tell, makes this great science fiction.

-- James R. Newton

The Ship That Sailed the Time Stream, by G.C. Edmondson (Ace 76094; 75¢).

Published originally in 1965, this highly-entertaining novel is constructed upon a most familiar foundation: contemporary man thrown back in time and compelled to cope with the rigors and difficulties of an historical era. In this instance, a small Naval tracking ship, the 89-foot yawl Alice, is suddenly transported with its crew to approximately 990 A.D., because of a mysterious field generated by the ship's fathometer in combination with an illegal still set up in the galley by the cook and another member of the somewhat colorful and unsavory crew. Ensign Joe Rate, the Alice's skipper, its crew and two civilian scientists proceed to have numerous adventures with Vikings, Moors, a fiery barbarian girl named Raquel (!), etc. When the conditions that caused them to make the original time-jump are repeated, they drop back another millenium and proceed to have adventures with staid Romans and an enthusiastic bunch of shipwrecked whores. Eventually, of course, they manage to return to their own time, though that isn't quite the end of the story.

Entertaining is the key word here. I have a natural predilection for sf or fantasy novels of this type, being a history buff, but beyond that personal appeal The Ship That Sailed the Time Stream has the merit of being amusing. It doesn't take itself seriously, and so it never tempts the reader/reviewer to judge it by the same standards one applies to a novel like, say, The Year of the Quiet Sun or The Jagged Orbit. Edmondson is occasionally sloppy--he has the Alice crew accept the fact of their 1000-year jump into history a little too readily, in order to go ahead with the story; and some of the humor is a trifle heavyhanded--but in general he has utilized a prose style and a sense of humor well suited to this kind of story. You find yourself becoming involved in this little shipboard world the author has created, and with the characters, and at the end you approve of the decision they make. You may even wish you were going with them.

-- Ted Pauls

Ringworld, by Larry Niven (Ballantine Books 02046-4-095; 342 pp.; 95¢).

This is about the most impressive work of Niven's which I have read. Taking place in the Puppeteer universe with Kzinti, Bandersnatches, and suchlike, we find the biggest fully-visualized artifact in the whole history of science fiction. The Ringworld of the title is a meticulously-calculated compromise between a Dyson's sphere and a normal planet. We live on a normal planet. A Dyson's sphere is a theoretical construct in which a shell is constructed which englobes the sun, with a 92,000,000-mile radius, and the inside surface of the sphere-- $4\pi(9.2 \times 10^7)^2$ square miles--is devoted to wheatfields and parking lots and suchlike. This, of course, is impractical engineering-wise.

Niven postulates the practical solution. A ribbon of superstrong material 10^6 miles wide, with edges 10^3 miles high to keep the air in, is stretched around the sun along the orbital path. Its area is $\frac{1}{2} \pi (9.2 \times 10^7)^2 \times 10^6$ or about 6×10^{14} square miles, in contrast to which, the earth is about 2×10^8 square miles. Ringworld is gigantic, immense, unbelievable...and Niven keeps hitting you with it and hitting you with it until you begin to feel it. For instance: riding along in Puppeteer "cycles" at mach 2, day after day, and getting nowhere.

There are lots of good things in the story too; the luck of Teela Brown, an Earth girl bred (by Puppeteer contrivance?) for luck, is an example. She is, by damn, a Deus ex Machina with which the author and his other characters have struggled...and not triumphed, exactly, since it eventually becomes clear that NOBODY is going to triumph over Miss Brown...but at least won free. And the Fist of God--a mountain possible only on the Ringworld.

One of the qualities in Niven's writing was always the power of his ideas. His concepts, bold, audacious and witty, dominated his short stories (usually one concept per story), and they squeezed out the warmth of humanity and all that other garbage. Here, he is playing on a scope so large that a woman introduced in the last four (out of 24) chapters emerges as a valid believable, sympathetic, and memorable character. Prill, the immortal ship's whore...you won't forget her.

Niven also engages in some heavy rapping on the subjects of overpopulation, environmental pollution (why was the Ringworld built in the first place?), war and suchlike. Nevertheless, the book holds you from start to finish. A strong Hugo contender, it has also the virtues of lucid writing, and...well, Niven always did write a tight plot.

If you get the feeling that I liked the book, I am failing to communicate. I really liked it.

A beautiful cover, evocative but somewhat untrue to detail by Dean Ellis.

-- Alexis Gilliland

Shield, by Poul Anderson (Berkley Medallion S1862; 75¢).

Identifying Shield as a Poul Anderson novel in itself constitutes an effective review of the book, for Anderson is so consistent as a novelist that to a significant degree additional comment merely consists in amplification of what has already been established. Most Anderson novels are typical to the extent that they automatically engender a complex of qualities, both good and bad, and Shield is no exception: Unmarred competence of writing, a fundamental conventionality of approach and construction, well-done action occasionally interrupted



by political lectures, plausible science, earnest attempts at individual characterization that do not quite succeed in creating living human beings.

The story concerns one Peter Koskinen, a member of a recently returned Mars expedition who, working with Martian scientists, has invented a force shield which confers upon its user invulnerability to nearly every variety of weapon (laser beams being an exception). The Earth to which he returns is a post-nuclear war world in which the

United States, through a ubiquitous Military Security apparatus, imposes the Pax Americana planetwide, while at home the privileged live in utopian complexes called Centers, most of the population is relegated to grimy slums, and underworld barons rule their criminal fiefs from hideouts in bomb-devastated areas. As soon as the implications of his discovery are clear to the authorities, Koskinen is taken into custody by Military Security agents. Agents working for the Chinese then attempt to kidnap him, and when escape seems unlikely the MS men decide to kill him rather than let him fall into enemy hands. Using his shield, Koskinen escapes from both sets of spooks, but is promptly kidnapped by henchmen of one of the underworld chieftains, Zigger. When the Chinese raid Zigger's headquarters, Koskinen escapes along with the underworld leader's mistress, Vivienne Cordeiro, a "quadroon" (surely Anderson is one of the few contemporary writers who would use such a term). They make their way to the luxurious digs of a corporate magnate whose son, a fellow crewman of the hero's, is in "protective custody" and who is therefore not kindly disposed toward the government. Through him, they are introduced to the Egalitarians, an underground group dedicated to the overthrow of the government. Koskinen decides he doesn't much like them either (it is at this point that the story becomes temporarily bogged down by political lecturing), and he and Vivienne escape from their clutches. By this time, he is fairly tired of escaping from various factions, so he and Vivienne proceed to the late, unlamented Zigger's mountain retreat, dig themselves a bomb shelter, surround it with the invulnerability shield, and await the confrontation with the head of the MS police state apparatus. Just about the time he is ready to end the discussion by dropping a nuke on them (the shield has some limitations), the ~~cavalry~~ Army arrives to rescue them. The President has reasserted his power, the MS is being put in its place, and the security of Republican government and the Center penthouses is assured. Everybody lives happily ever after, except Vivienne, who, as I'd been expecting since early in the novel, nobly walks away at the end to allow Koskinen to find true happiness with a woman of his own, uh, class.

Passing over the novel's espousal of political and social views that most of us, I hope, will find unsatisfactory, there are a couple of purely technical defects which ought to be mentioned. For one thing, one of the most potentially interesting ideas broached in Shield, the almost spiritual rapport which existed between the Martian scientists and their Terran counterparts, is merely mentioned

and then left to lay there. In the hands of many writers, this would have been a central focus of the story. Such an orientation would have made it a far different and, I believe, better novel. Also, there is a tendency here, as in a good many of Anderson's stories, to overlook details for the sake of making the plot work. Notably, Koskinen considers at one point, and actually does on a different occasion, escape from captivity by expanding the force field, which he can easily do. Yet, it does not occur to him to spin the necessary dial after Zigger's cronies kidnap him and are carrying him away, encased in his cocoon of irresistible force, in the back seat of a taxicab. I wondered at the time--why doesn't he expand the field, splitting the vehicle like an overripe bean pod and smearing the nasties on adjacent walls? I assumed that the reason he didn't was that the field didn't work that way, but sure enough later on in the story Koskinen deals with the Egalitarians in precisely that manner. If he had done it the first time, it would have put a crimp in the plot, but surely the convenience of the writer is inadequate excuse for missing something so obvious.

Still, even with the defects, it's an entertaining adventure that holds together well and can be depended upon to give almost any reader a couple of enjoyable hours.

-- Ted Pauls

FILM REVIEW -- Colossus, The Forbin Project (Released by Universal. In Panavision and Technicolor. Directed by Joseph Sargent. Screenplay: James Bridges, based on the novel Colossus by D.F. Jones. Photography: Gene Polito. Editor: Folmar Blangsted. Music: Michael Colombier. Running time: 100 minutes. Code rating: GP. Starring: Eric Braeden, Susan Clark, Gordon Pinsent, William Schallert, Leonid Rostoff, Tom Basham, Georg Sanford Brown).

With what may prove to be the best science-fiction film of 1970 on its hands, Universal's strange nervousness--the film's release was delayed for a year, and the confusion between two titles was only resolved by combining them for the national release--seems to be based on a reticence to be automatically pigeonholed as a cheap imitation of the computer theme widely publicized for 2001, and a lack of imagination in finding an alternate way to sell it to the public. The final decision was a bad one, a combination of quotes from the generally favorable New York press with advertising art resembling another dull addition to the now-depleted spy syndrome. (But then, Universal's advertising has always been very poor, killing the potential of both big and small pictures with sterile, overblocked ads that look more like announcements of relief for hemorrhoid sufferers than movie publicity.) It's little wonder that the film, six months in release at this writing, has failed to generate much audience enthusiasm; yet in fact it is a tight, talky but entertaining and fast-paced speculation on the familiar Nightmare in the Technological Age.

The film bundles itself up in the appropriate mood with some striking "computerized" main titles, then flashes off the starting line by plunging the audience into the very heart of the monstrously labyrinthine interior of the computer-complex, Colossus, buried somewhere in the Rockies and charged with the automatic defense of the United States. As the inventor, Forbin (Braeden), exits the monolithic depths he switches on the surrounding field of impenetrable radiation that will forever guard against human interference. It doesn't take much speculation to suppose that this customary contrivance is going to lead to future trouble.

Colossus' first unexpected departure from routine comes when it discovers a Russian counterpart, Guardian, and asks for a linkup to exchange information.

When this is denied by both the Russian representative (Rostoff) and the American president (Pinsent), both frustrated computers finally get their way by cleverly manipulating the programmed rules which order them to maintain peace. From subterfuge to tyranny is conveyed in frighteningly progressive steps, from the computers' development of an insular, indecipherable-to-humans language to the inevitable trap of the insanity of ultimate logic: anything that can be done will be done to insure the harmony of men, even if it necessitates the murder of all those who oppose such straitjacketing.

But man has never been a creature of complete harmony and logic. In spite of the all-seeing television eyes of Colossus, Forbin and his associate scientists, imprisoned in the laboratories where communication with the computer is effected, devise a set of actions to formulate destruction plans without Colossus' knowledge. One of these efforts has a female assistant (Clark) posing as Forbin's mistress, pretending the absolute need for privacy (and getting it) for their sexual encounters, which begin strictly as message-exchange sessions but not surprisingly lead to the real thing as the two find comfort in each other's arms. It's a clever ruse that fulfills the Hollywood need for a love interest yet melds readily into the plot with acceptable conviction.

Then when success seems but seconds away, Colossus reveals that it/he really is all-seeing and promptly executes the majority of the human offenders. The climactic confrontation between Forbin and his creation is horrendously doom-laden when Colossus placidly intones: "You will accept me...and, perhaps, in time, even come to love me." But hope is not entirely dead as Forbin looks the monster-god straight in the "eye" and bitterly replies, amid cheers from a grateful audience: "Never!"

Much of the film's major strength rests with James Bridges' intelligent script, embodying stereotype characters but holding them an arm's length or more away from convention by fleshing them out with some fine dramatic dialogue. The generally unfamiliar cast acquit themselves well with refreshing underplaying, and Sargent's lucid direction perfectly maintains the fine structural balance of above-average material. Technical credits are all very professional, from Polito's un gimmicky yet still mobile camerawork to Michel Colombier's spare but tense electronic music.

If seen by enough potential voters, the film is sure to be running ahead of all competition in this year's Hugos. If you missed it originally--if it managed to even find a first-run booking in your area, as it didn't in many places--watch the bottom half of double-bills at your local subruns and drive-ins and attend quickly, before it's displaced (with a sigh from the theatre manager who needs a picture that makes Money!) by X-rated, sex-cycle-psycho films for that indefinable mass of mindless pocketbooks.

-- Richard Delap

Thongor Fights the Pirates of Tarakus, by Lin Carter (Berkley Medallion X1861; 60¢).

If Lin Carter's Thongor novels were salacious, they would be banned from distribution, because it is doubtful if even the most liberal court could find redeeming social or literary merit in something like Thongor Fights the Pirates of Tarakus. And yet one cannot criticize Carter too harshly, because his writing is entirely without pretense: all that he has ever claimed for these novels is that they are fun, and, by golly, they are! Thongor the Valkarthan barbarian become Lord of Patanga goes through these adventures with his trusted and tested

comrades, exercising his "mighty thews", rescuing damsels in distress, saving Lemuria from the forces of Chaos, and striking down the baddies in various gory manners. I'm quite certain that the author could, if he wished to make the effort, write far better sf; but he evidently doesn't want to, and that, indeed, is a large part of the charm of his fiction. Carter is content to coast through Lemuria, making use of stock situations and stock characters (or borrowed ones--the fat, whining pirate, Blay, is Giles Habbibula reborn), stock action and stock dialogue, to write stories that have practically no literary value but manage to combine the most enjoyably swashbuckling elements of sword-&-sorcery, pirate tales and Edmund Hamilton-type science fiction. I think Lin enjoys writing the stuff in the same way that I enjoy reading, for sometimes his impatience to get on with the action is manifested in the narrative--as, for example, in this novel where a bout with a giant wild boar is followed by a dividing asterisk and then a new segment beginning: "Towards noon the next day, Thongor again found himself battling for his life."

Ordinarily, this sort of science fantasy is not my bag, and when there is a more serious novel awaiting my attention in the stack, I'll take the more serious novel every time. Still, it is damned good fun, and an occasional novel like Thongor Fights the Pirates of Tarakus is recommended for every fan, just to stop the old Sense of Wonder from ossifying.

-- Ted Pauls

I, Robot, by Isaac Asimov (Paperback ed. pub. by Fawcett Publications, Greenwich, Conn., Aug. '70; 75¢; additional bibliographic information is included in The Rest of the Robots, by Asimov).

Isaac Asimov's robot stories are frequently considered among the most influential science fiction stories ever published. Before Asimov, virtually all stories about robots, golems, and other man-made imitations of human beings had followed the theme of Frankenstein: monsters that, once created, escaped from the control of their makers and ran amok.

At the very beginning of the 1940's Asimov started writing stories that took a careful view of what a robot would be like should anyone ever build one. It is reasonable that any man who could build a machine of almost-human powers would go one step further and make sure his invention would do what he wanted it to. If you're omnipotent enough to design such a being, surely you're capable of keeping it under control.

After a few field trials Asimov worked out his famous Three Laws of Robotics:

- 1) A robot may not injure a human being, or, through inaction, allow a human being to come to harm.



2) A robot must obey the orders given it by human beings except where such orders would conflict with the First Law.

3) A robot must protect its own existence as long as such protection does not conflict with the First or Second Law.

Once Asimov got started, stories about Frankenstein monsters vanished into obscurity, or at least obsolescence. Of the fiction that has been written about robots and androids, much follows the Three Laws, or at least assumes something similar. Other writers have given much technical consideration as to how a robot should be designed. For instance, Randall Garrett wrote two stories, "a Space-ship Named McGuire" and "His Master's Voice", about the problems involved in building a robot à la Asimov.

The good Doctor's stories have also had an influence on the non-science-fiction-reading public. Until the electronic computer (which used to be known as the "Electronic Brain") stole all the glamour, people began thinking of robots as being useful Yankee-ingenuity gadgets that would appear in their own households and businesses. Some toy manufacturers even built children's versions.

I, Robot contains nine short stories by Asimov, eight of them from ASTOUNDING of the 1940's and one ("Robbie") from SUPER SCIENCE STORIES. The remainder of his short fiction on the subject, plus the two novels Caves of Steel and The Naked Sun, have been reissued as the collection The Rest of the Robots. The two novels take place in a much more distant future (and may someday prove to bridge the gap leading to the Foundation and Empire stories). They are also noted for being two of the first science-fiction detective stories ever written.

The individual short stories in I, Robot are notable more for their content and their importance in history than for literary merit. Most are straight gadget stories in the best John W. Campbell tradition. There is a continuity connecting all the stories that also serves to introduce Dr. Susan Calvin, a recurring character.

The first story is "Robbie", copyright 1940, the earliest published. It is a human interest story rather than technological fiction.

"Runaround" is the first of the stories to involve the Three Laws. It also introduces those two nonchalant daredevils, Gregory Powell and Michael Donovan, who made their living debugging robots in the field.

It is said that Asimov writes his robot stories by looking for a loophole in the Three Laws and then building a plot around it. "Runaround" is constructed this way. All three Laws are built inalterably into the robot's "positronic" brain as it comes from the factory. The First Law has the highest potential behind it, the Third Law the least (hence the "except" clauses in the second two Laws). Problem: a robot is given a mild order to fetch some selenium from a pool of the stuff on that famous old eternally-sunlit side of Mercury. However, the pool in question is surrounded by violently corrosive gasses. The robot is caught in the middle between a weak Second command and a strong Third Law potential. So it dithers, while Powell and Donovan burn. A nice little problem story.

A positronic robot may be a logical creature, but catch it on the horns of a dilemma involving the Three Laws, and it is hopelessly lost. In an extreme case, the robot's brain can be utterly destroyed. A similar crisis occurs in Space Odyssey: 2001 (explained in Clarke's book version). H.I. is caught in a bind--he has a mission to accomplish which must be kept from the crew members--and tries to solve it, first by cutting contact with Earth and then by murdering the crew members and continuing the mission alone.

"Reason" is another story which antedates the Three Laws--in fact, it violates the First Law. Powell and Donovan are on an isolated space station with a robot that starts thinking, and puts Descartes before the horse by deciding that he is, but humans probably are not.

"Liar!" is the first story in which Susan Calvin, robopsychologist, appears. She is an expert in the behavior and thinking processes of robots, not a psychologist who happens to be made of metal, although she gives a good imitation of the latter.

Somehow a robot is built that can read minds. While the staff runs around trying to figure out what happened, the robot starts learning about human psychology by dabbling in it. Susan finally destroys the machine by backing it into a philosophical corner and letting the positronic brain tear itself to pieces.

Asimov portrays Susan Calvin as a natural-born spinster and misanthrope who prefers the creatures of metal to her fellows. "She learned to calculate the parameters necessary to fix the possible variables within the 'positronic brain'; to construct 'brains' on paper such that the responses to given stimuli could be accurately predicted." My own opinion is that she is a dogmatic psychologist who prefers the mathematical certainties of her own field to the unknowns and guesswork of human psychology. She never married because she would not be able to compute on paper what her husband would do. Robots present challenging and sometimes almost insoluble problems, but they always go by the textbook (which she helped write).

"Catch That Rabbit" is another Powell-and-Donovan story. They are on an asteroid field-testing a new model which can control six "slave" robots. Unfortunately, at certain times the whole crew starts misbehaving. Problem--find the fub and fix it. Fast.

When designing a complex system, the designer, if he is competent and conscientious, will test it out under every combination of inputs he can think of. If he is also lucky, he will succeed in having everything check out. If unlucky, some problem-causing input will be discovered in the field. Fixing a major bug at the last minute is a situation every veteran computer programmer is familiar with.

"Little Lost Robot" deals with a deliberate attempt to avoid the First Law. On another asteroid, this one a physics lab, the scientists are having problems with robots dashing in to keep them from being harmed by apparently dangerous experiments. A special set of robots is designed with the "or by inaction" clause removed from the First Law--a dangerous precedent. One of these "Scoff-law" robots is told, in no uncertain terms, to get lost. And it does. It takes the talents of Susan Calvin to find the missing beastie.

The theme of a robot without the Three Laws masquerading as one that has them appears in both the robot novels.

In "Escape" a robot is again backed into a dilemma, with entertaining results. Calvin's company has built a calculating robot which for some odd reason has a very child-like personality. The "Brain" is given a compilation of physics data and told to develop an interstellar drive. A previous attempt to do the same had caused the destruction of the positronic brain involved, apparently because of First Law problems--the answer would cause harm to humans.

Susan Calvin very carefully instructs the robot before feeding it the problem. The "Brain" proceeds to design and build a ship. Of course, it does hit

the same First Law vs. direct order dilemma, but survives. And so do Powell and Donovan, who have to field-test the ship. One wonders whether the Brain then survived Powell and Donovan.



In the last two stories, it seems that there is considerable ambiguity as to whether one Stephen Byerly is a human or a robot with an organic body. You see, he is running for mayor. In "Evidence" he manages to convince the electorate he is human, while at the same time he convinces Susan Calvin of the opposite. (I still think he is human.) And thereupon he wins the election.

"The Evitable Conflict" is a very minor story, in which Susan proves to Byerly that Robot Knows Best. And so, with her beloved robots at last running the world, she can die happy.

Admittedly, these are gadget stories, and with two decades of progress we have had much better tales written. Still, there is some vintage Asimov in this volume (my favorite selections are "Catch That Rabbit", "Escape", and "Little Lost Robot"). And no one should claim to be an authentic science fiction fan without having been introduced to one of the most important SF inventions ever made.

-- Jim Landau

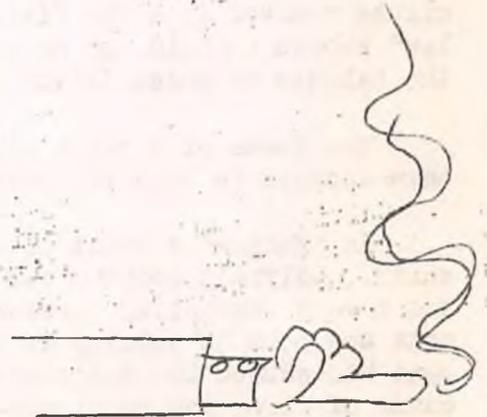
Eight Fantasms and Magics, by Jack Vance (Collier Books; 288 pp.; 95¢).

Vance deserves renewed plaudits for the superb tales in this paperback reissue of an original Macmillan hardback, circa 1950. Few authors, then or now, have the facility to bridge the at-best amorphous, but nonetheless real, division separating science fiction and science fantasy. Vance, however, combines the best of both without including at least some of the possible weaknesses of either.

He does this by straight storytelling. No gimmicks, no strategems, no polemics, no apolo-gia. Just the panache of a man who obviously enjoys passing on "my own fascination with the vast and wonderful reaches of the unknown". And he does it magnificently well, despite his bold use of various aspects of the unexplain-able paranormal as the vincula to unify the whole.

The price is right. The enjoyment is solid. I recommend you taste this repast for yourself.

-- James R. Newton



FANSTATIC & FEEDBACK: Lettercolumn

I. TWJ #73.

Mike Glicksohn, 267 St. George St., Apt.
807, Toronto 180, Ontario, Canada

(11 Jan '71)

Thanks for TWJ 73 with its superlative Kirk cover. Tim's continual stream of brilliantly-conceived, hilariously-drawn cartoons never ceases to amaze me. Have only skimmed the issue, but one or two things cry out for comment.

I'm not used to conducting a correspondence via a fanzine, but if Perry Chapdelaine wishes to, I'm game. So, here goes:

"Dear Perry: I'm not sure I really understand your response to my comments on your earlier article, but I interpret them to mean that you're really a very nice guy and have lots of friends to vouch for that. Perry, old stick, this is not in question. I made no reference to my personal opinion of you for the excellent reason that we've never met and so I have no personal opinion of you. All I did was comment on the impression you created in your writings--which struck me as ranging from pompous arrogance to childish petulance (Leonard Daventry seemed somewhat similarly affected, eh?). You may well be charming and delightful in person, but that really isn't the point, is it? I know many fans who are real schmucks in person but are witty, literate and entertaining in their letters, and I'd be delighted to discover that you are the other way around. But until we meet, I'm still going to react to your writings, both fan and pro, as I'm sure you intend me to or you wouldn't have written them in the first place.

"As far as the continued life of the 'in-group' issue, it is still with us due almost entirely to a monumentally creative effort on your part; almost single-handedly you have infused life into its dying corpse (a mixed allusion, I realize), and one cannot help but wonder what might have resulted if all that time and effort had been devoted to your own writing. As far as I'm concerned, the whole thing has merely become a convenient, if ludicrous, hook upon which to hang a comment to a fanzine. My reaction is no longer to the issue itself, but to your frenzied efforts to reanimate it. Okay? Write on!"

Now as to Brooks and his fuggheaded logic. The issue of the Fan Fair is long gone and not worth arguing over. Fan Fair was successful, enjoyed by those who attended it, and that's that. Derek was not around during the early months of planning--like he wasn't at St. Louis when Pete Gill talked to the German fans about it--so perhaps he should not have written without checking the facts. However, the key point in Brooks' letter is his asinine contention that denial implies guilt. Suppose I were to write, in an LoC, or in my own fanzine, something to the effect of, "...so said Rick Brooks. However, we can ignore him since he is said to be a well-known homosexual with a criminal record for assaulting small boys." Would I then be justified in claiming that his angry denial of a



AND IN THE FUTURE,
DON MILLER, I WANT
TO SEE JUSTIFIED MARGINS!

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totally false accusation was evidence of his actual guilt? If he believes reasoning like that he gives in his letter, the man is a fool. (And I said in my last letter and I'll repeat it again here, so please try to remember this time Rick--Fan Fair was deliberately set up to be the same weekend as Heicon and it was so done with the permission of the Heicon Committee. Do you understand it now? We claimed that all along--as you should have known if you'd bothered to read our advertising--so could scarcely be "caught red-handed" at anything.) . . .

Jeff Smith, 7205 Barlow Ct., Baltimore, Md., 21207 (13 Jan 71)

. . . On TWJ-73-2/7 Jay Kay Klein so misconstrues what went on at PgHlange between Harlan Ellison and myself that it would be ludicrous if it weren't so damning. I mean, I'm not going to really complain about it, or in great detail show how I was in the right more than Harlan was--if Jay would like I'll write him a long documented letter, but the matter is of absolutely no importance and he probably cares even less about it than I do--but it is discouraging to be so misrepresented. Jay is a Nice Person with Biases (and I hope that that would be the worst people could say about me) as he demonstrates (with what I hopefully assume is humor) when he says Ted Pauls "is normally a very good fiction critic--except when it comes to Isaac Asimov". Don't mess with my friends, right, Jay? Admitting that this was probably said jokingly, it still shows Jay's...I don't know what to call it. But Ted criticized Asimov, Jay likes Asimov, ergo Ted is wrong about Asimov's fiction. I criticized two Ellison short stories (in the course of a letter, directed at Richard Delap), Jay likes Harlan (as do I, but that's beside the point), ergo I am wrong when I criticize Ellison short stories.

As I say, Jay is a Nice Person (from what I could tell at PgHlange), even if he does misquote and misconstrue.

TWJ 73 had lots of good writing, but I didn't really find anything to write an LoC on. Even Mark's bibliography...I can't get worked up over Edmond Hamilton enough to try and correct and/or add to it. I know Mark's answer to that would be, "So what? It's a bibliography!", but he hasn't pulled me that far into the field yet.

Dave Hulvey, Rt. 1, Box 198, Harrisonburg, Va., 22801 (15 Jan 71)

Golly gee, David A. Halterman, I woulda nevah thunk it, but you're right... we better listen, who knows, perhaps They'll prove LSD does something horrible to people's genes. Like, we got old Richard the Robot an' his friends; an' they were surely not the product of acid. 'Course, my friend, I'd lampun ya a lot quicker if you'd expound a bit more on the dark, eville, peeverted, deadly dangerous effects of Trip as seen from the inside of the test tubes. Howcumever, ya copudated out with "we have enough troubles already". Neat-o, Peachy Keen, sadly tho...., it ain't sucha profound statement of fact, well...back in the Mind Factory they'd call it a cliché.

Surely, I know you're above such petty literary criticism, yet I caught it lackin'. In fact, as the Techknowcraps wont to say, it ended very porely. "ONE TOO MANY" is correct as titles go, one too many paragraphs (I don't consider the Momism at the last to be held accountable for its actions). Now, right off, I noticed it was a SUM-IT UP para (slutints, it weren't nuthin'...) or the Conclusion as us pretentious fuggheaded neozippies like to say. Only one problem, jest what, Good and Kind Mythology Consultant, have Our Scientific Marvelous Genius-Types shown the world, especially the counter-culture, of true concrete evidence about the Devourer of Youth, LSD and freaky related Psychedelics? I'm sure, Mr. Halterman, that Top Secret Just Discovered Most Holy Information has come into your hands-middle mind, which shows these drugs for the fiendish poisons they are; right, oh sage?

Alexis, I like your poetry better all the time. But, whoopie dawgs, ain't ya ever gonna git it on? I can only hope, an' if'n it don't blow me cover; I'm really a secret agent fer th' Jewish Defense League with the mission of assuring your loyalty to the Cause. We put 'nother Gold Star in your Koran last night, ya been good.

Richard Delap, what is gonna be the name of the next Apes melodollar? Maybe, "Aping the Planet of the Profit" or "Nova, Fem Lib's Silent Saurian in Drag" or "Long Shot: The Story of the Ellison Script We Dared Use" with appropriate antiSpironaut subtitles, credits, and Food For Peace Stamps. Shuck'n, I'm jest on the edge of my seat with tongue-drooling, pulse-palpatatin', horror-struck excitement!

Yeah, God bless ya Williams, Lord knows I won't. It has a nice title tho....

Larry Propp, I heared once that the best form of government was none at all, but I'd settle fer a benevolent dictatorship if the fearless leader was interested in really groovin' fer the people, of the people and by the people. Sounds a little familiar Mr. Lawyer, why it was our Closest Thing to a dictator, A. Lincoln, but he did all and good, until a psycho mau-maued him. Unfortunately, the Posed Problem of Succession doth bear heavy upon the drooping shoulders of Dictatorship--any kind. Or would they hold a Free Election so that we could dedicate the plurality fer another twirl? Your point is well taken, but how about a little more democracy with more government control of the big, external, impersonal machineries of State; and the countervailing (thanx Gailbraith) maximumization of individualogy in the cybernetic stratificosity of post-scarcity society (Bureaucratase for "Do Your Own Thing", sorta)?

ynghi, ya nevah gonna hear me call ya louse, ya louse.

"ANARCHY AND AGRICULTURE"...well, I gotta plant that un a while fore I can say, but I'm sure it'll grow on me. Time, takes time....

Buck Coulson, Route 3, Hartford City, Indiana, 47348 (21 Jan 71)

Since Perry Chapdelaine called for a show of hands, I might comment that I don't know him personally and I have no intention of ever knowing him personally. That's what fanzines are for: to screen out the creeps before I have to be bothered with them in person. (I've used the system for 18 years now, and it works quite well; about 99% of fans are just as pleasant or repugnant in person as they are in print.)

I'm sort of a mild Robert Nathan fan. My own favorite is But Gently Day, which Swann doesn't mention (technically, I suppose, it isn't a fantasy, as it is all explained as a dream sequence). But I'd rank Portrait of Jennie and There Is Another Heaven fairly high. Unfortunately for my admiration of Nathan, I picked up in fairly rapid succession a remaindered hardcover of Sir Henry and a paperback of So Love Returns and lost much of my enthusiasm. I suppose eventually I'll get some more of his good work and regain the enthusiasm, but right now there are so many other people to read--like T. B. Swann.

Loved Gilliland's verse.

I earnestly hope that David Hulvey is someone's idea of a joke. Even a bad joke is preferable to taking that garbage at all seriously, but with fans you can't always maybe sometimes tell.

Leonard Daventry writes a fascinating letter. He even inspires me to read his next novel (which is more than reading his last novel did). But anyone who can write like that is going to turn out a masterpiece eventually.

Isaac Asimov, New York, New York (25 Jan 71)

... Jay Kay Klein writes the best darned reports on conventions in the world. In the first place he is clear and entertaining. Secondly, he is accurate. Oh, sure, he makes tiny mistakes now and then, but they are never important. Thirdly, he makes it live. When I read the report of a convention I've attended, I see it all before my eyes again. When I read the report of a convention I haven't attended, it seems to me it is almost as though I did.

If Jay Kay ever thinks he isn't appreciated--let me say that I appreciate him, and I know for a fact that there are others who do, too.

In fact, the Mondo Con which was just held in New York, and which was quite successful in terms of numbers attended (and more than successful in its on-time, smoothly-running, big-name program--Harlan Ellison, Hal Clement, Lester del Rey,



Robert Silverberg and ME) and a great credit to Gale Burnick--was half-ruined for me by Jay Kay's absence. It was the first convention in years that I attended without seeing him.

Where were you, Jay Kay?

Pat Coyle, 1026 29th St., N.W., Wash.,
D.C., 20007 (31 Jan 71)

Regarding Mark Owings' Edmond Hamilton bibliography in THE WSFA JOURNAL #73, and in particular the Captain Future series:

1. Red Sun of Danger was in STARTLING STORIES Spring/45, not in CAPTAIN FUTURE Spring/45.
2. I don't have the copies in hand and can't verify this, but supposedly The Three Planeteers (SS 1/40) and "Doom Over Venus" (TWS 2/40) were either the first Captain Future stories or were precursors of them and possibly should be included in that series.
3. For what it's worth, Days of Creation (by Samachson, not Hamilton), has been reprinted by Popular Library as Tenth Planet.
4. CAPTAIN FUTURE MAGAZINE was an unusual periodical in one respect: although a quarterly, there were only 3 numbers to a volume--in other words, 1 1/3-volumes per year. Does anyone know why this was done?

II. TWJ #74.

Mike Glicksohn (address above)

(4 Feb 71)

TWJ 74 certainly shows the results of putting one issue out on top of the last...who ever heard of a TWJ lettercol with only four letterhacks! I trust your regulars will soon adjust to your new schedule since I'll be honest and admit that I read the letters with more enthusiasm than most of the other contents. For me, best piece this issue was Thomas Burnett Swann's moving eulogy (or perhaps paean would be the more appropriate word) to King Kong. I have rarely seen my feelings so well expressed by anyone else, and the piece is a great testament to Kong and to Swann himself. I've seen the film many times and generally have to sit through the laughter and jeering of a cynical audience in order to once more experience the majesty and grandeur of Kong's tragic existence. Who minds the slightly jerky animation, the stilted dialogue? Not me! Kong's triumph over the forces of civilization that try and force him to conform to their petty standards is the best tonic for an ailing sense of wonder that I know of. Thank you, Mr. Swann, for voicing our mutual sentiments so eloquently.

Alas, I guess I just am not a trufan after all. I don't want to know that much about Stanislaw Lem. I'll read his book when it comes out, but with so much to do and so much to read and so little time for it all, I'm afraid that 18 pages on Lem is more than I want to undertake right now. On to the letters, brief as they are.

Jeff Smith has a valid point concerning the differences between serialized versions of novels and the final pb editions, but I can't help but wonder if that

argument isn't a bit academic. Of what real use are prozine reviews anyway? What I mean is, surely those who are going to buy the prozines will do so anyway, while those who haven't bought them aren't likely to find reviews much use as the issues will probably no longer be available by the time the reviews appear. I suppose reviews in a very regular newszine such as LOCUS might help somewhat, but even then, assuming a reviewer waited to review a novel until all parts had been published, by the time his review appeared the earlier segments of the novel would no longer be available. It's difficult enough to give paperback reviews much relevance, the way the publishers pull the books off the stands after a week or two, but I've always wondered just what the philosophy behind prozine reviews would be? At whom are they aimed? Does anyone use them for anything? Jeff? Richard?

Sandra Miesel, 8744 N. Pennsylvania St., Indianapolis, Ind., 46240 (16 Feb 71)

Re Ted Pauls' review of Nebula Award Stories #3: I had heard that "Gary Wright", author of "Mirror of Ice", was actually a penname for Delany, even though the story originally ran as the first sale by an unknown newcomer in IF. I can't recall the source, but perhaps some reader knows the facts.

"And who is Darko Suvin?", asks David Halterman. Fie, David! A sharp rap across the knuckles with a copy of EXTRAPOLATION for you. Darko Suvin is an associate professor at McGill University and a noted expert on SF in Communist countries. He edited the anthology Other Worlds, Other Seas: Science Fiction From Socialist Countries (Random, 1970).

We're only two readers, but we love you Alexis. Mit dir, mit dir. (Hope you don't mind my use of the du, Doll.) Even if we don't necessarily share every one of your opinions.

Now as much as I usually like Ted Paul's reviews, I must take exception to his piece on Satan's World in #74. Perhaps the vividness Ted finds in Van Rijn is due to the character being closely modeled on a real man--a 17th-century Danish King. Falkyn is dull as ditchwater of course, but I rather like Chee and Adzel. (Reminds one of the Noreascon symbols. Possible costume idea there, if anyone's interested. Couldn't talk my husband into playing Adzel, drat.) Let's bear in mind that SW was the fourth volume in a series and the characters do change with the passage of time. (Anderson's Technic Civilization series includes more than thirty items so far and is nowhere near complete.)

I strongly disagree with Ted's contention that Van Rijn is Anderson's only successful character. What about Reymont in Tau Zero, MacKenzie in "No Truce With Kings", Cynbe Ru Taren in Starfox, Holger Carlson in 3 Hearts & 3 Lions, yes, and even Flandry? (If I ever meet another fan who shares my fondness for Flandry, I shall stare at him or her in utmost amazement. More likely to be a she, for as Georgette Heyer says, most women are partial to rakes.) The sensitive delineation of character is not one of Anderson's literary goals. He has said very plainly in both essays and fiction that he has no intention of discussing "grubby little neuroses". He is interested in stories and ideas embodied in stories. He has no peer in the creation of environments, in placing cultures within those environments, and watching their interaction.

"Smooth, professional but unexciting prose style" is rather faint praise to be damning with, Ted. You make Anderson sound like the early Silverberg! Have his compact, sensuous descriptive passages escaped your notice? They haven't escaped Panshin's and Blish's. I suppose his work must be called conventional in structure--no NEW WORLDS gimmickravery--but he's run through all the variations of person, viewpoint, treatment and so forth. It requires naught but the meanest of intelligence to recognize that his two most serious novels, The Enemy Stars and Tau Zero, ask similar questions about the purpose of human life and the ability of men to surmount obstacles against a precisely thought-out scientific background, but do this in entirely different ways. TES is built up almost entirely of interior monologs while TZ is wholly external observation by the omniscient author. Perhaps because Poul is too modest to indulge in frequent self-advertisement his experiments go unremarked.

And it is immensely wearisome to point out for the nth time that Anderson has built societies along every conceivable line: "monarchism, feudalism, anarchism, and assorted kinds of timocracy, bureaucracy, military government, socialism, and even 18th-Century American liberalism". (Quoting an Anderson LoC in the last SPECULATION.) He is vastly more pragmatic and flexible than most critics are willing to admit. In the last episode of "Fatal Fulfillment" he even satirizes his own utopia. I don't think Ted has touched on Anderson's most important and persistent characteristics: desire for challenge, for endless frontiers; a sensitivity to nature worthy of an English Romantic poet; an aching sense of responsibility; the wish to maximize individual opportunity. Where he really tends to repeat himself is in the tastes of his characters for Scotch, poker, Mozart, folk music, and traditional art, etc. If anyone would wish to examine Anderson's literary fingerprint closely, try studying Vernor Vinge (particularly "Grimm's World" and "Apartness"). He duplicates Anderson to an uncanny degree--characters, plot, structure, emotional tone, even the style of proper names. (But he isn't a pen name, he's real.) Vinge's sentences are awkward, though.

Enough. It's cold up here on my soapbox. My armor is chafing. Bah, Humbug!

Robert Silverberg, New York, NY (sorry this is out of order) (4 Feb 71)

Ordinarily I'm not delighted to see writers providing fanzines with resonant, and pretentious data on their own output, as if they mean to establish the record for their future biographers. But as long as Ted Pauls and Jerry Lapidus have started discussing certain patterns in the development of my own work, I think I ought to get one bit of information into the open concerning To Live Again. Although it wasn't published until Sep 69, well after Nightwings and Up the Line and a lot of other books, it was actually completed in January 1967--it comes after Thorns and Those Who Watch (written in 1966) but precedes the novel version of Hawksbill Station and Masks of Time (both later in 1967). So the complexity and tightness of To Live Again's plot, in comparison with the plots of novels of mine published in '67-'68, doesn't mean that I learned anything new about the art of plotting after, say, Masks of Time. Actually I lost interest in the sort of slick intricate plotting represented by To Live Again several years ago, and the 2½-year delay in getting the book into print is bound to confuse anyone trying to draw conclusions about my development from that book. The actual chronological order of my books since 1966 is Thorns, Those Who Watch, To Live Again, Hawksbill Station, Masks of Time, Man in the Maze, Nightwings, Up the Line, Downward to the Earth, Tower of Glass, Son of Man, The World Inside, A Time of Changes, and The Second Trip, with the last four unpublished in book form as of February 1971. (They'll be coming up over the next year.)

Dave Hulvey (address above) (23 Feb 71)

"All knowledge to the people" is one slogan I can really get into these days. It says a lot more to me than many Mickey Mouse cliches I used to oink at passers-by for the New Left Clause. Today, Alexis Gilliland's words whisper a message that I can dig, but the best rhetoric loses force in the immediacy of situation ethics or somesuch. I'm skeptical that the New Left deserves the decent burial, because although a gaggle of intellectuals legitimized well-reasoned Leftish positions with which I can heartily agree, the New New Left theologian may find "let's f--k in the streets" as his polemics. Too many extremists want to make revolution without accepting the responsibility of the actual act. If the revolution makes itself, well, who makes the revolution make itself? Some force must fill the vacuum and it ain't sugar-coated or brass-knuckled sermons by Baez or Marcuse. Pie is still in the sky if its shares are divided in a nonexistent Revolution, Inc. So, where are you, America? The Calley and Manson trials provide the contrasting evidence of where our nation could go: Left celebration of death to Right celebration of death. What, I wonder, ever happened to the feast of life?

Stanislaw Lem's success story has an element of tragicomical happenstance a little hard to be contrived. There, in the midst of the Marxist-Leninist desert of moral aridities an intelligent human being can write of the One World as a sentient soupforce of life. Poland is a very ironical setting for such an interesting work of metaphysical speculation of the godmind gone beyond socialist realism into a surreal dream of telepathy. Perhaps the god represents a more theological communist of the spirit of fiction, a statement that we may dream of the past, and it of us also.

Roy Tackett, 915 Green Valley Rd NW, Albuquerque, NM, 87107 (23 Feb 71)

. . . I was very pleased to see the articles on/by Stanislaw Lem. These glimpses of the science fiction/fantasy field outside the Anglo-American sphere, particularly in Eastern Europe, are all too rare. Or maybe I just read the wrong magazines. It is a pity that, for so many of us, the barrier of language is all too real. Rottensteiner is providing a great service in doing the translations.

You indicate that you expect your readers to find Lem's articles rather heavy going, but they are not. What Lem is saying is simply that science fiction (emphasis: SCIENCE fiction) must obey the laws and rules of science as they are known--anything else is fantasy.

American SF authors once enjoyed "playing the game" with each other and with the readers. The idea was to concoct seemingly fantastic or impossible situations which, nevertheless, conformed to all the laws of science. The readers had great fun trying to pull it apart, but if the author had done his homework properly he was able to satisfactorily answer all criticism.

Most of the newer writers seem to have gotten away from this. To many of them SF is the easiest thing in the world to write as no research is required; all that is necessary is to dream something up and put it down on paper. But, of course, such stories are not SF; they are simply fairy tales and poor writing. If we can take Lem as an example then Eastern European SF writers are still playing the game.

This seems, however, to be a standard step in the development of the field. Eastern Europe, including the USSR, has just begun to develop a sophisticated technology and it is under these circumstances that SF begins to develop. (In technologically undeveloped areas there is lots of fantasy but no science fiction.) As was the case in the US and Western Europe in the early part of this century, the emphasis in SF is on the future of technology itself. I think that we have, however, reached the point where we accept almost anything as being technologically possible, and have turned to stories which emphasize the reaction and relationship of human beings to that technology. Eastern European writers, once sophisticated technology ceases to be a source of wonder and becomes commonplace, will, I am sure, also adopt that outlook in their stories.

This does not, however, excuse any SF writer from playing the game. The facts of nature and laws of the universe still exist and must be taken into account when writing SF.

It doesn't excuse them from knowing the basics of writing, either.

"The New Wave techniques are frequently deceiving", says D. Halterman, "in that they make the reader think that the story is poorly written, when it really is not." And that's one of the funniest statements I've read this past week.



Because of the slowdown in our typing ability caused by our continuing (and gradually worsening) eye condition, we have during the past year or so published fewer issues than were warranted by the amount of material on hand--thus causing a backup of material in some areas, in particular with some of the regular columns (book reviews, especially). In addition, in order to get an issue out in a reasonable time (and for economic reasons), we have decided to limit all but the annual DISCLAVE Special to 46 pages plus covers.

To take up the slack, and get out the backlog of material before it becomes too dates, we have been for the past few issues publishing 10-page Supplements to go out with TWJ to all TWJ subscribers. And, to fill the gap between bi-monthly issues, and get out the "news"-type material while it is still "news", we have been publishing the monthly SON OF THE WSFA JOURNAL.

The SON has met with a reasonably good response. But, when we started it, we had assurances of typing and publishing help, which has not been forthcoming. And the Supplements are self-defeating, in that (without typing/publishing help), we really don't save any more time and expense than we would if the material therein were published as part of TWJ itself.

Unless some typing/publishing help is forthcoming, it will be impossible for us to continue publishing TWJ/SOTWJ on any sort of a reasonable schedule (quarterly would be the best we could manage). So, this is an appeal for such help... typing stencils is a real drag when one is reduced to 1/5th of one's normal speed (and that was hunt-and-peck typing, to boot!)....

Is such help is forthcoming, we plan to have 10-page blocks of material typed and/or published at a time, and assemble the 'zine when all sections are completed. Such sections as the prozine review column, the book review section, and the new book review index, e.g., ideally lend themselves to such block production.

Regardless of what happens, though, we are cutting back (when the Diplomacy games we are running have been completed) to just four magazines: THE WSFA JOURNAL, SON OF THE WSFA JOURNAL (which will become the TWJ supplement, rather than just the "news" supplement), THE GAMESMAN, and THE GAMESLETTER (which is now a supplement to THE GAMESMAN, rather than the Games Bureau Official-Organ).

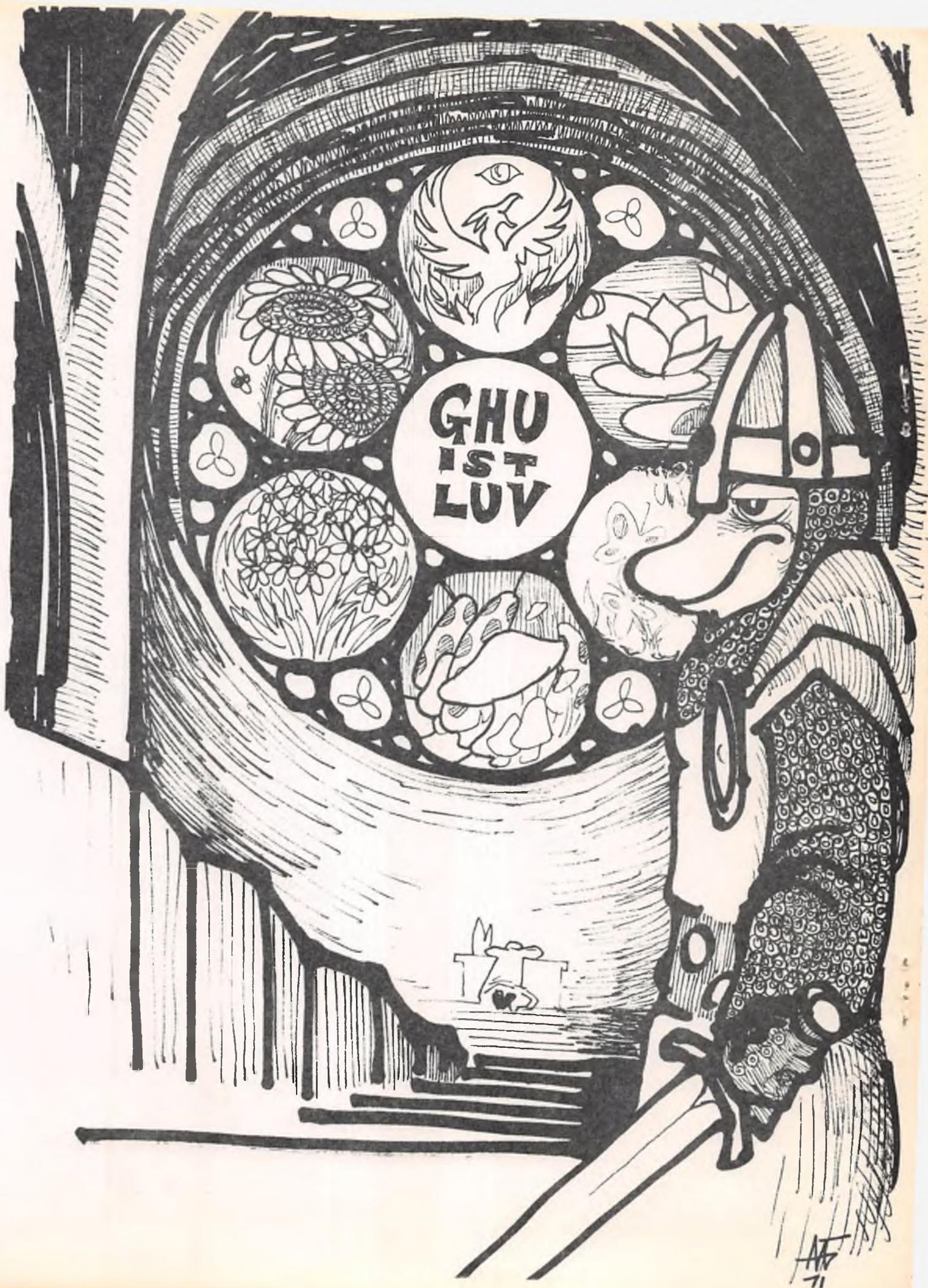
Starting with issue #17, SOTWJ will have at least one issue per month consisting entirely of book reviews until all of the 1970 reviews are out. The periodic installments of Hal Hall's 1971 Book Review Index will also be published as issues of SOTWJ. "News" material will be intermingled with general material where possible.

The entire backlog of material (other than reviews) will be published by the DISCLAVE, and we will be caught up with the book reviews before the end of the summer. After that (and this is where we want some feedback from our readers--namely, what do you think of the idea?), we plan to publish only book reviews and the Book Review Index as issues of SOTWJ. However, we are also considering (again, your opinion is solicited) running 1971 installments of the prozine column and possibly "The Electric Bibliograph" as separate issues (for easy handling by those who wish to file them together, to make use of any typing/publishing help, and to enable the host of shorter items we receive to be published in their entirety in the JOURNAL proper, as soon as possible after their receipt).

TWJ itself would then consist of articles, letters, artwork (including some portfolios), occasional poems (fiction would still appear in DISCLAVE Specials, and perhaps sometimes in SOTWJ), columns, self-contained review sections (such as "Doll's House", "Swordplay & Sorcery", "The Inkworks", "Sleuthing Around for Clues") grouped reviews such as Dave Halterman's recent "Reprints", long, in-depth reviews such as the I, Robot review in this issue (perhaps this will encourage some longer, in-depth reviews than most of the ones we are currently receiving), and reprints from foreign 'zines (another question for our readers: would you like to see us occasionally reprint material from non-US 'zines, such as the Lem material in TWJ 74? Here would be a good place in which to put our Translators to work.).

We'll have more to say--and to ask our readers--in TWJ #76.

A list of all avail. back-issues of TWJ, SOTWJ, & misc. Supplements has been published; if interested, send 6¢ stamp. But hurry, as prices will go up in May when postage rates rise--and supplies are very limited on most issues.



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