



BEABOHEMA 3

BeABohema is available for contributions of words or artwork or wisdom or plastic plaques, letters of comment, fanzines in trade or for 60¢ per issue. Subscriptions are available at 4/\$2. Back issues are available: #2 (only about five copies left) is 40¢, #3, 4 and 6 are 60¢ each, #5 is 75¢ and #7 is 60¢ too. I feel like clearing these things out, so if you want a back issue let me know about it now and I'll let them go for the prices I just mentioned above. Next issue they'll probably go up because they get to be a pain after a while.

BAB is edited by and published by Frank Lunney at 212 Juniper St, Quakertown, Pa. 18951. Submissions of artwork should be sent to Jim McLeod, the ArSe Ed at 7909 Glen Tree Dr., Citrus Heights, Ca. 95610. This is Deuysch Neudle Press Mark II publication 12. Copyright Francis G. Lunney 1970. New Melanie is playing at the moment. Finally found a Tom Lehrer album today. *Wow*

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Art work

Cover by Jim McLeod

Tim Kirk--3, 18, 21
Mike Gilbert--4, 5, 13, 23, R3, R4, R7
Bill Rotsler--9, 10, 13, 14, 16, 19, 22, L1, L17, 1
Derek Carter--12
Jack Gaughan--15
Bill Peon--20
Gabe Eisenstein--R1
Jim McLeod--R6, R9, R12, L9, L10
Connie Reich Faddis--R10
Alexis Gilliland--L5, L6
Andy Porter--L13

Bacover by Jim McLeod



I really plan on cutting down on the mailing list of BAB to go along with the cutdown in size, in order to further reduce my workload and make BAB a fanzine that gets some feedback, because it makes me feel a lot better when I hear from people after sending them this mother'a few times. So, if you've been receiving BAB as the result of goodwill on my part for the past few issues, you'd better do something in return, baby, or else....

BABBLINGS

It may not seem so upon first leafing through this issue of BAB, but it was put together in a relatively short time. Relatively short, that is, when compared with past issues, when I've dragged the production over the entire period between that issue and the preceeding issue. I didn't start work on the book reviews until a month ago, with the letters coming a short time later. This procedure is a lot different from The Way Things Have Always Been. I had been telling myself that it was because I didn't have the artwork electrostenciled—I get everything done for one issue at one time—that I didn't start on the main part of BAB, and then I checked some of the letters I normally would have answered and didn't; I looked at the old correspondents fading away, or letting more and more time go between answers; I looked at myself letting long-time correspondence sag.

I noticed my disinterest with most of sf. With fanzines. With fandom.

My enthusiasm for music increased. I found myself coming home from school each day and putting records on the stereo and then looking through the mail, more often than not containing ROLLING STONE or The LA Free Press rather than the fanzines which used to come every day.

And I see the groups I came into fandom with fading away. The numbers of us still left from My Age—late 1967 when I joined NFFF, August 1968 when I published the first issue of BAB—are rather small, it seems to me, and I believe I've experienced the drop-out that every new fan reads about and hears about when he first becomes active in fandom, but never really believes. Everyone reads that fans come and go as their interest in the activity increases and lessens, but no one can visualize the day when the mailbox is empty for weeks at a time, finally being filled with mundane bills and the "real" trash mail. Dropping out of fandom is something a new fan finds hard to conceive of.

But I see it going on around me now, with the people I've known from the first no longer present.

And it's remindful of the urge to escape, fans making like lemmings. Too many people see fandom as a closed group unable to get into other fields, and the free people see factionalism in fandom—fans knocking, and I mean seriously knocking, sf devotees, political people being bumrapped, comics fans being called names—and a lot of it can't be accepted. I mean, getting heated over whether someone takes drugs or doesn't work: it's senseless.

I have the funny feeling that fandom may be keeping me in a constant state of depression lately. The fights within the macrocosm may be reflective of the larger view, but it's getting to me all the same. Constant depression is the result. A feeling of exhaustion is inside me all the time. Only thing is, my brief gafia didn't do anything for it, so...it has to be the outside world as well.

My solution is to do nothing about it, and work for change within myself and that's it. I'm not going to work my ass off for anything anymore. BAB is going to be a fanzine I want to put out, and I'm not going to have issues like the old mothers that were 80-110 pages long, no matter how some of the neofans may dig reading the big issues and the subscribers may dig getting a giant-sized magazine for 60¢. I can't expend the effort any more.

My changing attitude may be evident in this issue, as I believe it's only about 50 pages long, which is a hell of a lot shorter, though it may not be the personalzine of the 20-page variety. I hope to be able to keep it around this size, or maybe even get it a little shorter, as I believe it makes for a more interesting magazine all around, the reader not being as swamped with articles and subjects and my not being swamped with the work needed into publishing 110 pages.

So watch the next issue double in size.

*

The cover on this issue is terrible compared to the original, people. Jim worked up a beautiful scratchboard illo, and I've found that scratchboard just won't make it with offset. The printer told me he made about four different plates for the illustration, and he wasn't able to make it come out just right. The lines were fine, and I can understand the trouble he'd have. It came back today, and I saw the copies when I got home. Detail is lacking and it's pretty much of a disaster. I'm sorry.

*

Looking through this issue of BAB you may find some "Rotsler for TAFF" cartoons, and they are indicative of the way I'm planning to vote this time around. This will be, in fact, the first time I'll be eligible to vote in a TAFF election, and Bill Rotsler deserves the trip, so follow the signs.

*

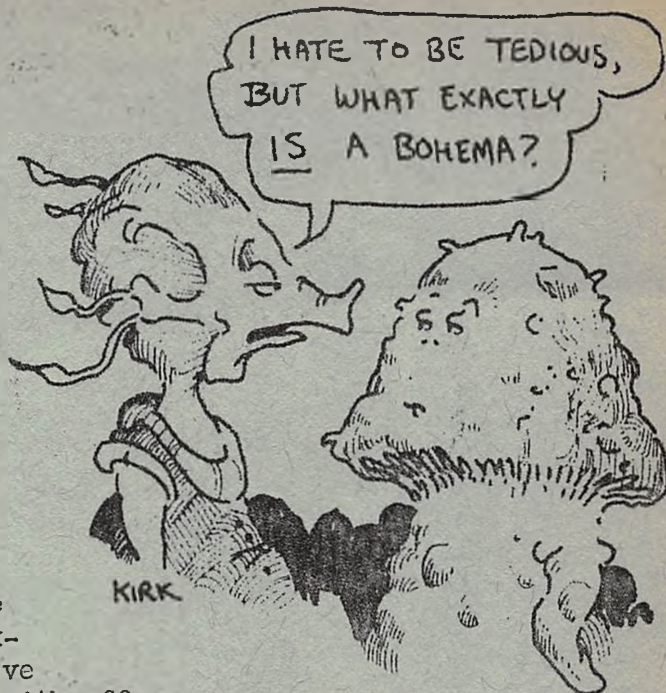
Before I'm accused of sponsoring a "Jump on Justin St. John" issue with the article by John Pierce and the letter in Cum Bloatus by Robert Whitaker, let me say that the letter came to me first. Robert sent it to me after seeing the Johnny Berry review of BAB in AMAZING, the review appearing in the same issue as a letter from Justin St. John, I believe. Well, Robert isn't what you'd call a fan who's been carrying some heavy activity for the last few years, so I doubt that his opinion has been shaped over a long period of time. Rather, he's seen St. John's attacks in SFR and the letter in AMAZING, and that's it. In a short period of time, St. John has managed to become the most fuggheaded person in fandom, replacing John J. Pierce, who has been rather level-headed lately. (Pax, John!) He's been able to alienate fanzine receivers with his GREEN TOWN REVIEW, a modest piece of....well, call it what you will. He's offended readers with his letters in SFR. He's set non-fans against him with his rantings against John Pierce in AMAZING.

And now he's disappeared. GREEN TOWN REVIEW? Who knows where it is. Letters? I've heard that's he active in local fan circles, but not anything on a par with his previous level.

I started out trying to say something, but maybe I'd better say that this should be an anti-St. John issue, since he can be trying at times. But it is his neck, it's his rope, and it's his life.

I have my own rope.....

--FL



Way Station



by Dean R. Koontz

A disjointed column this time, because nothing much of high campy humor has happened to me to warrant several pages of exposition. So it goes.

Returned from Philcon after being highly inspired by The Living Silverberg, of whom I stood in awe from the time I was fifteen until-- Hell, even still! I am now wow working a 70 hour week (which is not so heavy when you work at home and don't have to dress for work, drive to and from work, take a full hour for lunch, etc.) and finding that the more I write the easier the task becomes. And the more lucrative, of course. I've earned as much in these first two months as I did all of last year--something a little over six thousand. I must admit that this could not have been done without my lovely and talented wife, with whom I have been collaborating on pseudonymous books (look out, Geis!). Gerda does the chapter-by-chapter outlines of our erotic work, fleshes them out with some prose, and I do a final draft in two days. I spend four days a month on erotic titles which pays the rent and all our other bills plus puts some into savings-- then I rush into the more serious work. The insurance provided by the erotic titles has made it easier for me to do what I want in sf--as I think will slowly become evident over the next year or so. I'm fairly pleased with The Dark Symphony, out from Lancer in March, and another title I'll do for Lancer as part of a five book option, if the editor likes it. Have both sides of an Ace double, maybe out this year yet, with a novel and a short story collection. And am getting into film work (more about that in later columns). The result of all this being that we have enough money to invest and have decided in favor of our own motion picture independent production company or our own magazine by the end of the year-- as opposed to blue chip stocks. We may lose every cent of a considerable investment in either project, but it will have been fun. And ever since I saw my first few feet of 16mm running on a screen, I've wanted to get into commercial films. I am star-struck, have gone Hollywood (you should see me in my Foster Grants) and lie beneath a sunlamp for two hours every day, acquiring that Miami-for-the-summer look...

One film project it seems I will be involved with is Vaughn Bode's projected ninety minute adult erotic cartoon tentatively titled Bode's Erotica, which a major company is showing solid interest in. Vaughn is coming down for two days this week, and we are rapping over a storyline

to prepare a ten page outline for the animation company interested in the project. If it goes, and prospects look very good, it will be my first script writing, though another project is currently wending its way through channels, of which I might be able to include more info next time.

Speaking of scripting: Theodore Sturgeon, according to Variety, is writing a script, under contract to a major studio which I forget momentarily, based on the Crosby, Stills and Nash song, "Wooden Ships" from their first album. Listen to the song. Think. Wonder...?

Wooden Ships on the water very free and easy...
Silver people on the shoreline leave us be...



Black sails knifing through the pitchblende night
Away from the radioactive landmass madness
From the silver suited people searching out.....

The "Deadbone" strip in CAVALIER, by the by, is going to three pages instead of four--but into full color!

A couple of days have passed since the first page of this was written (I am not so slow on all my writing, friends!) and I can report that Bode and I did the script outline. The movie may now be called "The Amorous Adventures of Puck," all about a lizard without reproductive organs and his Magic Wooden Dildo. There is no question, if the storyline remains intact, that this will get an X rating.

Look for an end, by the by, to the Bode sf strip currently being published...

Here's a bit taken from a letter from Gardner Dozois. Gardner was in the army for three years, and he has more or less (more) let his hair grow since getting out (as anyone attending the Philcon can attest). For those who often find themselves at a loss when faced with vicious right-wing epithets on the street, harken to this little take from Gardner's letter:

"A rather obnoxious man accosted me in a local grocery (NYC) and said, 'Lot of you fucking hippies around lately.'

"I replied: 'Lot of you fucking zombies around lately.'"

Hey, you've probably heard about the NYC sex papers, and if you get a chance to pick up SCREW on your next visit to the big city, do so. It is so refreshingly candid, and written in such good humor that it deserves all the support it can get. And, what I find most charming is that the thing is totally free of left-wing and right-wing political ramblings, unlike most underground papers these days. If there really is a Revolution, SCREW will have a lot more to do with it than the political activists, I think. SCREW deals with the gut issue of American anti-sexuality and fights for realistic freedom in all arts and all homes and for each individual without regard to that individual's political sentiments on the war, poverty or what have you. Pollution and the attempt to adopt a sensible code of sex laws may be the two issues uniting both radical wings in the future.

Well, after my rambling two issues ago about speaking at my old alma mater to a creative writing class, I thought I'd never accept such an offer again. But I did. I have the willpower of De Sade. Anyway, I will be scheduled to speak for forty-five minutes, this June 15, to a congregation of high school teachers attending a four day fest to present them with new ideas for the English classroom. My subject is teaching of fantasy and science fiction... Maybe there will be a BAB column from that...

Well, you see, they're paying me fifty bucks, and I'm greedy...

Besides, now that Lunney is paying 12¢ a word for BAB articles...

I see the Oscar nominations have been made. Though some quality films are included, there is little question where the awards will go--to the idiots as usual. After viewing probably a hundred films last year, most likely more, my own candidates, if you're interested, are as follows (I'd be interested in your opinions; sometimes I need someone to point something out in a film so I can re-judge it):

Best Film: MIDNIGHT COWBOY.

Best Actor: Dustin Hoffman for the role of Ratso Rizzo. There is little question that the most genuinely human, moving moment in motion picture history is the last twenty minutes of MIDNIGHT COWBOY. I went to see the film nine times (seven times for \$.50 because the theater that had it for thirteen weeks here has a Thursday Shopper's Matinee for that price) and never once left the theater dry-eyed. And the god-damned ushers, at both nighttime performances (the same ushers) we saw, were crying in the end. But we all know that John Wayne will win for TRUE GRIT, a moderately successful movie of a poor adaptation of a good book.

Best Supporting Actor: Hard one. Either Jack Nicholson for EASY RIDER or Gig Young for THEY SHOOT HORSES, DON'T THEY?

Best Actress: Jane Fonda for THEY SHOOT HORSES, DON'T THEY? or...No, no other possibility here.

Best Supporting Actress: Sylvia Miles for MIDNIGHT COWBOY or Susannah York for THEY SHOOT HORSES, DON'T THEY?

Best Direction: Arthur Penn for ALICE'S RESTAURANT (A terribly tough piece of direction, by the very nature of the material and the storyline) or Costa Gavras for Z, a brilliant film.

Last year Cliff Robertson got the Oscar for a mediocre performance in CHARLY--sure, his "stupid Charly" was good, but his "genius Charly" was abysmal! And Alan Bates deserved the damn award for his tremendous work in THE FIXER, but then he didn't run full page ads in Variety, as Robertson did, didn't campaign for the award.

I sometimes think it ought to be possible for the movie industry to pool a heavy number of regular movie goers to find out patron feelings on the previous year's productions--like the Hugo awards. It seems when professionals start judging each other, the entire thing gets screwed up.

Hey, some of you might be put off by the general non-sf trend in the column, but: So it goes. I am beginning to find, in fact, a rise in interest for film, music and other interests, which fans consider a part of sf. Even when the film or music is not science fiction. I think this is because the cultish enthusiasm so long found almost exclusively in sf is being generated by underground music and the new style of meaningful films. Consider that the music played in the highly tragic ending of MIDNIGHT COWBOY is a song titled "Science Fiction" and is perhaps the most haunting piece of a fine musical score. The movie has nothing to do with sf--except that the people who made it seem to dig the fact that sf is now what we are living, not something to be dreamed of. Look around. See. So it goes.

So why don't I list what I consider the ten best cuts from albums or singles in 1969--and again solicit opinions. I will not list these in order of preference, because even picking ten out of such a beautiful musical year was difficult enough. But: "Walk on the Water" by the Cr  dence Clearwater Revival (CCR); "Effigies" by the CCR; "She Came in through the Bathroom Window", Beatles; "Lay, Lady, Lay" by Dylan; "Jingo" by Santana; "Helplessly Hoping" by Crosby, Stills and Nash; "Fortunate Son"

by the CCR; "Black Magic Woman" by Fleetwood Mac; "Wooden Ships" by Crosby, Stills & Nash; "The Boxer" by Simon and Garfunkel. I have purposefully omitted Led Zeppelin, because I can't forgive them for the commerciality of Album Two.

Look out for Jim Steranko, who is beginning to do Lancer covers. Some tremendous work (some mediocre), and a lot of promise.

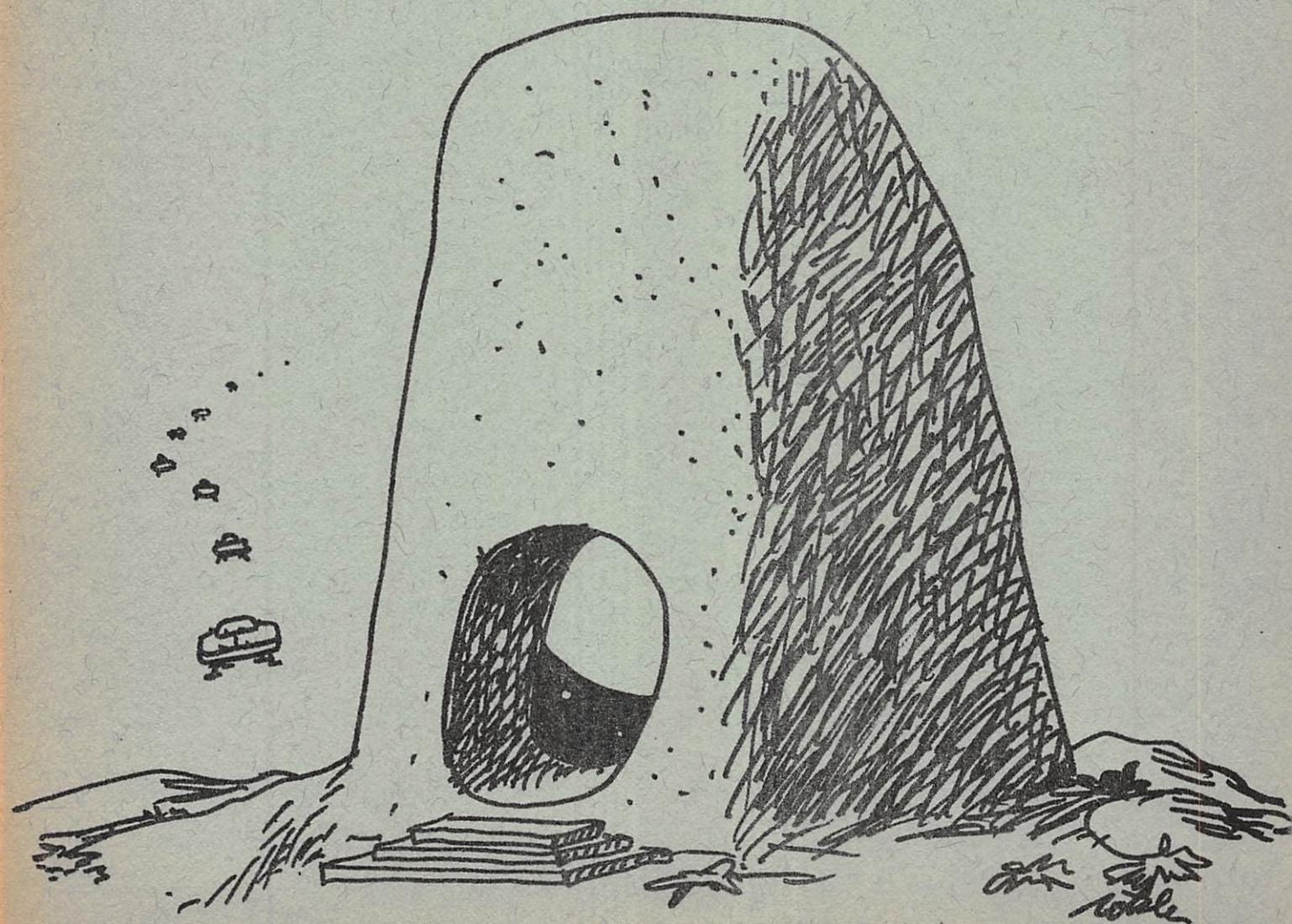
An end to this!

--Dean R. Koontz



ADDENDUM

piers anthony



Readers of this magazine are generally aware that this is my hangout for fan feuding, knives in the gut and similar fun. The number of other fanzines I write to can be numbered on the fingers of half a foot, or thereabouts. I still receive a few, however, and on hand is #7 of CROSSROADS. I have never written to this fanzine except through BAB, but I continue to get sundry mentions therein. Actually, it's not a bad production, considering the hypocrite who edits it. A few comments on the material pertaining to me, then:

James Blish--As I recall, neither Tucker nor I said anything about my being angry about earning \$17,000 from SF writing. This was simply my statement--made here in BAB, not CROSSROADS--of my position. Some people earn a million dollars writing, others earn nothing; I gave my figure for general information without either bragging or complaining. Tucker took me up, however, suggesting that it was too little money and pointing out that he had earned as much from a single novel. While I admit to a certain envy of his success there, I feel your comment is therefore irrelevant. Indeed, you might be interested in my Addendum of BAB #6, as you appear to suffer from incomplete information. No sense in taking exception to comments I never made, when I have provided more than enough on my own. Meanwhile, I am glad to see your own statistics--and I would like to see those of other writers, too. To correct another impression: my first seven years of commercial writing, largely part time, netted me no money at all. Everything was rejected. Had I written and submitted the same material 30 years earlier, however, I believe I would have sold the majority of it. By the time I was of age to write, the standards had risen; there were more markets, but it was still more competitive because of the difference between pulp standards and GALAXY standards. Consider also that people like me have had to break in by matching the standards of people like you--not your beginning standards, your current ones. Do you see now what I mean by greater competition?

JJ Pierce--Cute insinuation of yours there, that "appierance (sic)" bit. And Snider carefully avoids denying it. No, "Jeff Scott" is not me. I do not write about my own work anonymously, and I do not denigrate the work of other pros anonymously, as you must have observed by this time. In fact, I recall saying nothing anonymously, apart from the pseudonym you already know me by. I can, however, tell you something about this matter. Jeff Scott is a collaborative pseudonym fronted by a young man and a young woman whose mail is intercepted by their elders. I have known them both for several years (she has a lovely smile!) and am certain that the time will come when that particular situation changes. Wish them luck, even if you don't agree with their stated assessment of literature. (And pay no attention to the denial Al Snider will make about my comment. When the truth outs, you will see it is so.)

Dean Koontz--As I made plain before, Snider could have sent me a copy of CROSSROADS--had he wanted to. He did send me #2 at my prior address. But not #'s 3, 4 or 5. When I let it be known that I had no copies, he asked andy offut for my address. andy declined to provide it, but offered to forward the copies, and Snider agreed to this. Then he never sent them to andy, but went to Robert Margroff to ask for my address again. Never did he try to send one through SFWA or BAB, either. When he finally got my address, after promising Margroff not to abuse it, he sent me a copy of #6. Now, misaddressed but forwarded, I have #7. When you remember that it was #4 that had the "We Love You" section in it, you can appreciate the sort of dealings Snider has made, and perhaps begin to understand why I call him a hypocrite. And perhaps you have learned a bit more about me, too. If you really have things to say about me, try sending them to BAB. They'll either be published or forwarded, in contrast to what Snider does. (Remember, Dean, when you were telling me about fandom? Now Snider is telling you. And you can appreciate why writers get cynical, since my experience in fandom predated yours and yours may have predated Snider's. In time, you may tell someone to take a flying fuck...)

Bob Tucker--Glad you liked Omnivore. Now try Macroscopic, the first of my novels not to be recommended for the Nebula Award.

--Piers Anthony

THE INCREDIBLE JUSTIN ST. JOHN

BY JOHN J. PIERCE



When we see someone making an ass of himself, our first impulse is merely to point out the obvious.

However, when such a person not only continues his asinine behavior, but compounds it to such a degree as to make a public spectacle of himself, further comment is called for.

Such is the case with Justin St. John, editor of the Greentown Review and self-proclaimed enemy of the Second Foundation and so-called "traditionalist" science fiction. Mr. St. John's distortions and innuendos have been repeated for so long now that they can no longer be blamed on ignorance--only on malice.

Mr. St. John poses as a man of great inner conviction. But the fact of the matter is, he shows no evidence of having any real convictions. The opinions he expresses are a vague and confused jumble of other people's notions which he has not even bothered to put together into a coherent pattern.

He blusters a great deal about "moral philosophy" and a "science of ethics," backed with convenient catchphrases he picked up in the Objectivist Newsletter. To this he adds shopworn cliches against "traditionalist" S.F. which are obviously derived from diatribes published by Harlan Ellison and Richard Geis in Science Fiction Review, and notions about symbols and archetypes of the sort found in Riverside Quarterly and Judith Merrill's anthologies.

What, precisely, has Mr. St. John to say about the issues between "traditionalist" science fiction and the New Wave?



First, he claims that "traditionalist" S.F. is a "counterfeit Romanticism," based on nothing but "formula" plots and "hack" style, populated by heroes who achieve their ends only by "ray guns" or "magic swords," and who are utterly devoid of "ideals and convictions." He refers to all "traditionalist" writing as "Captain Future" and "Flash Gordon."

That these changes actually bear little if any relation to the truth Mr. St. John half-recognizes, for he admits to an admiration for Robert A. Heinlein--the epitome of all that is best in "traditionalist" writing. His hypocrisy in simultaneously praising Heinlein and denouncing "traditionalist" standards should be plain to all.

The fact is that "formula" and "hack" writing of the sort associated with Captain Future are by no means representative of what the Second Foundation--or most other "traditionalists"--support.

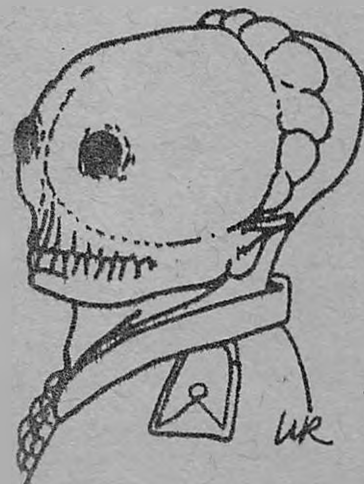
Writers like Heinlein, Isaac Asimov, Clifford Simak, Stanley G. Weinbaum, Arthur C. Clarke, Henry Kuttner, Catherine Moore, Frederik Pohl, Lester del Rey, Cordwainer Smith, Roger Zelazny, Ursula LeGuin and many others have always been known for their individual approaches to plot, style, theme and characterization. No one with any knowledge of science fiction could seriously claim that they hew to formulas or write in identical styles.

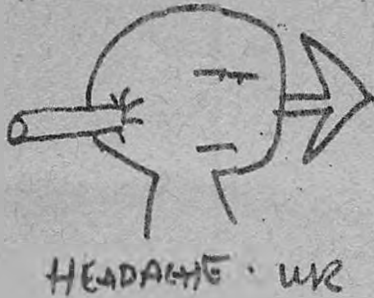
And the heroes of their stories do not and never have achieved their ends either by "ray guns" or by "magic swords." They achieve their ends through thought, through reasoned action. Furthermore, all major "traditionalist" writers have distinctive moral philosophies, which they have clearly expressed in their stories, and which their heroes usually represent. Perhaps their philosophies are not the same as Mr. St. John's--but this is beside the point.

In any case, Mr. St. John's ranting against "ray guns" and "magic swords" seems hypocritical in view of the fact that Christopher James, one of his own ideological comrades, had high praise for the "Conan" series in the Greentown Review. If any "traditionalist" author ever substituted magic devices for "ideals and convictions," Robert E. Howard was the one. How can Mr. St. John justify this contradiction in his outlook?

Second, Mr. St. John claims that the New Wave is a "revolt" against the "counterfeit Romanticism" of "Traditionalist" S.F., and he claims further that the goal of this revolt is to create a genuine Romanticism based on a "science of ethics" and on heroes who combine the "real" with the "ideal" as role models. He proposes that a "projection of man" is replacing a "projection of science."

Mr. St. John's major piece of "evidence" to support his position is Norman Spinrad's Bug Jack Barron. A curious choice, in view of the fact that Spinrad's background is thoroughly that of a hack writer, whose attempts at stylistic brilliance resemble Tugboat Annie trying to be a ballerina, and whose overall approach shows no real sympathy for Romantic ideals, "counterfeit" or otherwise.





Spinrad began his career writing hackneyed space operas like The Solarians. This is a common practice for new writers with little talent. Under the influence of Harlan Ellison, he switched his sympathies to the New Wave, and made a minor reputation with The Men in the Jungle, a rather seamy Naturalistic expose of a megalomaniac who has delusions of idealism but is in reality motivated only on a glandular level.

But Bug Jack Barron, we are told, represents a new departure--a "real" hero who "initiates" action rather than merely reacting to a situation, and who, presumably, represents "moral philosophy" in a sense that no "traditionalist" hero ever did. How much of this is the truth?

Well, to begin with, Jack Barron no more "initiates" action than any other hero in a man-against-the-machine plot. He is the typical protagonist of such stories who stumbles into a situation that shows the nastiness of the powers that be, reacts to it, and eventually leads a "revolt" of one kind or another.

But there seems to be an element of parody in this, as shown by deliberately banal dialogue and interior monologue, repeated endlessly, Captain Futurisms like "I hate you, you dirty rat," and an unbelievable "menace" borrowed from a B-movie called "The Man Who Could Cheat Death." Jack Barron is motivated in the climax only by guilt--not ideals.

In view of the fact that Spinrad's short stories since Bug Jack Barron have reflected the same cynical, New Wave attitude as found in The Men in the Jungle, Mr. St. John's example can be interpreted as at best a fluke, and at worst a parody of the man-against-machine story--in the same tradition as the Batman TV show, or the James Bond Movies.

Mr. St. John cites Ray Bradbury as another example of the New Wave revolt--and here he is so absurd that little comment is necessary save to point out that Bradbury made his debut 25 years before the advent of the New Wave, has never been associated with the New Wave, and does not express the attitudes associated with the New Wave.

He dismisses J.G. Ballard, Thomas Disch, Harlan Ellison and other leading lights of the NEW WORLDS and Dangerous Visions schools of the New Wave as an "inconsistent minority," when it is a well-known fact that these authors are the major proponents of the New Wave and set the standards for it--standards that are anti-heroic, anti-rational and nihilistic, and certainly devoid of genuine "ideals and convictions," much less a "moral philosophy."



He tries to round out his case with references to Roger Zelazny and Samuel Delany--who clearly grow out of the Romantic tradition in science fiction--and with borderline cases like Robert Silverberg and R.A. Lafferty. All these writers--along with Ballard and Ellison and Kurt Vonnegut--have in common, he says, is "distinctive" style.

Some of the styles--particularly Zelazny's and Delany's--are distinctive. Others are borrowed from other science fiction writers--Lafferty tends to parody Cordwainer Smith, though not very well--and still others borrow from "experimental" techniques previously used by the mainstream, from the stream-of-consciousness of James Joyce to the anti-psychological approach of the anti-novel to the cut-and-paste method of William S. Burroughs.

The most extreme of the styles are used for the same purpose they served in the mainstream: to express the hopelessness, despair and confusion of the authors. Proponents of the New Wave have made no secret of this--the attitudes of Ballard, Disch, Ellison and others are quite clear. Yet Mr. St. John chooses to treat these attitudes as if they were of no particular significance,

Nor has he ever explained how authors whose beliefs--if any--are generally mystical, often based on the psychedelic experience, astrology, spiritualism, Oriental religion and the like, can possibly create the "science of ethics" he sees emerging from the New Wave. Even the writers on the borderline between the New Wave and "traditionalist" science fiction tend to define moral issues in terms of neo-religious fads and nut cults.

Mr. St. John has repeatedly denounced the lack of "definitions" in science fiction; but he has never yet supplied one of his own. Through all his letters, reviews, essays and editorials there runs no clear idea of any kind about the nature and function of the genre--particularly insofar as that nature and function would distinguish the aims and purposes of S.F. from those of the mainstream.

This is hardly surprising--his major source, the Objectivist movement, has never had anything to say about science fiction in particular, only mainstream fiction. Lacking guidance from his chosen authority, Mr. St. John can only flounder about with half-measures and empty rhetoric.

His continuing hypocrisy is manifested in examples too numerous to catalog. He continually objects to "package deals" and "evasions." Yet he makes "package deals" lumping in the best "traditionalist" writers with Flash Gordon and Captain Future, and evades the obvious fact that the best "traditionalist" writers always created individual styles, plots, moral philosophies and real heroes.

Again through a "package deal," he seeks to link Bradbury, Zelazny, Delany and other "traditionalist" writers to the New Wave--evading the knowledge that the philosophies of these writers have nothing in common with those of the creators of the New Wave like Ballard, Disch, Ellison and Vonnegut, nor with the attitudes supported by New Wave critics like Judith Merrill and Michael Moorcock.



In his first notable appearance in a fanzine letter column, he made a sarcastic reference to the private sex life of Dr. Asimov, and characterized Dr. Asimov's works as "pre-digested pabulum." Yet he later denied saying anything about this author's sex life, and also denied implying that he was a hack writer. In one article--never published--he denounced the idea that certain writers could "dominate" the New Wave, while simultaneously avowing that modern culture is "dominated" by irrationality.

In one letter, he condemned Ellison for using four-letter words. Yet he praised Spinrad for a novel full of four-letter words. He denies belonging to an ideological movement, while using rhetoric that clearly types him as an Objectivist. He denounces "bromides"--yet repeats the same cliché-ridden attacks on "traditionalist" science fiction even after these have been answered. He continually engages in personal insults--yet feigns injured innocence when called to account.

Mr. St. John hostility toward the Second Foundation is largely the result of a fit of pique--aroused by private correspondence from myself criticizing his attack on Dr. Asimov.

His own Greentown Review reveals a shallow understanding of science fiction--in his critical essays, Mr. St. John vacillates between belaboring the obvious and missing the point entirely. His work habits must also come in for criticism--disappointed subscribers have yet to see any sign of a second issue of his fanzine.

Finally, there is the question of Mr. St. John's identity. A friend of mine was once given the phone number of Dennis Raimondo--listed as the "business manager" of the Greentown Review--as the number to call in order to get in touch with Mr. St. John.

My friend called this number, and asked for Mr. Raimondo. His mother explained that Mr. Raimondo was away at school. My friend then asked if Mr. St. John were there. "Oh, that's Dennis," Mrs. Raimondo answered. Mr. St. John, one may recall, recently denounced an essayist in Crossroads for hiding behind a pseudonym.

I don't believe anything further need be said.

--John J. Pierce, Jan. 30. 1970



THE INSIDE STORY OF WHY ENGLAND WILL PUBLISH ANYTHING

BY
PAUL
HAZLETT

I heard a rumor the other day which sounded hopeful: "Gordon Dickson, the new SFWA president, is trying to make SFWA a true 'professional' organization, rather than a special interest group established for special people."

I would like Gordon to consider permitting fandom representatives on the SFWA Board of Directors!

Most pro SF writers seem willing to acknowledge the fact that science fiction writers came from fandom, but most seem unwilling to also acknowledge that fandom is anything but a necessary evil.

I've heard Fred Pohl speak, for example, to the point that the "only way to become a SF writer is to be a fan first."

Now Fred may have been embellishing a point, as he can on occasion do with gusto. If only partially correct, fandom as the cradle of SF writers has a material stake in the SFWA organization. Surely we ought to have some voice, as well as open and above-board feedback into the nest.

Colleges across the nation, for example, are becoming more liberal daily in the establishment of student representation on their various boards.

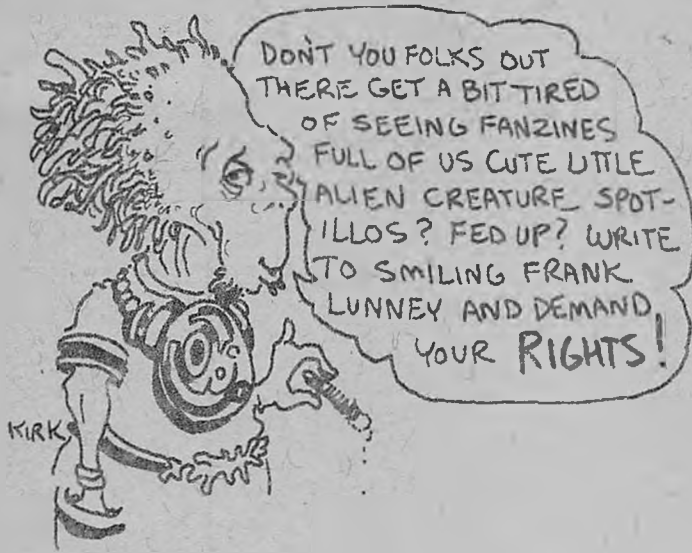
Then, too, the world of fandom is the main prop of most SF writers--not so much in sales, as in the hucksterism and jacketitis as mentioned in THE INSIDE STORY OF HUGO WINNING, last BAB issue.

For those reasons, if for no others, we fans ought to closely inspect SFWA very closely, including its underpinnings.

I had occasion to visit England recently, and also the opportunity to explore the validity of one of SFWA's rules. Only publication in America can serve as a proper membership credential. One excellent writer--a friend of mine and also SFWA member--has had seven excellent novels published in England, none of which serve as proper credentials. Could there be that large a gap between the publishers of England and America?

This is the simple story I learned while in England. English publishers will publish anything because they have nothing on hand they consider any good, and

A PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT:



you have nothing on hand, and the presses are thirsting for fresh ink, what can you do but publish anything? I still recall the plaintive note in the voice of a publisher over the phone, "Can't you find me another John Wyndham?" If I had the time to write a sword-and-sorcery epic now, I could get it published though it were written backwards and in Swahili. I exaggerate, of course--but not much.

As a manuscript reviewer, I find this sickening--as a writer, I am of course grateful, as one's chances are that much better. In fact, even as a manuscript reviewer there are some advantages--now that Ballantine has pushed the boat out Stateside with books by Cabell and Dunsany, it is even possible

that some very fine and long-neglected British authors will be republished in England --by those who have been consistently overlooking them for decades. Lindsay's Voyage to Arcturus would never have had a second printing over in England had not old Victor Gollancz, an oddity among publishers if ever there was one, taken advantage of the fact that in wartime, with the paper-shortage and the blackouts at their height, people would read anything they could lay their hands on: thus it was possible to publish an "uncommercial" and have it sell. Perhaps we really do need another war!

You must bear in mind that quite a few publishers are unable to read anything but balance-sheets, and reluctant to pay manuscript reviewers. There is, on the other hand, an increasing demand for SF from the public--nothing runaway, but still a definite and continuing interest. I include fantasy here when I say SF, for the simple reason that, while professionals and fans will argue the distinction till hell freezes over, the average English reader is unaware of it, and wouldn't thank you for telling him. To him--and it is sad how often this includes the man who prides himself on being 'literary'--Ray Bradbury and H.G. Wells are one and the same firm, publishing from different addresses, and he'd class Festus Pragnell as the equivalent of E.E. Smith, Ph.D., had he ever heard of either. The cover and the blurb are the things that sell the book, and if you have a big enough backlist you can forget about new authors altogether. I've given up count of how many editions I've seen in the U.K. of paperbacks of Asimov's Foundation series, and other books; and, if things go this way, I shortly expect the same novels to be re-issued weekly, the cover artists being presumably paid on weight rather than quality; if he can submit fifty versions of the same cover in January, the publisher will have his year's output of that book wrapped up.

Prestige publishing is still with us, of course, though it is not the thing it was. A fine, upstanding "experimental" writer has a good chance of publication for at least two non-sellers; after all, we still owe something to the White Goddess, nicht wahr? Regretfully, though, even with the full blessing of the Arts Council, the Institute of Contemporary Arts and all the Left-Wing Establishment, it becomes harder after that. It's these damned accountants. Paul Hamlyn and Robert Maxwell, who set out to sell books like boots and--unforgivable crime--succeeded, must be two

of the most hated men in Great Britain, but the egg they broke will never be put back in its shell again. Nowadays, a writer is expected to earn money for his backer. A most ungentlemanly state of affairs. Ah well--autres temps, autres mœurs. While there I saw Paul Hamlyn quoted in the newspaper as saying, "Who needs books?" This from a publisher! I looked down at the paper again, and up at the sky. No lightning, nuthin'...

The critics, by and large, do not help overmuch. They undoubtedly mean well, but their idea of helping us to make SF "respectable" by putting it into a literary column. Kingsley Amis's efforts there are best summed up in the old Communist title, "One Step Forward, Two Steps Back." The kind of reviewer called for there would be more of a Tom Wolfe. Tell you a funny thing--I hear on the grapevine the literary lads don't like Wolfe, either... Above all, the critics just can't seem to get away from categories. I'm all for Aristotle myself, but enough is enough. Can't they see a book as just being itself, and not a sub-species of some genre of their own cloudy invention? One of the best things to appear for some years was John Brunner's Stand on Zanzibar, which didn't achieve a fraction of the impact it should have, simply because the reviewers couldn't make up their minds whether it was SF or "population explosion," and just flunked the whole issue.

Looking the field over, one can only conclude that the SFWA is quite right to discount publication in the U.K. as a membership qualification. How can you count a country where the publisher who knows that Evelyn Smith and E.E. Smith, Ph.D. are two different people is the rarest of birds, where the critic of the subject is often far less well-read in SF than the youngest and shaggiest of his readers, where--well, no matter, but how can you honestly compare such a country with the U.S.A?

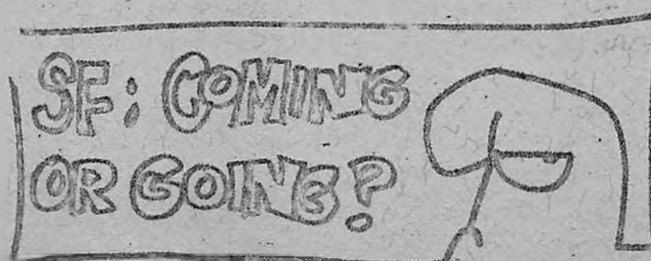
And finally, why bother? Lobbying in the U.K. is a fine art neglected. What can you do with people who, far from cutting each other's throats, don't even hate each other? Have been proven in certain cases even to assist people from the opposite camp? Such retrograde behavior deserves only one treatment, and it was aptly summed up lo! these many years, in the words of the highway planner anent the conservationist--

"He's just an old reactionary, trying to be funny."

Tear up the road ahead, and give us something concrete for our money."

Just had a splendid new idea! Why not send in ideas you would like to see covered by me?--I won't guarantee they'll be covered, but I'll make a try at it. Mail your requests--and information, if any--to Paul Hazlett, care of Frank Lunney. We both guarantee protection of source; if necessary, though names and circumstances may need changing for publication. For example, I'd like to know details on why Robert Heinlein, Fred Pohl and Daniel Galouye are no longer SFWA members, wouldn't you?

--Paul Hazlett





Tracking Station

by Leo P. Kelley

Some time ago, I submitted a short story to COVEN 13, a relatively new magazine specializing in stories dealing with witchcraft, horror and the supernatural, to which I subscribe. I had been delighted to see such a magazine to take up where the deservedly revered WEIRD TALES left off so many years ago.

Since I not only like to read stories of the kind that Arthur H. Landis, editor of COVEN 13 published, but also like to write them--well, I did one specifically slanted for this market and readership. It was called "The Dark Door." I sent it off to Mr. Landis.

Weeks went by. Not unusual in this business. Months went by. A but unusual but still not unheard of. Finally, I wrote a note of inquiry asking for a decision on the story. Back came a printed sheet from which I quote excerpts:

"Circumstances, beyond the control of the Camelot Publishing Company, have forced a reorganization of our magazine, COVEN 13.

"...our problem is totally one of distribution, since readership acceptance has been excellent...we would not like to see the magazine die."

The notice concluded with a remark that new ownership of the magazine was

possible. Well, I thought, there goes a story sale. But, more importantly, there may go an interesting new magazine. Perhaps I tend to be a bit overly pessimistic about too many things. So I asked myself, couldn't the "reorganization" work out for the good of the magazine, the readership and the owners of the property? That question, at this writing, remains unanswered. Those of us who greeted COVEN 13 with such glee and delight will have to wait and see what magics might be made out there on the West Coast--and hope.

It may be clear by now--I certainly hope it is--that I was far less concerned about the potential loss of a sale because the magazine, once "reorganized," will probably consider the story again. That is, if the magazine doesn't die. What I'm most concerned about is the illness afflicting it--the disease of "distributionitis."

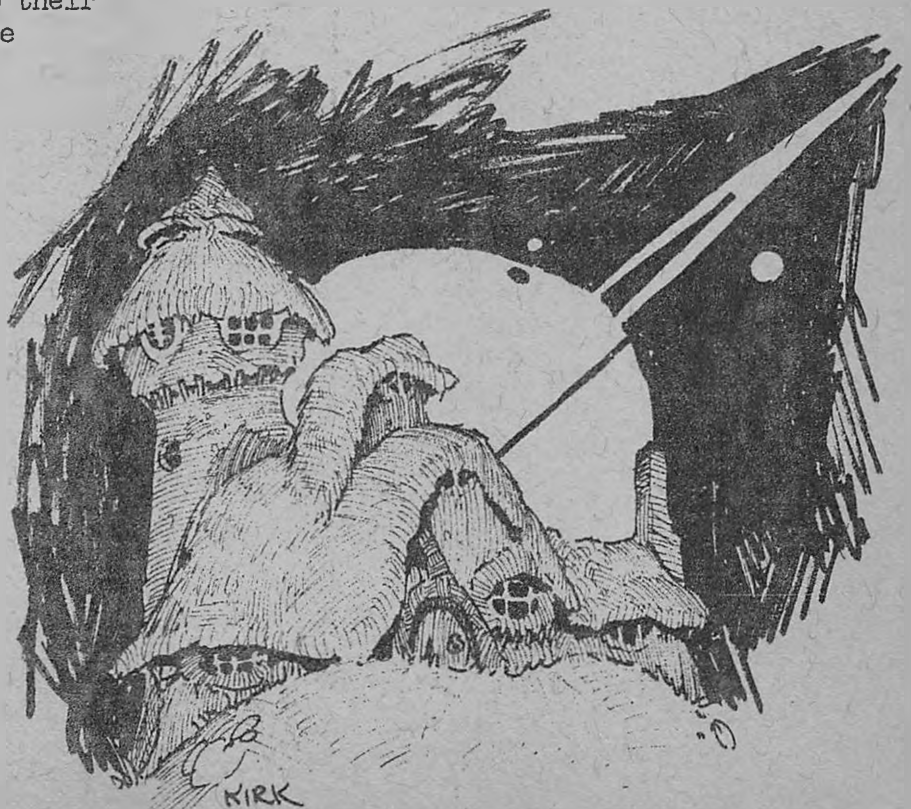
A fatal ailment in many cases, as we all know.

Can anything be done to cure it? I know a lot of people have tried with varying degrees of success and, I am compelled to add, degrees of failure. But I'm beginning to wonder if the emphasis of the efforts might have been misplaced in some cases, or, if properly placed, nevertheless unsuccessful. I would guess--but I don't know--that a solid subscription list would provide the necessary economic base to allow such genre magazines (as well as others) to operate successfully. If this assumption is correct in terms of the operation of such an enterprise, is it not sensible then to concentrate the venture's major energies and expenditures on building a substantial subscription list? Do magazines such as COVEN 13 make a strong enough effort in this area? Do they know how to do it, assuming the monies enabling them to do it are available?

Do they know, for example, that most fanzine editors would probably be willing to rent--or give--to such publishers their subscription lists and that in those lists would be a hearty number of people who, upon receiving a sufficiently attractive subscription offer, might well sign up? Do they consider advertising in appropriate media in an attempt to reach the people who could help them keep their magazine solvent and alive? The science fiction magazines, for example, would be excellent media. So would THE MAGAZINE OF HORROR.

Or is this all just pie-in-the-sky-thinking? Will fans become subscribers if they are reached with a reasonable offer? In sufficient numbers? Or will they just buy a copy if they happen to see it on the stands and write a letter to Mr. Landis (multitudes have already done so) and praise the magazine and let it go at that?

I don't know.



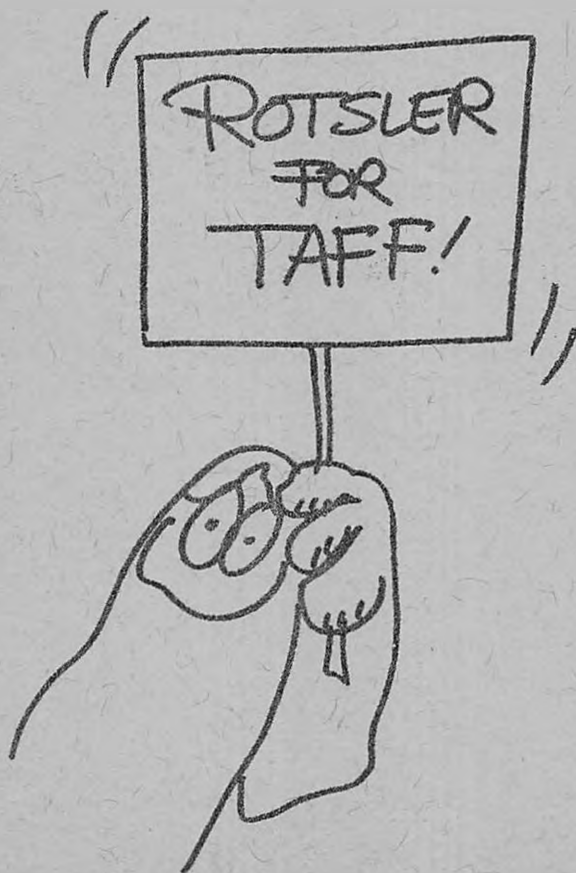
But I wonder if the mail marketing of such a magazine wouldn't provide a major part of the answer to the distribution problem. BUSINESS WEEK, for example, not only markets their magazine almost exclusively by mail but also places restrictions on the kind of subscriber they will accept. Of course, BUSINESS WEEK is well-funded. But I know something about their marketing effort and it is a good one. It works and works very well. You can't buy BW on any newsstand. The same is true of other magazines--HORIZON, for example.

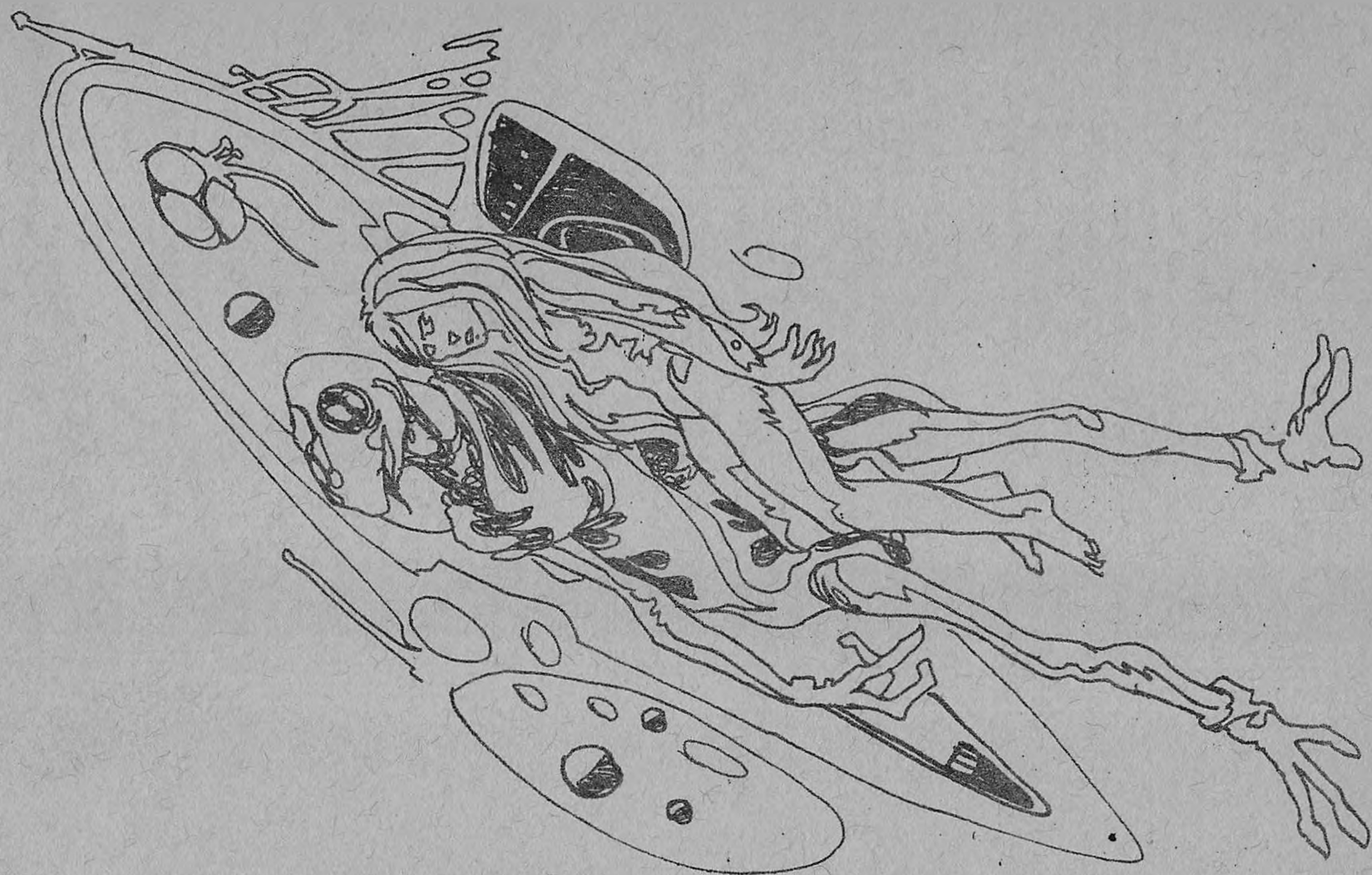
If the lists of names could be obtained and I think they could as I stated earlier, and if the mailings could be made economically and if the fans would part with a little of their hard cash--maybe--just maybe--new magazines of the kind many of us like to read wouldn't get so sickly so soon. Maybe intelligent mail marketing is the miracle cure which would end distributionitis once and for all.

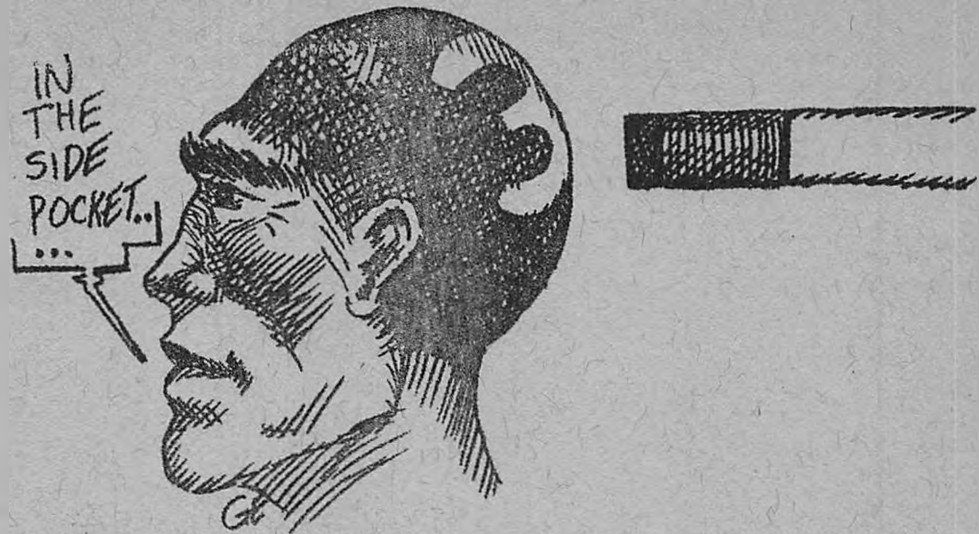
When Mr. Landis returned my manuscript several weeks after I received the initial notice concerning the patient's status, he enclosed a letter in which he said in part, "I enjoyed 'The Dark Door'. Intended publishing it, as a matter of fact, in issue #6. But... Sorry..."

So am I. I repeat, not because the story might never be placed (I think it will be). Actually, I can make more money in other markets such as ALFRED HITCHCOCK'S MYSTERY MAGAZINE to which I sell now and then and which pays triple what I would be offered by other genre magazines. No, I'm simply sorry because COVEN 13 is sick and many of us who learned to love it after such a short acquaintance may find ourselves mourning it all too soon.

--Leo P. Kelley







TURNIP COUNTRY

Macroscopic, by Piers Anthony, Avon W166, \$1.25

This is a massive novel, and in more than mere physical bulk, though it is in that sense too: 480 pages of fairly small type; chapters the length of substantial novellas; what are to all intents and purposes several short stories and a novelette interwoven as parts of chapters. Its concepts are galactic in scope. Macroscopic is too vast to be fully encompassed in a review, or at least in one written by this reviewer. Linear plot summary is out of the question; unless it were superficial, it would require ten pages. One can only describe certain elements and characters, chosen in the hope of thereby conveying something--not all--of what Macroscopic is about.

The Macroscopic itself: A device which is a kind of radio telescope of the future, which turns macron patterns into visual images. Macrons are particles constantly being emitted by every existing molecule. Since groups of macrons do not dissipate or deteriorate with time or distance of travel neither has any effect on the resolution or detail of the visual image. This means that, once the Macroscopic has been properly focused and interference tuned out, a man employing it can literally see what is cooking in a pot on the kitchen stove in a house on a planet 20,000 light-years from Earth. (Finding a particular planet or house in the first place can, however, be a considerable problem.) With this fantastic tool, man can study the culture of every other planet in the galaxy--or, rather, he can study their past, since a stream of macrons from a world 11,000 light-years distant will convey visual images of events 11,000 years in the past. Combined with faster-than-light travel, the Macroscopic can also be employed for detailed exploration of segments of Earth history.

Ivo Archer/Schon: In an experiment aimed at determining whether mankind can transform itself into a race of geniuses by selective breeding and proper upbringing, a multiracial group of specially selected young adults are mated and their children removed from their care to be brought up at a government installation in what the experts consider an ideal environment for intellectual development. Thus provided the best available in both nature and nurture, it is hoped that the project children will represent the highest level of human intelligence. But the expectations of the experimentors are somewhat disappointed: average intelligence among the group is measurably higher than in the population as a whole, but there are only a few children of genius calibre and some are actually of below normal intelligence. The adult supervisors and testers, however, do not know about Schon, the supreme intellect in the history of the human race. By the age of five, he speaks fluently every known Earth language, and that is merely one of his many abilities. After causing the death of the second greatest genius in the group in a mysterious game, Schon creates a new identity for himself and submerges his own personality. He thus becomes Ivo Archer, who has a gift for music and certain types of mathematical games but is otherwise intellectually undistinguished. Although he is able to function and influence the alter ego to some extent, Schon is largely a prisoner in the body, unable to emerge unless Ivo calls on him. Ivo, after leaving the project, leads an inoffensive and completely undistinguished life, wandering through the American South in the footsteps of Sidney Lanier, a 19th century poet whom Ivo (in the parentless environment of the project) "adopted" as his symbolic father.

The problem: Not only random visual images are picked up by the Macroscope. There is also a broadcast, blanking out a substantial portion of the instrument's receptive "wavelength." It consists of a sequence of colors and shapes, repeated over and over, which are an exercise in symbolic logic so devastating as to literally destroy any high intellect exposed to it. At the time Ivo Archer enters the story, summoned to the orbiting Macroscope station by a fellow child of the project, Dr. Bradley Carpenter, the destroyer wave has already reduced several of the station's most eminent scientists to drooling morons. People below a certain level of intelligence are not affected; the destroyer burns out the minds of only those approximately in the genius range (IQ 160 or higher). Ivo, who is after all only a part of a mind and personality, is not dangerously affected by the destroyer sequence, which he views shortly after his arrival. Two others view it with him: Dr. Carpenter is reduced to idiocy, and a sharp-minded politician from Earth who came to investigate the situation at the station dies as a result of his exposure.

University and the Traveler: The destroyer is not the only deliberate macron broadcast. The humans deduce, before they have the opportunity to see for themselves, that the function of the destroyer is to jam other broadcasts. What is being broadcast is knowledge, immense quantities of advanced knowledge. The macron waves are a university of the galaxy, containing information on every conceivable social, medical, scientific, creative and technological field. Advanced cultures broadcast the sum total of their learning and wisdom, so that long after the last living representative of their species has expired the spirit of their civilization, its glory and its successes, will continue to circulate on macron beams throughout the galaxy. There is also a stream of macrons originating outside the Milky Way galaxy. Called the Traveler, it consists of incredibly advanced and detailed information on one subject and one subject only: space travel.

The odyssey: After the death of the Senator, the station personnel are afraid that their political leaders will destroy or pervert the Macroscope (by employing it as a spy device, etc.), and so decide to steal it. Ivo Archer wins the Macroscope in a sprouts tournament, and with four companions--Harold Groton, a space engineer, his wife Beatryx, Afra Summerfield, Bradley Carpenter's girlfriend, and the virtually

mindless shell of Dr. Carpenter--sets out for the far reaches of space in a booster rocket docked with the Macroscope. Thanks to the Macroscope and Ivo's resistance to the destroyer wave, they are able to avail themselves of the fantastically advanced technology of the Traveler beam, and in this way are able to out-distance pursuit, transform a portion of Neptune's moon, Triton, into an Earth-like environment, and, ultimately, master faster-than-light travel via jumps between the convoluted curves of space. (In the process, they manage to remove Neptune from the solar system...) They journey across the galaxy and finally reach one of the stations from which the destroyer signal is beamed, and there they learn the truth about the destroyer and the Traveler. There, too, the intellectually advanced but emotionally and morally immature Schon personality is defeated and merges permanently into the Ivo Archer personality, which thereby becomes a whole, integrated personality.



There is much more to the novel than this, of course. It incorporates, as previously noted, what could easily be several separate short stories and a novella. In the latter, Ivo Archer is the central character; it takes place in the city of Tyre shortly after the collapse of the Hittite empire. The short stories see Schon in the role of a military strategist in interplanetary war, Beatryx as a stranger on a world tearing itself apart through racism, and Harold Groton as the Drone of an insect-like society. There is an expanding perspective in Macroscope, which opens dealing with man's little corner of the solar system and gradually encompasses interstellar and eventually intergalactic concepts. This results in a shifting moral perspective. The destroyer, for example, is obviously evil from the viewpoint of the novel's starting position, but begins to seem "good" as the intellectual horizons of the characters expand, only to seem "evil" once again still further on. Whereas the Traveler seems first "good", then "evil", then "good" again as the same process unfolds. The novel is a human story as well as a vast galactic drama: what their experiences do to the characters is as important as what the characters themselves do. The final chapter consists of a fascinating symbolic battle between Schon and Afra, in which the finer points of astrology figure prominently. History, educational theory, psychology, race prejudice, the nature of civilization--all is touched on in Macroscope.

But with all of this length and scope, is it a good novel? I believe it is, with qualifications. The writing, overall, is not Piers Anthony's best--Omnivore, for example, was better written. There are, as there must be in a book of this length, places where some cutting would have been in order. Anthony has a tendency to take off for a couple of pages on some subject--like the consequences of a Florida teachers' strike of a few years ago--which, though it might make an interesting fanzine essay, is utterly superfluous to the novel. And there is one glaring deficiency which badly hurts: the characterization of Schon, which simply never gets off the ground at all (it

is not so much dreadful as absent). However, these points are far outweighed in the balance by the novel's worthwhile qualities. Except for the teachers' strike essay and a couple of other similar intrusions, Macroscopic never drags, which is a considerable accomplishment for a 480-page novel dealing largely with huge abstract and symbolic concepts. Other than the portrayal of Schon, the characterization is uniformly excellent, extending even to truly minor characters (such as Mattan of Tyre). Anthony handles his development-of-galactic-civilization concepts well, and writes his fictional history with the vivid excitement that only a frustrated historian can bring to such endeavor.

Macroscopic is flawed, certainly, but is nonetheless an extremely worthwhile novel which should be on every serious SF fan's reading list.

--Ted Pauls

To Live Again, by Robert Silverberg, Doubleday, \$4.95

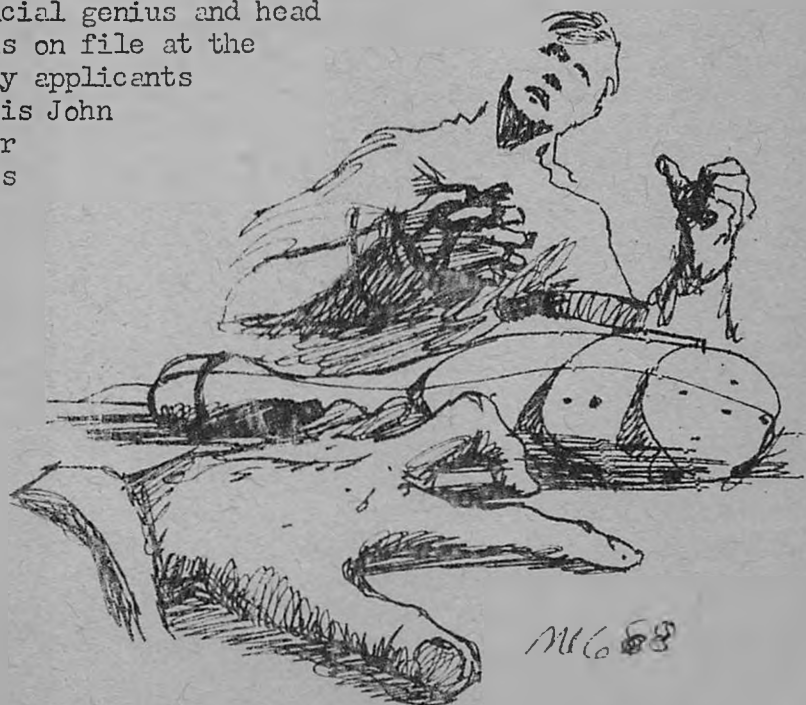
I don't expect to ever read a great book by Robert Silverberg. He is not the type of writer that produces great books. He knows what he is doing, and does it. Very well. But it is too smooth, too slick. He doesn't have the power, the sheer overwhelming power, necessary for greatness.

This is not a complaint. Silverberg is one of the very best writers in the field, and I haven't read a bad book from him yet. But it's all so damned painless! Books like Stand on Zanzibar and Bug Jack Barron exhausted me. To Live Again goes up on the shelf, and if you ask me "Did you like that" I'll say, "Yes, very much."

Background: The wealthy--the very wealthy--have available to them more than one mind. They can buy the minds of the dead. Should one be bought, it stays in the back of the "real" mind, is drawn upon for its experiences and exerts a subtle influence on its new owner. If this new mind--or persona--is strong enough, it may go dybbuk, and replace the original mind. This is illegal, and should a dybbuk be found out, it is "erased."

The story: Paul Kaufman, financial genius and head of a dynasty, has died. His persona is on file at the Scheffing Institute, and there are many applicants for it. The only one really eligible is John Roditis; Kaufman's mind would overpower anyone else's and go dybbuk. Kaufman's heirs are opposed to this, however, because that would give Roditis too much power in his own empire-building. Nephew Mark Kaufman's own personal choice for Paul's persona is himself, but it is illegal to possess the persona of a relative--just as it is illegal to possess a persona of the opposite sex.

The characters: The fight for Paul's persona involves several other principals. One is Francis Santoliquido, head of the Scheffing



Institute. Finding it impossible to satisfy both parties, he looks for a way to thwart both. There is Charles Noyes, Roditis' right-hand man, whose persona is actively engaged in an attempt to go dybbuk. Elena Volterra, who is Mark's mistress but who doesn't let that stop her from sleeping around. And Risa Kaufman, sixteen, and not quite Arkady, Podkayne or Mia. Strong-willed as those girls were, they are nothing to Risa. A year before, she had decided to surrender her virginity; so she flew to Cannes and "picked out a likely stud." Now she wants a persona, and she tells her father she'll get pregnant if he doesn't sign the release forms. She seldom compromises, but even when she does it isn't 50%. If she were alive, I'm not sure whether I'd like her or not, but I would like to find out.

My sympathies rested mainly on Noyes, however, as I suspect they might have been meant to. Silverberg has done a marvelous job, though, in presenting both sides of all his characters. If a reader attaches himself too strongly to any one, he is liable to get stung. He will find his hero in moments of weakness and stupidity as well as strength and cunning. That's why I felt safest with Noyes, who fights an uphill battle throughout the whole book. The smaller they are the softer they fall.

As might be expected, there is a good deal of sex in the book. Also as might be expected from Silverberg, most of it doesn't go far beyond the stage of nudity. It is handled much better in To Live Again than it was in, say, The Masks of Time--which was written, I believe, around the same time and possibly even after. Silverberg doesn't seem to be afraid to use sex in his novels, but he does seem slightly uncomfortable. Conditioned on Ace Doubles, I suppose.

But what really made me uncomfortable about this book was its slickness. As the novel speeds toward its conclusion (it really moves) pieces of the problem slide into the solution almost effortlessly. Zwip. Zwip. And if Part C slips out of its slot, plug^{it} into the next one. There are about a dozen major characters--primary and secondary--and almost no minor characters involved in the plot. The dozen form a self-sufficient group, and there are only about two walk-on characters with any influence at all.

The book is, as I said, slick. But if we can put up with what is bad about pulp for love of sf, we can put up with some slickness, too. To Live Again is hardly a bad book (compared to a recent slick sf pub, Wyman Guin's Standing Joy, it is a work of genius), and I heartily recommend it. For ten pages (62-73), it surpasses itself with an absolutely brilliant dybbuk scene. There is a horror to it, and a fascination, that I've never gotten from anyone else. And since none of the rest of the book is bad, I can think of no reason why you will not enjoy it. There is food for thought, excellent characterizations and swift pacing. That's enough for a good book. Don't pass it up.

Jeffrey D. Smith

Raw Meat, by Richard E. Geis, Essex House 020136, \$1.95

This is an interestingly constructed novel which, focusing on two principal characters, bit by bit reveals a picture of American society about a century hence. The society which emerges chapter by chapter is a "1984"-ish police state dominated by the Great Mother Computer, also known simply as Mother. Its citizens, who live tightly organized lives in the rigidly stratified class society of dome cities, are the products of artificial insemination and state nurseries. Family life does not exist within the technological jungle of the domes, nor do close personal relationships of any kind. Individuals live in utilitarian cubicles, and spend most of their leisure time



"living" total sensory tapes. The cubicles are self-contained worlds, with all of the necessities of life provided by Mother. This is bread-and-circuses with a vengeance. This way of life has produced its own peculiar morals and mores, which the author shows consistently and convincingly. One may experience any form of love-making via sextapes, and taboos about showing breasts and genitals do not exist. On the other hand, references to natural bodily functions are taboo, hair is considered obscene, and under no circumstances is the navel uncovered.

Geis also manages to show, without making the point explicitly, that this society is in the early stages of disintegration. There is a guerilla war in Brazil which is (government pronouncements to the contrary) not going well and which is endangering the domes' food supply. There are "perverts" living outside of the domes--letting their hair grow, farming, having babies and in general pursuing what we would consider normal lives--whose numbers are apparently growing, and Mother finds it necessary to trade with these outcasts in order to supply enough food for the domes. Security is breaking down; more and more, the perverts are managing to get their message to the population within the domes. Incidence of suicide among dome-livers is mounting, as are various forms of heterodox behavior. In short, Geis captures, as in a still photograph, a hellish "utopia" which is beginning to crumble.

The novel concentrates on two characters, Jim 5422-26-9596, a misfit who keeps losing jobs because he insists upon asking embarrassing questions, and Delia 5429-98-3781, his next-cubicle neighbor, who works in an automated food-distribution center. Jim has vague dreams of escaping to Outside, though he never makes a serious effort in that direction. Delia is a more conservative personality, with only a small streak of rebel in her. They become acquainted--both badly need a relationship with another human being, though neither fully realizes it--and eventually try real sex, which is frowned upon by Mother (and which, they discover, is less enjoyable than the sextapes). Jim finds a feeling of importance he never had before in being a rebel, and eventually puts himself in a situation where suicide is the only option open to him. As the book ends, Jim is dead and Delia is returning to her zombie-like existence in Mother's world.

While no genius, Geis shows a good deal of talent as a writer, and Raw Meat is in many ways an effective presentation of one of those appalling future societies which SF writers so often postulate.

There does seem to be an awful lot of sex here, though...

--Ted Pauls

Redbeard, by Michael Resnick, Lancer 74-579, 75¢

Here is the surprise novel of 1969. Most of the surprise comes because of who wrote the book. Resnick's previous output was directly connected with his interest in

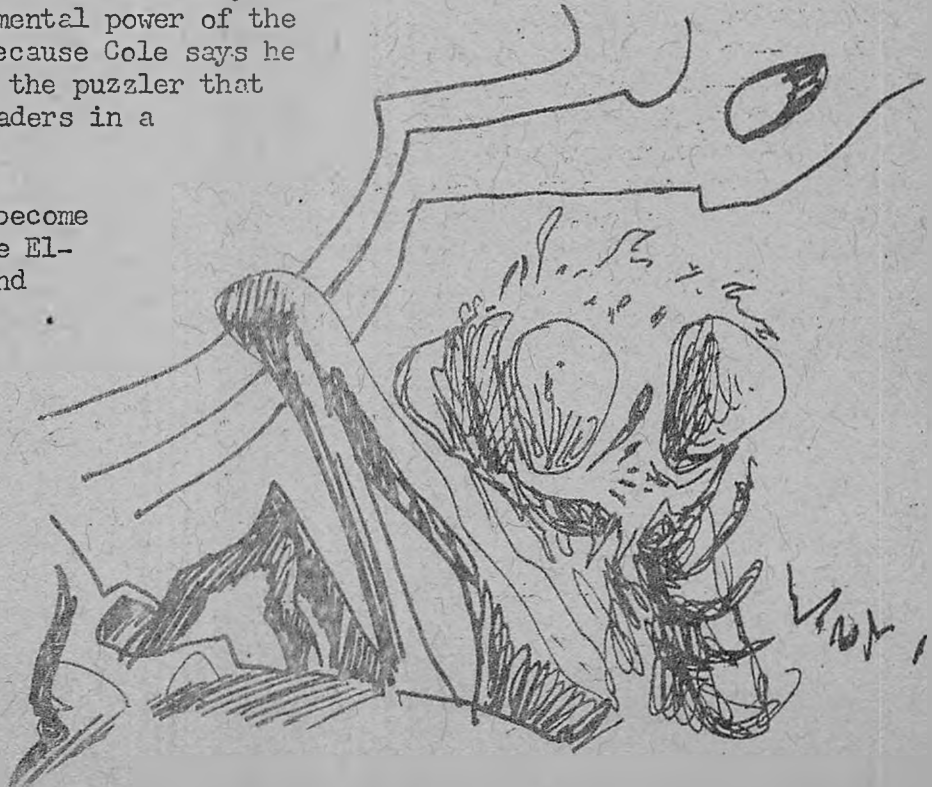
Edgar Rice Burroughs. While his Ganymede books have provided me with a great deal of pleasure, most people wrote them off as bad imitations of ERB's books. I'll concede the point, but I believe that Mike never took the novels seriously himself and wrote them to give a couple hours of light pleasure to us Burroughs nuts. But now he's written Redbeard; with this book I'll concede nothing.

First, Resnick has provided a good background. The action takes place in a post-atomic war Earth. That's nothing new, of course, but such a setting can bring about an excellent story if handled right. And he's done it right. It seems that the only survivors of the war were people who had been in bomb shelters, caves or subway tunnels. Most of the trouble in the new world comes from the latter group. While radioactive fallout had little effect on those in caves and shelters, those in the subways were much more vulnerable because most of the air supply came from the polluted atmosphere. Soon mutants were born to these tunnel dwellers; most of them were killed to protect those who survived in the caves and shelters.

Now, we get a fascinating set of characters. This, I believe, is the strongest point of the book. Mike has made them live and breathe and love and hate and fight. They all come about because of one fact many people forget: mutants aren't always easy to spot. Gareth Cole, a mutant, survives because of this. Later, this physically puny, mentally super-powerful being decides to turn tables on the non-mutants, or Normals, by using his powers and an army of mutants to take over the world. The man who leads the battles against the Normals (the physical fighting, of course) is Red Will Donahoe, a terror with his beautiful red beard and his savage sword or warclub. He is physically normal and has no extraordinary mental powers. To be quite truthful, he has little in the way of reasoning power. Donahoe is brutal, lustful and egotistical; he is the compleat savage. By comparing the redbeard to Cole we can see that, general or no general, there's going to be conflict. The fact that Donahoe is a misfit among the three-headed, one-eyed or mentally superior freaks can only increase the redbeard's anger.

But why is Donahoe kept alive? Throughout the novel it's shown that Cole can easily get rid of the redbeard whenever he wants to, and the latter has only brute strength unlike the superior mental power of the mutants. So why keep him? Because Cole says he needs him. But why? This is the puzzler that has the characters and the readers in a daze.

Three characters who become involved with this problem are Elston Stramm, Andrew Craston and Alutha Drake. Stramm is a brave, shrewd and resourceful man who believes that the redbeard can help in defeating Cole and thereby save the Normals. He is one of the five Barons who rule the Hub (Boston). There is a precarious balance among the five; the defeat of the mutant leader could shift the balance in Stramm's favor. I feel,



however, that he was mainly worried about the people and behaved admirably; even Donahoe gains a feeling of respect for the man. Craston, on the other hand, seemed to be power hungry. Though blinded by Cole, this baron is extremely shrewd and knows how to manipulate events and people. Eventually, however, the source of power comes to rest in the hands of Alutha Drake. She is the wife of one baron and the daughter of another. With their deaths she holds the key to two baronies and supreme power in the Hub. Donahoe wants her and the baronies and Craston fights to keep him from at least the latter.

So Red Will and Alutha are kept on the run. Each tries to figure out the weakness that can kill Cole, and what the reason is that the mutant leader has let Donahoe live. Cole seems to settle back and take a disinterested view of the proceedings. Craston searches constantly for the redbear in his search for greater power. And what is the final result? It wasn't what I expected. It couldn't be when nothing is what it seems to be. On the whole, however, I think that Craston gains the most, but even he had a few surprises. And there has to be a sequel. You don't realize this until the last few pages after having sped through one incident after another; when you reach the end, however, this will be the most obvious thing in what has been a novel of surprises. I hope that Mike Resnick can keep surprising in the future.

--Sandy Moss

Nomads of Gor, by John Norman, Ballantine, 75¢

Well, Tarl Cabot is back with us again; this novel is his fourth go-round. All the books in the series are enjoyable, but there are quite a few things that should be done to improve things. First of all, the books are too long. This must have bothered me previously, but I really felt it this time. It seems to me that 344 pages are far too many for a sword and sorcery novel; really good books can be done in two hundred pages or less. All these pages certainly provide a great deal of space to develop all aspects of the planet Gor and its wide assortment of characters, but you begin to lose interest after a while as page after page of description weigh you down. Because of this, there is also a slow-down in the action; this is an absolute no-no in an s&s novel.

In Nomads of Gor Tarl Cabot, our intrepid hero, tries to find an egg which is supposed to help perpetuate the race of Priest-Kings who rule the planet. Tarl is on the mission as a favor to a Priest-King he befriended in the third book of the series. Previously the hero hated these godlike beings because of their interference in his life. Besides the friendship, there now seems to be an added reason for saving the egg: Tarl discovers that there is a malevolent group of beings ready to conquer our solar system. Only the Priest-Kings stand in the way of these Others! (Oh brother, what else is new?) This egg, it seems, is kept by a warlike nomadic group of people who inhabit the plains of Gor (the Wagon People). Various adventures follow as Tarl tries to recover the egg from them.

A great plus in this book is its characters, possibly excluding Tarl Cabot. For at least half of the book the hero seems to be quite a wooden statue. The other characters live and thrive; he seems to be continually acted upon. Everyone else seems to do all the interesting stuff while he goes around like an emotionless robot. Towards the end, however, even he begins to live. Meanwhile, we have the lusty leader of one of the tribes of the Wagon People; he's a great character with just the right sense of humor. For instance, I got a great kick out of the way Kamchak, this leader, handled a too proud, newly captured and enslaved girl:

I followed Kamchak down the steps of the wagon and, blinking and still



sensible of the effects of the Paga, gravely held open the large dung sack near the rear left wheel of the wagon. "No, Master!" the girl wept.

"You call no man Master," Kamchak was reminding her.

And then I saw the lovely Aphris of Turia pitched head first into the large, leather sack, screaming and sputtering, thrashing about...

Sleepily I could see the sides of the sack bulging out wildly here and there as she squirmed about...

"I am tired," he said. "I have had a difficult and exhausting day."

I followed him into the wagon where, in a short time, we had both fallen asleep.

You can see who wears the pants on this planet!

Another great character is Harold. This young man is looked down upon by the tribe because he hasn't proved his courage. He provides Tarl with some really wild moments, and he's a great foil for the hero with sarcastic wise cracks and similar attitude.

If you're willing to put up with a slow beginning and plow through long descriptions, the book isn't bad. All the pages, after all, allow the

publishers to charge 75¢ rather than 50¢ or 60¢; you wouldn't want Ballantine or the author to starve, would you? I believe you will have a better chance of surviving, however, if you read the first three books first. (It seems that I'm really looking out for the author's welfare.) If you aren't with it after the first, there's no sense in going on and reading this one.

---Sandy Moss

Tower at the Edge of Time, by Lin Carter, Tower 43-321, 60¢

Like most of Carter's science fantasy, this is a standard thud-and-blunder hero-epic, with all of the traditional elements: a larger-than-life hero whose iron-grey eyes are generally found gazing levelly at a dangerous meanie; a beautiful girl with whom the hero is smitten; a passle of villains, including a gruff pirate whom you just know will end up joining the hero in eternal friendship (the hero himself, of course, is not averse to a little mild piracy on occasion) and an effete prince whom you just know will be killed in the final chapter; two bushel baskets full of strange names and titles; chases, brawls and sword-fights; and a quest for one of those things that is always the object of a quest (in this instance, the Jewel of Amzar and the treasure to which it is the key).

In spots, the prose, particularly lines of dialogue, is embarrassingly bad, but at its best it flows with the almost poetic smoothness characteristic of this sub-genre of SF, as in this passage describing Thane, the hero:

Like one fleeing from some enormous and irreparable crime, or one seeking relief in far exotic places from the intolerable burden of lost, unforgotten love, he roamed and roved the great black spaces between the stars. In the whispering, wine-scented forests of Valthome he had hunted the fearsome Man-Spiders with but a spear. Masked in a globe of crystal that he might breathe, he had dared the purple seas of Yaoth and visited the sea bottom cities built of pink coral. He had hunted the Pharvisian snow tiger in the glacier-bound hills of that far world where men drink blood and swear by Silence. He had sought black pearls on the green-sanded beaches of Pelizon, where men have three eyes and fight with little ebony rods. He had ventured even into the Black Drift between the galactic arms, to dim Clesh, the world where riches rule, and where captive monsters of living stone hew from scented wood the idols of the Chaos Lords. Much had he seen, far had he wandered, and from all had he taken a certain something into himself. And there was about him an aura of strangeness and power, as some frightening and exotic fragrance which clung to him in his lone passage through strange worlds amid even stranger men.

Characterization is limited. The hero, "Thane of the Two Swords," is--unavoidably--a close copy of the heroes of most other novels of this type, and the lesser characters are essentially stereotypes as well. Lin tends to indulge in a bit of overkill with regard to names of strange worlds, races and gods, piling them on as if simple quantity by itself were sufficient to evoke a picture of a galactic civilization (the paragraph quoted above is a fair example in this respect). And there is the usual deus ex machina method of assuring that the hero overcomes all obstacles. Still, judged as what it is intended to be and nothing more, Tower at the Edge of Time is a success: a well-done, well-paced action tale that holds the reader's interest throughout. That kind of SF isn't really my bag, but if it is yours you could do a great deal worse than this Lin Carter novel.

--Ted Pauls

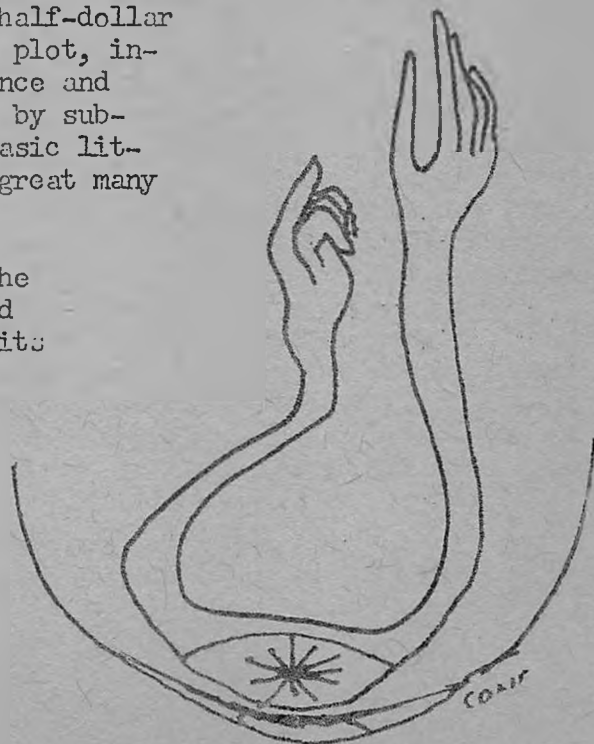
The Alien Ones, by Leo Brett, Tower T-060-1, 60¢

This, to be brutally frank, is such an utterly dreadful novel that it probably wouldn't be worth 60¢ if a half-dollar came with each copy. It brings together a nothing plot, insipid dialogue, cliché characters, improbable science and superficial treatment, all of which are aggravated by sub-competent writing. The Alien Ones does pass the basic literacy test, but not by an awful lot. There are a great many simple sentences of the "See Jack run" variety:

There were five moons! They were all in the sky at once. They were different sizes and different colors. They moved in their orbits in different velocities. It would be no easy feat to produce an Orkol almanac.

When Brett attempts more complex sentences, the result is reminiscent of stilted high school English compositions of the "Write a paragraph using all nine of the following words" sort:

Safron was silent for a moment; the



ethical import occurred to him, but the concept of Haldane's money more than outweighed what there was of ethical scruples.

Resolutely, by some deliberate action of will, he locked his conscience away in a deep, muffled recess at the back of his mind and forgot about it.

The reader devoutly wishes at many points during this book that the publisher had locked all of the copies away in a deep, muffled recess at the back of his warehouse and forgotten about them.

The novel concerns a pair of stellar colonists, Safron and Celeste Wilde, who engage in sparkling conversation ("Sorry I snarled, honey"/"It's all right, darling. I understand"/"This has been one heck of a trip") and take part in some completely uninteresting adventures, including several lifted bodily from third-rate Westerns. It is an uninterruptedly shallow story; by far the most interesting characters in the novel are a couple of decrepit robots. The principal event of The Alien Ones is the hero's transformation into a huge, scaly monster, a result of exposure to a strange radioactive isotope. For the remainder of the novel, he plods around carrying his wife in one arm (like King Kong with Faye Ray) and doing good deeds. Eventually, they return to Earth, Safron gets a body transplant (it's the 30th century), and they live happily ever after.

It's short, but that is about all that can be said on the plus side for The Alien Ones. If there is anybody out there who actually wants to read this piece of crud, I'll happily make him or her a present of my copy at the Lunacon.

--Ted Pauls

Nightwings, by Robert Silverberg, Avon V2303, 75¢ (Walker, \$4.95)

Run, run, run to your newsstand and grab up a copy of this novel if you don't already have it! This has got to be Silverberg's best effort to date (at least of those books by him I have read).

Nightwings is a novel built up of three novelettes from GALAXY, and therefor shows some faults in the story line, but the writing more than makes up for it. The opening of the novel is a really marvelous introduction to a story. It deals with the Watcher, an old man of the Watcher guild given the task of surveying the stars every day to look for alien conquerors and to give the warning when (not if) they come to the Defender's guild; Avluela, a young girl of the flyers with her nightwings; and Gormon, a guildless freak. The three are on a trip to Roun to seek employment on a devastated Earth in its dying days. The prose is excellent, descriptions awesome. Too bad somewhere along the length of the novel some freshness of writing becomes a bit lost and the plot is allowed to take control. Sad.

Other characters (all fleshed out faultlessly) are the Prince of Roun, who takes Avluela under his wing (or is it her wing?), and miscellaneous persons met on the Watcher's pilgrimage. Would it be wrong to tell you that the aliens do come? And that the Watcher is now out of a job? Anyway, he continues on to Perris and then Jorslem searching for a goal in life, and his youth.

Run ye and get it! You cannot get a better buy for 75¢ anywhere! The wonderful wimple has spoken!

---Steve Lawrence Goldstein





Cum Bloatus

Paul Hazlett Please publish my apology to Alexei Panshin. My notes and correspondence do not support implications that he screened out either pro or neo-pro letters in the SFWA Forum during his editorship. Apparently the screenings I had wrongly attributed to Alexei occurred either during or immediately after transfer to Mr. Terry Carr. I apologize for making the implication.

In BAB 7, Robert Moore Williams refers to SF REVIEW 34, wherein Terry Carr announces a new novel by one of his new writers. The same writer was apparently promoted in the SFWA Forum, while Terry Carr edited two Forums apparently to the exclusion of members' letters.

The implication in the minds of members became, "The Forum editor might have used his position on the SFWA Forum to push his own writers to the exclusion of members' letters."

This illustrates the dangers in permitting professional editors to also man key positions in a professional writers' organization. Terry Carr probably did not have any under-handed motive in publishing his new writer in the SFWA Forum, while screening out other members' letters. But some will always think so, to the detriment of the SFWA.

From the new writer's viewpoint, it is highly unfair to expose any innocent party to these implications, either right or wrong.

Equally unjust would be the case where the editor agrees to edit the Forum, and also to screen out his own stable of writers.

Professional writing standards cannot be improved so long as the enemy--oppositely polarized vested financial interests--is free to either control or appear to control communications and policies.

Piers Anthony
9601 Wilshire Blvd.
Rm. 22
Beverly Hills, Ca.
90210

Ted White's Inside Story lists five justifications for the Nebula Award. 1. Money; 2. Egoboo; 3. Publicity; 4. Money; 5. Banquets. I can't seriously disagree with those, but to my mind one should be added at the beginning: Quality. That is, the award should represent acknowledgement of the best the field has produced in a given year. People are going to read the winners assuming that they are the best, and judge the field accordingly. And when they discover another Jesus Christ story or another Last Man and Woman story or another transposed historical novel there or what-have-you, the smarter ones will say "If this is the best, I was right all along in thinking of it as trash." So the award can do harm if abused--and Ted admits there has been some abuse.

But since I don't like to establish my own biases (if you can't be objective, don't pretend to be--I try to follow that), let me make clear my current irritation. I believe my novel Macroscope deserved to be on the Nebula ballot, on the basis of quality. It is not. Others are welcome to read the six finalists and to compare them with my novel. Perhaps they will agree with the present ballot, and with its winner. But if they don't, they may begin to wonder why mine isn't there, and why Disch's Camp Concentration (said to be one of the finest ever) isn't there, and why certain others--I don't have titles in mind, I'm just sure they exist--aren't there. And why the ones that are there are there. And perhaps from this will come a more realistic appraisal of the meaning of the Nebula.

As for Ted's other commentary: I can think of an editor who would blackball on the basis of an honest disagreement, and Ted knows whom I mean. No, I'm not being cute and thinking of Ted himself. The ilk does exist. This editor has stated that I am out regardless of the quality of my work, and has bounced my work on that basis. Too bad; I will continue to be my own man. I just wanted it known that there are editors who are like that.

Leo Kelley's column has a certain unintentional bearing here, too. He has announced the winners of this year's (last year's?) NFFF Story Contest. You know, in microcosm that contest resembles the Nebula. It is subject to its little liabilities, as I have remarked before, but it does perform a service, and it has launched careers in the field. When you come down to it, what is more important: that a novice writer make his first sale, or that an experienced writer win additional acclaim?

Well, well! Now we have Paul Hazlett with the dope on Hugo winning. And he gives some rules! Let's see how I stand. 1. Go to fan meetings, etc. Ouch! Do I have to? I have never attended a fan convention, never belonged to a fan club. Except NFFF, and I quit that. 2. Get Unmarried. Ouch again! Not only have I been married for over thirteen years, I plan to stay that way. Sigh--here I am, washed out already for the Hugo. But look: 3. Anti-social Image. Ah, there I score! 4. Comics? I'm indifferent. Rock? I hate it. Psychedelics? Beatles? I'm out. Topless? Well, depends on age and sex and species. Guess I fail that item. 5. Sex. Why yes, I--oh, you mean at lectures. And with potential voters. Nope, I have no votes tallied there, alas. 6. Write about slobs. But I don't like slobs! 7. Get weak competition. Sorry, I don't have the strings to pull for that. 8. Make plays for nominations. Oops--I told that fan to take a flying fuck. 9. Advertise. Ha! I just said Macroscope should--didn't I? Didn't I?

Dunno. Winning a Hugo is harder than I thought. Here I've just been writing the best I could, and missing out on the real action. No wonder I never got anywhere. Sigh.

But you know, Hazlett, your rules don't explain The Moon is a Harsh Mistress

or Lord of Light or Stand on Zanzibar...

Letters: Correction on my own, first. I was under the impression that ULTIMATE had reprinted a number of Robert Moore Williams stories, but the author says he knows of only one. Of course there may be others, since ULTIMATE doesn't inform the authors, but I'm not in a position to check that out.

Alexei Panshin--I did not attend the 1969 Milford bash, but I did nab some of the writers that Keith Laumer didn't want. It was my impression that there was a certain ingroupness to his group, however. Call my group the outgroupers, if you want; they were Joe Green & family, Jack Williamson and Perry Chapdelaine. Harlan Ellison had planned to show, but circumstance prevented. I enjoyed their company tremendously. Funny thing was that though Williamson was the writer that knocked me for a loop into SF readership that never did abate (his story "The Equalizer" in the March 1947 ASTOUNDING was the first I read as expressed SF), I did most of the talking. Maybe when I've had his experience, I'll sit back politely while some writer not born yet expounds...

Isaac Asimov--Well, well, the Asimov has sighted glancingly down my asimuth, implying that there are more hours in my day than in his. No, no, Mr. A. It only seems that way. But now I have a chance to air my single grudge against the Kindly Doctor. I used his book The Universe as research for Macroscopic, and--no, that's not it. Can't blame him for knowing more than I do, drat it. Besides, I used the same publisher, Avon. (Ingroup laws are very strict about things like that.) I also read his dinosaur two-parter in F&SF, and--oh joy! I do believe I know more than he does about dinosaurs and the causes of their extinction. Very well, Mr. A: your penalty is to read Paleo/Orn (upcoming in one form or another in AMAZING soon), or at least its last chapter, and see if my theory doesn't beat yours. (Anyone who has the temerity to mention my name in a fanzine is subject to penalties. That's an Outgroup rule.)

Fred Pohl--I am amazed.

Ted White--Strange that Tucker has expressed his annoyance with me neither to me directly nor to BAB, but to you. Meanwhile I have said everything I have to say about him right here, openly, and stand vulnerable at a dollar a throw to TAFF for any proven misstatement. If he feels that's the wrong foot, why doesn't he come here and make me pay, literally? I can tell you this, though: he will never settle it by talking to third parties. If he really wants to end it, he knows how.

On your answer to Ted Pauls: I am now in the middle of my first juvenile SF novel, and brother! This stuff is not easier to do than adult fare. As part of my research for type I read a Heinlein (Have Space Suit, Will Travel) and a White (Secret of the Marauder Satellite) juvenile. I judged the White effort to be superior. I know, that's heresy. It's still better. Of course that's older Heinlein; don't know how it would come out today. Anyway, I recommend for scoffers what I'm doing: writing one. Six months ago I would have said writing juveniles was nothing, but I changed my mind.

I have no current complaints about Ted's editorial treatment of me. I think he's a slob in various ways, but one of the better editors when it comes to assessing and handling material.

Marion Zimmer Bradley Breen--I am extremely impressed with this letter. Favorably; this woman is saying something.

Harry Warner, Jr.--So you view with concern the trend toward bigger arguments by professionals in fanzines, stemming from seemingly minor initial remarks. And you wonder about rebuttals to reviews. Well, I'll pass on the second for now, because I

have a great deal to say on it and I'd have to organize my thinking more. But the first I'd better react to, because of course I am the leading offender in this particular issue.

Once I read a rhetorical question: Why is there so much violence in fiction? And the answer was that, like it or not, violence is the heart of life. We survive as individuals and species by competing successfully, and even today man is surviving by exterminating other creatures of the planet. So when man seeks entertainment, it is violence that moves him most readily. There are other things, like sex, but violence is the most widely accepted. So it is not surprising that similar violence should carry over into fanzines.

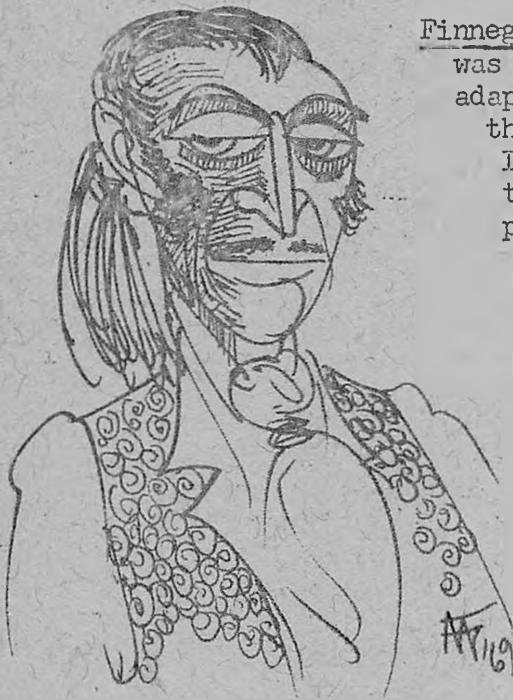
But mainly, a person is moved most by what affects him most personally. That's a survival trait too. If someone else sits on a thumbtack, you don't jump up. You may even laugh. "Blessed is he who sitteth on a tack," you murmur unctiously, "for he shall rise again." And you note with a certain lofty disapproval his immature reaction to that. But if the point should penetrate your own particular hide, you rise in a hurry, and you do not appreciate uncouth humor at your expense. Very well: it is much the same with verbal tacks. Your emotional integument is as much a part of you as your posterior, and you must defend it from penetrations or you will suffer.

I own parakeets, and I observe in them many of man's own qualities, simplified. They pick unerringly on the bird who doesn't fight back--the injured, the sick, the weak or merely passive. They will not stop voluntarily, and the bird can die if nothing stops the process. The individual does have to draw the line somewhere. At first it may seem like a game, but it isn't; it is merely the first state, the testing stage, of a long ugly process culminating in the destruction of the weaker party. Fortunately even the weakest birds will defend their rights, though some react more swiftly than others.

You, Harry Warner, Jr., appear to have evolved a sophisticated defense against potential attack. You read the fanzines, and if you think that someone has said something stupid or wrong or unfair, you don't tell him so; you search for some positive aspect or interpretation, and you remark on that. That way the bastard has no motive to strike at you. Most commend you for this. I think you are something of a hypocrite. When Roy Tackett or Bob Tucker or Bob Vardeman compliment my fiction (and they have), this means something to me, because I am currently at odds with these people and I know they aren't eager to oblige me. They are saying what they mean. But if you compliment me, I suspect that you are not telling the whole truth, because you always compliment people. Positive becomes meaningless without some negative, ugly as that fact may be. By a similar token, I have little respect for the person (not you) who claims to be a friend, then slips in the knife. I respect the art but not the motive. Ted White is an example. He will say that Harlan Ellison is a friend of his, but--and Harlan will come out bleeding from the bowels. I tend to be the opposite: I make no bones about fighting with somebody, then I slip in compliments to put him offpace. (I'm a pretty dirty gut-fighter. The fact that I say it openly does not make it untrue.)

So if you react to that hypocrite bit, Harry, you understand what I mean. That hits you directly, fairly or unfairly (and both fair and unfair attacks hurt) and you have to respond in some fashion, if only by pretending to ignore it. Perhaps you will kick a fire hydrant and be satisfied, or perhaps you will gain another step on an ulcer, but you must respond. Some people, notably me, respond in fanzines, and if the comeback seems larger than the provocation, it is because we are unusually volatile. Possibly thumbtacks don't hurt you as much as they do me (do you have a fatter ass?), and likewise verbal barbs jolt you less. Principle is the same, though.

A number of people obtain their kicks vicariously, lacking the nerve either to place tacks or to sock back when a-tacked. So they watch others fight, perhaps identifying with one of the combatants. This hardly makes them more noble. They see Paul Hazlett let fly at sacred cows and brush Asimov passingly, and they see Asimov react not to the basic issue but to the one slight reference to himself (he calls that speaking to the point) and in so doing mention Anthony, and then you see Anthony shove Asimov a little in return for even less reason (you, Harry, are one of the few to realize that I enjoy these scrapes and am hardly as bitter as I seem), and they are eager to see Asimov put the bastard down good and proper, and it is all part of the game... (They'll be disappointed. Asimov will merely use this discussion as a takeoff point for a discussion on human dynamics and sell that for more filthy lucre. Look for it in F&SF about a year hence.) My point is that none of this is evil, nor is it pointless. It is a necessary if often foolish thing. For both participants and spectators. The true hypocrites are the ones who, secretly enjoying it all, profess to object to it, like Al Snider and...Harry Warner? (OK, Neal Goldfarb: tell everyone how I'm shit-sliding again.)



James Blish--Aha! You challenge Koontz on that Fimegans Wake apostrophe bit. Seemed to me that Joyce was fairly consistent about omitting apostrophes and adapting words for his purposes, and I'd hate to think that it wasn't intentional. (Particularly since I myself remarked, in commenting on Dangerous Visions, that someone had made an error by inserting that apostrophe.)

Robert Moore Williams--Man, he's putting it on the line! Instead of commenting directly here, let me give a little analogy based on my own experience. When I was in ninth grade, at boarding school, a score of us lived in separate residence. No, it wasn't a fraternity; just the place the junior high students were put. There were internecine politics there, too, and the big boys beat on the small boys and all that, physically. (I was a small boy--in fact, the smallest in my class, male or female. But don't get excited, folks; since then I've grown almost a foot.) One of the lesser lights had a problem that the instructor in charge was trying to fathom. "Oh, I can't talk about that," the boy said. "The other guy is a big wheel." The

instructor couldn't accept this answer, for he was not conversant with the situation. He was not on hand when the arms were twisted, the shoulders bruised; nevertheless it was reality. Later on, in conversation, someone mentioned shoes without laces, or some such. "There are also wheels without axles!" the instructor quipped. There was a burst of laughter. But I looked at faces at the moment, and noted that 16 boys were laughing, and four were not. The four. For some reason, they did not find it funny.

OK--now we have various accusations and counter-charges about SFWA and its operations. Some plunge in to such discussion with abandon. Others find it irrelevant or untrue or unfunny. If you watch the faces, you can learn something.

Interestingly enough, the letter following RMW's is Robert Silverberg's. He finds Hazlett's charges pure nonsense, and he names names of old pros who have given their precious time to help their less fortunate brethren. And he points out that these fine chaps get a barrage of griping from disgruntled semipros, and wonder why they bother.



Well, Silverberg is right about being an insider. His unconscious arrogance is such that he once advised writers what SFWA's recommendations were--on the very ballot at which the issues were to be voted on! He is indefatigable in the amelioration of writer/publisher problems--to the satisfaction of the publishers. But I am one of those griping semipros, and I have had dealings with him on several occasions--and I suggest that he needs to learn the distinction between helping--and meddling. Most particularly he needs to realize that SFWA was originally conceived as a writer's group, not a publisher's group.

But let him speak for himself, lest my summary be unfair, Mr. Silverberg. There seems currently to be an altercation between certain writers and ULTIMATE, on the question whether the latter shall or shall not pay for stories reprinted. Whose view do you espouse? Do you feel SFWA should establish sanctions against the publisher if he does not pay for the stories, or do you feel that it should suppress the evidence against him and allow an increasing number of writers to resign in disgust?

Mike Gilbert--Interesting comment of yours on cover art. I believe it would help if the authors of novels were given veto-power over the covers assigned to their works. In fact, I could paint better covers myself than some that have graced my work. Certainly more relevant ones. But the packaging is entirely in the hands of the publisher.

Jeff Smith Jeez, I run a nice, quiet, noncontroversial zine that, because of
7205 Barlow Ct. lack of interest, may not survive its third issue. Doesn't anybody
Baltimore, Md. just want to talk about sf? That's what I want to do.
21207

I guess to be a Fan I have to attack some people, though. Okay, I'll take Chapdelaine and Williams. Most everybody else will, too, but I don't agree with them and will delight in pointing out some of their idiocies. Williams first:

He complains that Terry Carr brags about a book he has bought. So what? He's a fan as well as a pro. Fans like to talk about books they like. (Why don't they subscribe to PHANTASMICON?) And he was invited by the editor of the zine he bragged in to brag. He was asked to brag. I suppose Ted White shouldn't have said he liked Gordon Eklund, either. Tough, Williams, tough.

And then--or before--Williams jumps up and down and claps and says, "Go, Hazlett, let it all hang out and name all those names, but not your own; don't let 'em know who's attacking 'em." Pah. Fah. Shah.

Williams didn't like Terry Carr when Carr was at Meredith's because Carr was doing his job. Pah again, and Fah again and Shah again.

But Williams is just senile. Chapdelaine can't use that as an excuse.

First, Hazlett says, "I'm not a writer, as many of you can tell." Anyone who

has read any of Chapdelaine's stuff--I hate this kind of snide comment, but I can't help myself--knows that, but it's nice of Perry to admit it. (Oh, for shame!)

Seriously, that statement casts aspersions on everything he says. We now know he is capable of setting down a bald-faced lie. And, of course, in this issue's article on the Hugos, he doesn't name names; he just slinks around.

And look at this:

A) Last issue Hazlett said Chapdelaine and Ellison didn't get along.

B) This issue Chapdelaine says he likes Ellison.

C) Hazlett then admits to being Chapdelaine.

But D) Hazlett's article in this issue is nothing but a personal attack on Ellison.

What are we supposed to draw from all of this? I draw a picture of an adolescent having fun throwing stones at people from a hiding place, and then, incapable of keeping his secret, running out and bragging about it. "It was me all the time; wasn't I clever?" No, Perry, you weren't. Now run home, your mommy's calling you.

Harry Harrison
Box 1058
Imperial Beach, Ca.
92032

I would like to apologize for those members of the Science Fiction Writers of America who were incontinent enough to take our family quarrels and problems outside of their natural bounds. No organization runs smoothly, and an organization composed only of chiefs must look like a firestorm of vituperation to the indians.

I am pleased to see that most of the SFWA members who spoke with a measure of detachment during this discussion maintained their professional dignity and attempted to say what I am repeating here: the whole affair is no one's business but our own. I am shamed for those members who used the opportunity vituperation; they are easy to spot, the writers who named the names of those who "wronged" them, who used the occasion for personal aggrandizement. The real words of truth about the entire matter were written by Bob Silverberg who told it as it is. A few individuals--and Bob was and is the hardest working among them--labor as longtime professionals to help the newer people in the game. That is the whole of it, that is what the SFWA is about.

Ted White is another thing altogether. He has been called an inveterate liar in print before, so I can only reiterate this truth once again. There is very little fact in what he writes, and no truth at all in what he wrote about me. He needs the attention of a psychiatrist and the law courts. I am choosing the second and his libelous statements are now in the hands of my attorneys.

I feel the correspondence and articles about SFWA were both unnecessary and in bad taste. I suppose that there is no way to prevent this sort of thing, but I myself want no part of it. I would appreciate your removing my name from your mailing list.

Robert Moore Williams
PO Box 611
Valley Center, Ca.
92082

I have a problem I hope some sf fan will help me solve. However, before we go into my problem, I would like to comment on the last BAB. I didn't know that Harry Harrison was near impeachment when he was a vp of the SFWA! Do you mean that this organization, which will not stand up for its own members against chiselling publishers, has the guts to impeach somebody? Incredible! Does the

pot talk of impeaching the kettle? Utter nonsense! The SFWA is too busy hollaring about Nebula awards to think of impeaching anybody. Besides, who would draw up the indictment?

Come, Mr. White, don't be pulling our legs with this talk of threatened impeachment of Mr. Harrison. Even the youngest among us knows better than this.

Mr. White also seems to charge me with saying that no writer is any better than any other writer (it would be easier to say which stinks the worst, but not much easier) or that writers should be paid by the hour (I would like it better if they were paid at all, especially by Mr. Cohen) and that I have somehow suggested or advocated a communized state. Come, Mr. White! My idea of me is that I have consistently beat the drum in behalf of the individual. Also, I have come of a long line of rebels. (Golly, how long that line is!) But just any day, just anywhere, I am willing to run up the flag and start singing, "I am an American," this being my way of saying that I think I'm getting a better roll of the dice here than I would anywhere else on Earth. One of these days I am going to recommend Bella V. Dodd's School of Darkness as interesting reading for all sf fans and writers.

It seems to me to be clear that Mr. White does not like me. I owe him no ill will because of that. Not liking me is one of his privileges in America.

Right now I have seven soft-cover booklengths on the stands, counting Beachhead Planet, just released by Dell, and five more coming.

Mr. White doesn't like me. But somebody does! Who? I don't know. I just don't know. Not a single editor who recommended any of these twelve books do I know-- nor a single fan who bought one of them.

In connection with the idea that somebody likes me I would like to exhibit next a table of comparative sales which I drew up recently. I know, I know, I know, the table is unfair, the statistics are poorly done, and I am a knothhead who is incapable of straight party-line thinking. Here's the data. You make what you can of it.

MAGAZINES	Print Order	Newsstand Sales
	(Print order compiled by deducting subscription sales from total print order)	
ANALOG.....	128,732.....	69,950
GALAXY.....	109,381.....	43,000
F&SF.....	82,907.....	34,718
SOFT COVER BOOKS (Mine, naturally)		
	Print Order	Newsstand Sales
<u>The Day they H-Bombed Los Angeles</u>	101,984.....	81,437
<u>The Second Atlantis</u>	101,485.....	64,082
<u>Word of the Masterminds</u> (Double).....	110,577.....	82,583
<u>To the End of Time</u>		
<u>The Blue Atom</u>		
<u>The Void Beyond</u> (Double).....	113,346.....	90,677

My sources for these figures are the publishers' sworn statements in their own magazines. On the soft-cover books, my sources are Ace royalty reports. Since I do not have subscription sales, I removed the subscription sales from the total print order to get the number of magazines that actually appeared on the stands. In addition, Ace claims they lose on an average 28% of the print orders. If you want to amuse your-

self by taking 28% of the sales listed above, presumably lost, you will find that you will have accounted for more books than were actually printed. Ace won't be amused by this, however. I called it to their attention some time ago. They still hate me.

The point I want to make again is that somebody must like me--for somebody buys my books. If you want to take this as an illustration of pure, exuberant ego, go right ahead!

What is my problem? Well--but first I want to thank Piers Anthony for the kind words he said about me in BAB 7. "Robert Moore Williams, it seems, has long since come to terms with reality, so he turns out what the market demands--and the fact that he does sell is not evidence of his incompetence but of his competence in matching these demands."

Thank you, Piers. Long ago, this was true. Today, it is only partly true, this in the sense that I don't read these books and magazines any more (to keep from any kind of imitation, conscious or unconscious) but instead I do my own thing and I do it regardless of any new waves that come along--and I get away with it. Any editor can reach anywhere on his desk and find another story just like the one he just read (the apes are everywhere, even screaming words like hack and jerk at me) but when an editor picks up one of my stories, he knows I am not following any party line and that he has something different in his hands. More than this, he knows he has something that has a proven sales record behind it. (I already said this was an example of pure, exuberant ego.)

In another way, however, Piers is right and so very, very right that it hurts even yet to remember it. For a long time I have said essentially what Piers said, except I used these words: "It ain't easy to stink 'em up just right." This was the way I expressed coming to terms with what the market wanted. How did it happen that I came to terms with the market? This way:

I had just quit my job and had just begun writing, in Farmington, Missouri. I was a farm boy and all I had were dreams. Farmington is so far back in the Ozark Mountains that they are still looking for the next wagon train to come through. A little after I started a man named Jown W. Campbell, Jr. (in those days there was a Jr. after his name) had just become editor of a magazine called ASTOUNDING STORIES. (Don't bother to tell me I don't know what I'm talking about.) Campbell had just seen a story of mine, Beyond that Curtain, in a magazine called THRILLING WONDER STORIES. He wanted me for his magazine and was trying to locate me when I sent him a story called Robot's Return. Shouting with joy, he bought it--and promptly sent along a plot for me to develop into a novelette. Happy as a pig in a corn crib, I wrote a story for him. Bounce! (I didn't know it then but I was learning the meaning of the twist the hard way.) When I found enough air to breathe with, I wrote a third story around the same plot. (I could write a million around it if I so chose.) I went the third story to Mr. Campbell. A month passed. Two months passed. Heaven was in my hands. Three months came. Heaven shit in my hands. In short Mr. Campbell bounced the third story too--and explained how it was a marginal story but in the time it had been in the office the margin had been displaced upward!

So help me hamnah, this is the truth!

The next twist is that eventually I sold all three stories to other magazines. I doubt if this would have happened if they had been really bad stories.

This was part of the way I learned the necessity of coming to terms with reality. I learned the lesson so well that ever since then I have been dubious about doing business with John. Do I need to do business with him? My soft-cover book sales say I do not.

I also came to terms with the realities of the publishing business in other ways, one of them being sending Ray Palmer a story at a magazine called AMAZING STORIES, just bought by Ziff-Davis from Teck. Back the story came. "Beautifully written but I would not want to take a chance on it. Not pulp fiction."

Fortunately, there was still plenty of breathing air in the Ozark Mountains.

Ray eventually showed me what he wanted--and I went on to sell him perhaps a hundred stories. The twist here is that now I am fighting Sol Cohen, Ted White's boss, over the ownership of these stories. Mr. Cohen claims he owns these stories. I claim (and I can prove it) that between 1938 and 1957 Ziff-Davis bought only the right to print a story once, that if a story was used a second time another payment was due the author. (One of my fights with the SFWA is that they refuse to go to bat for their own members against Cohen.)

I want to say again, dear children, that it ain't always easy to stink 'em up just right. It's really much easier to do beautiful work--and go broke doing it.

In connection with all of this, I would like to call attention to two recent reviews of two of my books. In SFR Hank Davis recently reviewed The Bell from Infinity. After mentioning two of my early stories, Robot's Return and Flight of the Dawn Star as being among his favorite sf stories (I wrote him a letter thanking him for even remembering these stories written so very long ago), Hank ended up his review by saying, very gently, "He can do it better."

Now this is essentially what Piers said. Ah, well, since this is the morning for exuberant ego displays, it might be possible, just barely possible, that perhaps I can. Why don't I? Who pays your bills?

Recently Mr. Halterman reviewed one of my Zanthar stories in the WSFA JOURNAL. Mr. Halterman didn't like that story. He chewed me out and good. Then along came Zanthar at Trip's End. Mr. Halterman did a switch and recommended this one.

I like reviewers who can say as gently as Hank Davis, "He can do it better," and who can do flips like Mr. Halterman. They're beinf individuals, are these gentlemen, and even when they are chewing me out, I beat the drum for them to have that



l11

right. If everybody liked everybody else, this would be a dull and stupid world.

As to Paul Hazlett, it seems to me that some people are chewing him out pretty strongly. It also seems to me that I can see shit so far up in the necks of some people that it is almost running out of their ears. However, Paul Hazlett isn't causing me any trouble. It looks to me as if one thing he is doing is trying to make an honest woman out of that young whore, the SFWA. At this task, I wish him, fervidly, lots of luck. However it is my guess that she was born to be a slut--and this she will be to the end of her days. Too many of her members, in my opinion, would sell their grandmothers into prostitution if by doing so they would get their names on the front cover of the next issue of the Whore House News.

My problem? In one issue I am called a hack, in the next issue I am called a jerk. Would somebody define these terms for me and tell me the difference between them?

David Gerrold Reason for this letter is to support a point made by Silverberg. He
Box 526 says that SFWA is an attempt by the pros to help the neo-pros. Being
Hollywood, Ca. in the latter category and trying to work up to the former, I can sup-
90028 port his comments from firsthand experience.

Item: My anthology, Generation, could not have come about without the efforts of SFWA members. The support I received from members of the organization made the book possible.

I was able to contact many writers through the SFWA Bulletin, I was able to get support from other already established pros, and I was able to get advice and necessary backstopping from others who had done similar anthologies. For instance, Harry Harrison is directly responsible for the circumstances leading up to the sale of the book. Harlan is responsible for helping me establish certain guidelines and for finding me certain writers. Silverberg, Niven, McCaffrey and certain others have offered to do jacket blurbs for the book.

Of course, I had to do it myself (with help from Stephen Goldin) but the point I am making is that I was able to avoid a great number of mistakes because of the existence of SFWA. This is SFWA's main purpose.

A few facts about the book (which hopefully will be out before the end of the year). There are a total of 23 or 24 stories in it. Six of the writers are brand new, these are their first sales. At least an equal number are represented by stories that are among their first five sales. There are six (or is it seven?) female writers in the book. There are a number of people from the Clarion group.

Anyway, the point is, it's one of those books that doesn't just happen because a publisher thinks it's a good idea. It was an idea that had to be pushed and pushed hard. (If it's any good as a book, I'll be glad to take the credit. If it stinks, it's all Stephen Goldin's fault.)

But the book came about because there were people to help--SFWA people. If these people were truly hogs shoved in up to the snout do you honestly think they would help a new writer, and a new editor with his project. They'd pay lip service, sure, but when it came down to it, would they?

Well, they did. They did as much--if not more--than any group of writers could do for someone who's going full steam on a dangerous and half-assed project.

(i.e. a book of new writers, edited by a new editor.)

I resent the people who are jumping on SFWA now. Too many of them are jumping for the wrong reasons. Sometimes I am a little appalled at who some of these people are. Many of them are people I respect. (Or is it respected?)

Sure the SFWA is not perfect. There are a lot of things it can't do, won't do, doesn't do. But it is only an organization made up of people--and unfortunately, that's a rather imperfect medium. Of course, it has its virtues as well as its faults.

Organizations, being groups, cannot function as individuals, and we should not ascribe to them the attributes of an individual. The whole is not always equal to some of its parts. When SFWA is at its worst, it is because of the actions of some of its individuals.

And conversely, when it is at its best, it is because of some of its members.

I believe in SFWA--and I'm one of those neos who's supposedly being pushed out of the trough by the other shoulder-shoving snouts. I happen to believe that it's not that way at all, and I've already put my money where my mouth is. At Philcon, in the name of my anthology, I gave the organization a \$100 donation. It was my way of paying back the organization as a whole for the actions of some of its members which helped me and my career.

Robert Bloch Well--BAB #7 certainly sent a lot of hornets winging from their
2111 Sunset Crest Dr. nests! Haven't seen so much controversy under the same covers
Los Angeles, Ca. since the hey-day of the Shaver mystery. Of course, the Shaver
90046 mystery was a damned sight easier to understand than SFWA or the
 Hugo awards--and made considerably more sense, too. Since I'm
a member of the former and a winner of the latter, perhaps I shouldn't talk--but on the
other hand (the one which feeds me, and which I'm biting) who has a better right? I
handed out the last set of Hugos in St. Louis and will be handing out some Nebulas, I
presume, at Berkeley this March--and I only hope the awards system will be revised so
as to somehow reflect a more accurate cross-section of fan and pro evaluation. But
how this can be done remains a mystery!

Roy Tackett Issues numbers 6 and 7 of BEABOHEMA have provided more enter-
915 Green Valley Rd. NW tainment than any fanzines in recent history. All the weep-
Albuquerque, N.M. 87107 ing and wailing and gnashing of teeth over SFWA and the "Mil-
 ford Mafia" and the Nebula Awards, all the bruised little egos
on parade, I haven't laughed so hard in ages. The outgroup, eh, Frank? At a time when
the editors of science fiction and mainstream magazines are crying for competent, rele-
vant fiction it is most amusing to find this bunch of self-styled "professional writers"
bitching about how they are being excluded and clawing at each other like a bunch of
pussycats. Professional writers? Haw! Professionals produce.

Andy Porter Perry Chapdelaine, a first class Ass, begins from a basic misappre-
55 Pineapple St. hension. The NYCon (A. Porter, Sec'y, NYCon III) didn't limit nom-
Brooklyn, N.Y. inations for the Hugos to members. ANYONE could nominate. Like-
11201 wise, to nominate in most other conventions you had to be a member
 of the current or previous convention. This limits nominations to
only 2000 people (not Chapdelaine's 400). The rest of his article, based on initial
inaccuracy, goes downhill from zero.

I will be buying artwork from fans for VENTURE and, maybe, F&SF. The VENTURE buys are definite; F&SF may follow, if everything works out all right.

Mike Deckinger My interpretation of a "professional writer" is one who made his living
25 Manor Dr. at this craft. In the science fiction field there are not a great many
Apt. 12-J fitting within this limitation: Bob Silverberg, Poul Anderson, Robert
Newark, N.J. Heinlein, perhaps a half-dozen more who manage to make a comfortable
07106 living wage writing and selling science fiction. The great majority
of SFWA members are writers who derive an income from some other un-
related field. I don't agree with Dean Koontz in suggesting that "professional" car-
ries connotations of stagnation and an inability to progress. To me, "professional"
indicates the individual has satisfactorily mastered the skill and can directly apply
this talent towards earning a living, but in no way intimates that he is in a rut and
unable to modify his skills. If that was the case a professional writer could sell
a profitable book that would bring in a steady stream of fat royalties, and all future
books would necessarily turn out inferior to the first acclaimed work. This is hardly
the case. I need only cite such craftsmen as Bob Silverberg or John Brunner who are
systematically producing books that invariably eclipse the previous works.

Pauline Palmer's review of The Left Hand of Darkness is unnerving because she
reviews the book for what it should be (in her opinion), not for what it is. She in-
sists that it is a dull book. The story moves along slowly, leisurely, but I'd prefer
to use the word "sober" as a description. A dull book is usually dull because the au-
thor lost interest in the story development, and completed it only to fulfill the terms
of a contract. Too many books have been written this way; usually this painful dis-
covery takes place somewhere before the book has reached mid-point. But I doubt very
much that Ursula K. LeGuin deliberately chose to write a dull book or was writing to
get a contract satisfied. The Left Hand of Darkness offers a sober view of an Earth-
man's reaction on a totally unhuman world. I found his behavior to be completely be-
lievable, his attitude of careful exploration and study far more understandable than
a plot that moved him from one cliff-hanger to another. Such a gimmick, studding the
novel with dramatic interludes, might have attracted the average sword and sorcery
reader but it would not have improved the novel.

The Left Hand of Darkness is basically concerned with the conflicts and relation-
ship between Genly Ai and Lord Estraven. The pace is moderate enough to sustain the
background about which the tale unfolds. Everything in it points to the intricate char-
acters of the Earthman and the alien, and how each react to each other. In this view
I see no point for argument. The book creates a set of believable characters who dom-
inate the story so skillfully that when one is killed the loss becomes a sharp, personal
matter, and you can empathize with the sorrow of the other. The notion of twisting
this book into a satire is almost too sacrilegious to contemplate.

George Hay I'd like to comment briefly on Pauline Palmer's review of The Left
411 West Green Rd. Hand of Darkness: My novel is a mirror, in which one sees one's
Tottenham own face. Thus, I will not say--as I am tempted to--that la Palmer
London, N.15 has been reviewing a tragedy under the impression that it was a
U.K. French farce. I will say that, as I understood the book, the author
was presenting the characters, not only as themselves, but as ex-
pressions of their planetary and national characteristics. Your critic deplored the
absence of character development; it seems to me that a right reading of this work
should produce a considerable character development in the reader. When I say that
Ursula LeGuin, on the basis of this work, should be compared with Jane Austin and Isak
Dineson, I am not just being fulsome; I mean that she shares the capacity of these writ-

ers to tell us, via their characters, something about the mood that suffused their times, and, beyond that, something, ultimately, about the entire human condition.

Peter Singleton
Block 4
Broadmoor Hospital
Crowthorne
Berks RG11 7EG
England

I have been mistaken for "Erasmus Spratt" by several faneds during recent months. As a matter of fact, "Spratt" is really G.D. Croft, who has recently left this institution. He promised to write to me but has failed to do so; so I can't pass on the ishes of BAB relating to his comments.

As for "Spratt" questioning the accomplishments of Piers Anthony, I can only ascribe this attitude to his universal ignorance of modern SF, though he is well grounded in the older authors and magazines.

Mike Gilbert
5711 West Henrietta Rd.
West Henrietta, N.Y.
14586

Do you know these bastards are going to try and draft me this June--hell no I won't go!--nobody is gonna see my little pink bod layin' face down in a rice paddy on the 7:00 news--Those kats even cut the space program--shit!

I did a neat thing--I just sold a painting of "Pete" Conrad going into the Surveyor crater to his sister who lives in the area. I also did a certificate for him to sign (it's about one of the personal things he took to the moon for his sister (she's got medals from his two previous flights)) and I'm having lunch with her tomorrow--neato! And Pete's coming up to visit his sister in the Spring and I'll get to meet him--wow!

My mother runs a paperback store and she's hip on sf, anyway--LISTEN TO THIS ACE BKS: the recent Ace doubles have used some Greek cat who does photo covers--one was a chicken in a GI Joe suit--aw! It isn't that the fact is what are they doing there anyway but they are sooo bad. My mother said, "Thanks be its a double so I can face the ugly cover to the back."



My mother knows books and she says that type cover doesn't sell! Don Wollheim is on drugs or something--sigh!

For Derek Carter: Jones has a memory bank of style--it's scary--but I seem to observe that he has let himself get stuck in a rut--I think he's trapped himself with his style. I'd like to see him do something new & different--and what you said in your second paragraph is so true--so true.

In SFR, Avram Davidson said he cared about how his book covers look--E Pluribus Unum--how about the rest of you dirty pros?

I now sink back into the machines of joy and love all with a program! I am making an SF movie--Kubrick beware! Ed Emshwiller beware--log r, read out on 1, plus 2 click!

have a go!

robert j.r. whitaker there is nothing worse than a pompous bombastic fan within
201 liston avenue the ranks of fandom. enclosed within the march issue of
wilmington, del. amazing stories is a letter by one such bombastic, pompous
19804 fan. and i might add he is also quite a snob. his name is
 justin st. john. justin writes, and quite unsuccessfully, as
 if he were trying to learn every word in the dictionary. his
contrived style is as windy as he is; and it seems that his liking for ray bradbury's
fiction taught him nothing, for bradbury aims at simplicity, while justin aims for
bombastic tones that make him look intelligent.

examine:

"if there is nothing worse than an argument that is merely irrational,
it is an argument that is a bromide, a catch phrase, a ritual of exorcism of
an unpopular concept--"

that is just the first sentence of the gust of wind that justin st. john
breathed upon the readers of amazing. he goes on for two more columns in his pseudo-
intellectual style.

in his letter justin attacks j.j.pierce with arguments (all of them contra-
dicting himself, of course) that have been brought up against pierce. he mentions
that pierce's "bromides" are as bad as the fiction he admires. pierce admires brad-
bury--and so does justin st. john. justin made some half-baked remarks about the new
wave. (really, did you know bradbury was a new wave writer? that kurt vonnegut is
one, too? so says the pseudo-professor justin st. john.)

"traditionally," writes justin-the-know-it-all, "sf authors have their charac-
ters too busy fighting DEMs from betelgeuse to bother with such mundane issues as
morality and philosophy." a strange statement. and then again not so strange when
one realizes that justin speaks out of two sides from his mouth. his attacks in the
science fiction review upon the good doctor, isaac asimov, wherein he belittles asimov
for thinking (quite justifiably) that sex does not have to be in a story, and also
four letter words, show he has little regard for the opinions of others, and their
ethics. and when he says that science fiction writers have been writing about DEMs,
he obviously has not read too much of the recent fiction in the prozines. there has
been little man vs. monster material in the past ten-fifteen years. his statement

shows that he is a snob--and a very narrow one indeed. it shows he lives farther in the past than j.j. pierce, and pierce, for all his blindness, will praise a story when it is good.

if justin st. john were to read this letter, he would comment on the spelling and the syntax, so what? i make errors, and i'll admit it. but let him admit that he is a windbag.

Isaac Asimov
45 Greenough St.
West Newton, Mass.
02165

There seems to be a controversy about the sale of my robot stories to the movies (and/or TV) between Dean Koontz and Jerry Lapidus.

The facts are simple enough. The robot short stories from I, Robot and The Rest of the Robots are involved.

The novels are not. So I think, from internal evidence, that VARIETY is correct (I did not see the article).

Two points must be made. 1) As far as I know, only options are involved so far, and the robots may never see either the big screen or the little one,

and 2) I realize that Mr. Koontz announced that "like Isaac Asimov" he does not mistakes only to be funny. Nevertheless, overenthusiastic admirers may say that I don't make mistakes out of sheer overenthusiasm. Be it carefully noted by the literal-minded, however, that I, myself, have NEVER claimed never to make mistakes. Indeed, in many of my writings I make a big deal about the mistakes I make.

You wouldn't think I would have to say this, but my experience with fanzines leads me to be quite certain that I do have to say this.

Robert E. Margroff I was astonished that Ted White (of all people) attributed some
Elgin, Iowa 52141 of my words to John Pierce (of all people). Under the circumstances, I'd better hasten to reply.

Quoting Ted's published letter:

"As an aside to John Pierce, I should note that if 'in 1962 there was no hallucinogenic drug problem for society to wrestle with,' then there is none now. The psychedelic drugs were first popularized (by Huxley) in this country in the late fifties, with his Doors of Perception; I first encountered peyote in 1958, personally, and tried it the first time (I was cautious) a year later.

"Today's problem aren't caused by the drugs, but by the reactions of the people who are trying to suppress the drugs."

I find that last statement of Ted's an astonishing oversimplification. I've seen somewhat similar statements elsewhere and have marveled that it goes largely unchallenged. I'm not the best qualified person in the world to prove that there is a problem aside from "the reactions of the people who are trying to suppress the drugs," but it seems to me that there is.

First, what is a problem in this sense? Seems to me that since the effects of the drugs (long sense) are unknown, the fact that any large numbers of young people

take them is cause for at least concern. What happens to these kids? What is happening? What will happen in the future as a result of their taking them? These are problems--larger than just the personal, though I'm sure the personal must loom large.

Out here in Iowa I see nothing of the drug-problem, but the television and the papers and other sources suggests a large local problem elsewhere. It's not widely known and accepted, I believe, that some users of psychedelic drugs experience repeat trips longafter they've taken them. It's not, at the very least, suspected that mental breakdowns, suicides and other tragedies can and have resulted from careless taking of psychedelic drugs. That's no problem except to the individuals concerned? I can't believe that, honestly. I find it hard to believe that Ted wrote as though he believed it. (Frank, were you playing editor here? ((Nope.)) It almost seems to me that Ted would not make such a statement and leave it unqualified.)

Perhaps the sort of problem the psychedelic drug-takers pose for society can be illustrated to some small degree by an experience of a friend of mine. This friend hasn't experimented with psychedelic drugs himself but has an open mind about them. Last summer he and several other individuals were exploring a very deep, exceedingly dangerous cave. They had all the right equipment and a certain amount of experience and knowhow--they weren't taking intentional chances. Deep underground one of the party who had taken psychedelic drugs in the past began "tripping." Fortunately there was no tragedy here, but exploring unexplored caves isn't the safest sport in the world and it's easy to see how the lives of the entire expedition could have depended on the drug-taker maintaining a clear mind. Would you care to be suspended by a rope over a steep cliff and have reality suddenly "turn" for the individual entrusted with that rope? I think the answer is obvious. And if such a return trip could happen deep underground, miles from civilization, why couldn't it as easily happen under some less extreme situation? If an individual is piloting a plane or driving a car or working at any number of jobs where the safety of other people is involved...could anyone then say that "Today's problems aren't caused by the drugs, but by the reactions of the people who are trying to suppress them"?

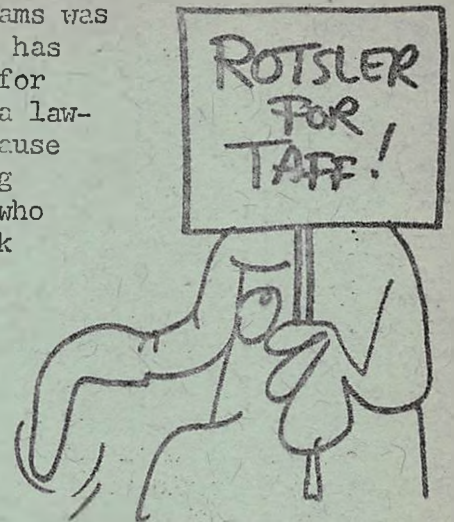
I'm sure I've made my point. Alcoholism can and does present problems for society. How much greater, then, the problems where the effects of a drug are partially unknown and only partially under study? How much greater the danger to associates and casual bystanders when there's that "repeat trip" factor?

Buck Coulson	As far as BeABohema being the vehicle for the "out-group" among
Route 3	stf writers--maybe if they'd learn to write more intelligent
Hartford City, Ind.	letters, they could get them published elsewhere. And if they
47348	could write better stories, they might even find themselves
	in the "in-group." Except for Piers, who won't be in any group
	unless he's running it. (That isn't an insult, incidentally; I wouldn't insult any-
	one who has much the same attitude that I do.)

Hazlett doesn't seem to know any more about the Hugos than he does about SFWA. By twisting his interpretation of every fact (and making up a few facts) his analysis of Hugo winning might possibly apply to one winner, Harlan Ellison. It doesn't, really, but you can see what it's based on. However, the author who has won more Hugos than anyone except Ellison, and who in the past few years has won a Hugo for everything he has had published (which Ellison has never come close to) is Robert A. Heinlein. And there Hazlett's analysis is nothing short of grotesque.

In his second letter, Williams does manage to pile a lot of dirty insinuations on a totally insignificant amount of fact, doesn't he? And he only sold Ziff-Davis

first serial rights? He's lucky, then; most authors of the day sold all rights or didn't sell. Sounds like Williams was a member of the Ziff-Davis "in-group." However, if he has all this evidence, I don't quite see why he's waiting for SFWA to do something for him; he has a prime case for a lawsuit. Kill your own snakes, Williams; don't bitch because nobody will do it for you. Apparently he is suggesting that any member in the "in-group" (as defined by him) who makes any sort of statement about another writer's work in "trying to influence fan and editorial opinion." His own insinuations about the "in-group," of course, are not trying to influence anybody. Of course not, anyone can see that. It's only the other guy who does things one disapproves of.



Gabe Eisenstein You actually put drawings in
1753 Rosemary Rd. places where there is some
Highland Park, Ill. relevance, I see. Like the put-
60035 on scribble I did is near the point in Hazlett's latest piece
telling us about the Huckster Dream-World that is fandom. More-
over, the level of effort and quality of the drawing and the null set signs just match
the degree of thought and...yes, puten, hucksterism of the article. Hazlett makes
innuendo as fun as hucksterish writing--that is, in seeing writing and everything
else as the Big Con he assumes a state of mind where this attitude is adapted to
fan writing as well. "So pack your ermines, Harlan--I've seen this happen before--
The marks are coming up on us--" All a vaudeville show 1920--Hazlett shows all
in Times Square in Picadilly...SFWA members will have to argue the other fish poi-
son cons, but a lot of us little guys vote for Hugos, and when the results have a
large similarity to our ballots--no travelling medicine show ever came through these
parts--the innuendo fades and the marks are leaving.

One more thing, while defending people who don't need it: why would the imag-
inary person in Hazlett's Hugo article, if he is, when not campaigning or cranking
out Hugo-winners, a screenwriter who makes many times what a SF story brings, even
with the Hugo designation, on a single hacked-out movie script, spend all this time
in working for the Hugo when he could be making money which, it is implied, is his
only purpose in all the insidious dealings? Quite a sentence there, but I think the
point is clear.

Jerry Lapidus Writing is an art, a fantasy having some relation to life. I think
54 Clearview Dr. this in something of a response to Marion Zimmer Bradley's comments
Pittsford, N.Y. on Delany (actually, some of Delany, since only some of his stuff
14534 is written in the way she dislikes, but more on that soon). What
I'm trying to say is that writing is not "real"; when you sit
down to read a novel or a short story, all you're doing is reading a made-up story
about people or things or events or something. You may be entertained, you may be
educated, you may be convinced, you may be impressed by what is written, but this
doesn't change the basic nature of the medium. What you are reading is not describ-
ing actual events; even with the most intensive attempts at realism possible, you are
always conscious that you are reading a crafted, a created work. This has been ac-
cepted in the other art forms for centuries; no one expects a painting to be "real,"
and music has always been accepted as something created by some person or persons.
With the slight exception of the theatrical movement known as naturalism (and its

subset, realism), theatre has almost always been of the presentational variety, that in which there is no attempt made to pretend that the audience is watching reality on stage. In modern theatricalist movements, this is played up even further, but the practice stretches back to the earliest stirrings of western theatre, in Greece. Why, then, do we constantly insist that the writer maintain the fiction that he is describing reality? Why do people insist that he constantly remain aloof from his work, not allowed to present an aside or a soliloquy to his reader? What Delany is doing isn't by any means saying, "Here I am, cleverly writing this"; what he seems to be saying to me is something to the effect of, "Here is a story, and here's where it came from, and maybe if you put the two together, you'll discover something about me, or yourself, or life, or the world." He's simply admitting that he's creating a world, manipulating it for his own purposes. Panshin has done it too, in the Villiers novels, and even Brunner did a little in Stand on Zanzibar. Of course the idea isn't new, but if it works and it helps the fiction, I don't see anything wrong with it.

Of course, the whole argument applies pretty much to Einstein Intersection, and maybe to "Time Considered as a Helix of Semiprecious Stones." The latter story doesn't use diary entries or anything like that, but it makes no attempt to pretend the events are actually happening. Maybe it will be "acceptable", though, since it uses the often-employed device of simply having the first-person narrator tell the story. This allows him to embellish all he wants, and still stay technically within the story, for then the "story" becomes not merely the events as described, but instead the character, telling what has happened to him. But most of his writing, certainly most earlier work--Babel-17, Fall of the Towers, "Star Pit," the rest--is fairly straight. Most of his work isn't like this, which is fine; the greater variety of styles a writer can employ, the less likely he is to write patterned work.

Jay Kay Klein	As usual, I'm a bit late with comments on BAB 7. But I think
302 Sandra Dr.	you'll understand when I tell you that I've been working on
North Syracuse, N.Y.	one of the burning issues of the day: the Identity of Paul
13212	Hazlett!

As many persons are aware, I'm one of the outstanding computer experts in the country; with access to perhaps the largest computer outside of the Department of Defense, and the use of a staff of computer programmers. Accordingly, the unlocking of the Greater Cryptogram has been undertaken by me.

This involves breaking down the known writings of Paul Hazlett into phrases, words and even phonemes. Cadences are tagged, along with such characteristic features as vocabulary choices, punctuation sequences and the like. Next, these (and other items) are compared with selections from writers that are members of SFWA. (On the not unreasonable assumption that among these may be found the true identity of P. Hazlett. If not, other writers will be pursued later.)

As customary in cryptanalysis, to save time, inspired guesses are first made: certain authors are checked out first, as likely suspects. Among these with a high probability are those with an initial "P" and secondarily with a medial or final "P." (Similarly with "H.")

Leading the pack is Isaac Asimov. Alphabetical order, you know--secretly none other than Paul French! However, the correlation breaks down quickly under the powerful analysis of my giant computer: Isaac only writes for MONEY! Even to defend his honor, Isaac won't write more than a postcard (in addition to taking less time, a postcard only costs 5¢ versus 6¢ for a letter).

This brings us to Poul Anderson, who should have come before Isaac, except that I don't like to hurt Ike's feelings by not having him first. Poul is quickly disposed of, too: simply not enough swordplay in Hazlett's writing. Also, Mr. H. obviously knows nothing about fine wines.

Fred Pohl...nope, he wouldn't have been caught dead at a Milford get-together in the first place. Perry Chapdelaine...ah. ha! now we seem to be getting closer. But I can't reveal inside reckonings just yet, until additional runs are made of all Perry's published corpus. Nor can I for similar reasons say anything about Sprague de Camp.

This brings us to the consideration of writers who do not have a "P" in their names--this Hazlett is a slippery one, all right. First of all for serious consideration by this line of inverse reasoning is Virginia Kidd--who gave a very creditable performance in BAB 7 of apparently denouncing Hazlett and ostensibly denying the validity of his comments. She seems to be saying, "Who's afraid of Virginia Kidd?"

Inevitably, the garden path of persons with a "P" to their names leads to Bob Tucker. His innocence (imagine Tucker being innocent!) is quickly established when Hazlett's writing fails to disclose a single mention of Bob Bloch. Similarly, Harlan E. is excused since Hazlett fails to identify Harlan as the young man whose "writing and story were mercilessly criticized. Breaking the rules, this young writer stood up angrily, denounced his critics and swore that he would come back more famous, a better writer and a wealthier writer than all of them. This person did in fact make good, financially and publicity-wise. Apparently he returns to the SF Writer's Conference annually, not for need of criticism, but to flaunt the fact that he is bigger and better than any of his former critics."

No, it obviously can't be a writer who at the age of ten had dressed like Superman and threatened to jump from the Cleveland Trust Building. Anyone who thinks Harlan is Hazlett is obviously mistaken.

The list of suspects is endless. There's Sam, for one. But Hazlett fails to use six commas, three semicolons and a couple of colons with an exclamation point in any single sentence, thus eliminating science fiction's leading gaslight anthologist. For another, there's Alexei Panshin. But since Hazlett termed him "our new Robert Heinlein writer," I've no doubt Alex would cheerlessly ship Mr. H. to Siberia, come the counter-revolution.

Meanwhile, the Computer is busily reading the collected works of the entire SFWA writers. So far, three fuses, two transistors and a magnetic memory core have burned out. Even now I am in anticipation of the great, flaming expose I plan to write, entitled "J'accuse!"

George Inzer Hank Reinhardt called me last Sunday with the sad news that Al Andrews 116 Cox St. died in his sleep Saturday, January 24, 1970. I thought that you and Auburn, Ala. your BEABOHEMA readers would like to know since was was an important 36830 part of the Typerfund campaign Hank and I had for Al.

The obituary that appeared in the Birmingham NEWS, January 25, 1970 reads:

ALFRED M. ANDREWS, 42, of 1740 Murray Hill Road, Homewood, who died Saturday was a resident of Birmingham most of his life. He was a member of Jehovah's Witnesses Church. Graveside services will be at 10 A.M. Monday, at Elmwood Cemetery, Elmwood Chapel directing. He is survived by a brother, Franklin

H. Smith, Homewood. The family requests that memorials be made in the form of contributions to the Muscular Dystrophy Foundation.

To which I can only add that Al was a trufan and a true friend. He was the first fan I ever met. He was also the bravest man I have ever known. His body was a wasted hulk but somewhere he had the strength to have a great sense of humor, and a brilliant perceptive mind. Doctors were amazed at his will to live. The type of dystrophy that he had usually kills at around 20 and he lived to twice that age. He contracted the disease at age 2. This is what I mean when I say that he had courage that few have.

D.D. Sherman While Faith Lincoln may have sometimes been in bad taste, Steve
520 No. 19th St. Lawrence Goldstein gets positively obscene. Have your little
Philadelphia, Pa. hoaxes if you must, but please maintain some consideration for
19130 the intelligence of your readers.

WAHF: Bob Vardeman: "I notice a rather subtle meaning linked in with the letter from Paul Hazlett saying you could reveal him as Chapdelaine if you wished. The letter did not state Chapdelaine was the miscreant, it just said you could reveal him as such. Another Faith Lincoln--and so soon?

"Leo, when will you ever learn?"

Dave Lewton: "I can understand Dave Burton's argument--I mean, who wants a pro-dominated lettercol--it tends to hurt non-descript characters like fans who might like to hear what other fans have to say about things--but then again--the line between fan and pro is a slim one in many cases--if I get letters from various important pros for my zine or an article printed in it--I sure as hell would print them...I mean, if it's a choice between Jerry Lipshitz or Harlan Ellison...a choice between a pro or Dave Lewton...

Pvt. Jack West: "Since I am currently confined in the stockade as a result of being court-martialed last month (I was sentenced to four months) for refusing to train in the "art" of killing people, I can identify with Anthony's article. I could swear the descriptions he gave of the Chaplains, First Sergeants and Unit Commanders were the descriptions of the people I know here at Polk Polk. If the public knew what kind of asses run their Army, they wouldn't wonder why the situation in Vietnam is so fucked up.

"I seldom agree with Anthony on anything, especially Lin Carter, however for once I am in complete agreement with him. I'm happy to finally find some common ground with him. Anyone who hates the Army can't be all bad. Thank you, Piers, for expressing my views so well. F.T.A. all the way!" (Pvt. Jack West, 400-62-9794, Box A, Ft. Polk, La. 71459)

Irvin Koch: "First a word on your first four pages of artwork, I tell you the same thing I tell the leaders of the UT-K student agitators. You are becoming ORTHODOX, you are all becoming conformists, if you are also science-fiction fans and go along with the flower-children and "revolution" people you lose out on a chance to be one of the few people around who consider all the "ifs" of what everyone else is doing."

Dick Geis sent loads of Rotsler artwork; thanks Dick! And there were letters from Alex Krislov, Roger H. Bryant, Jr., Terry Jeeves, Neal Goldfarb, Mark Barclay, Tony Isabella, Alexis Gilliland, Gary Labowitz, Connie Faddis, Larry Propp, Sandy Moss.

