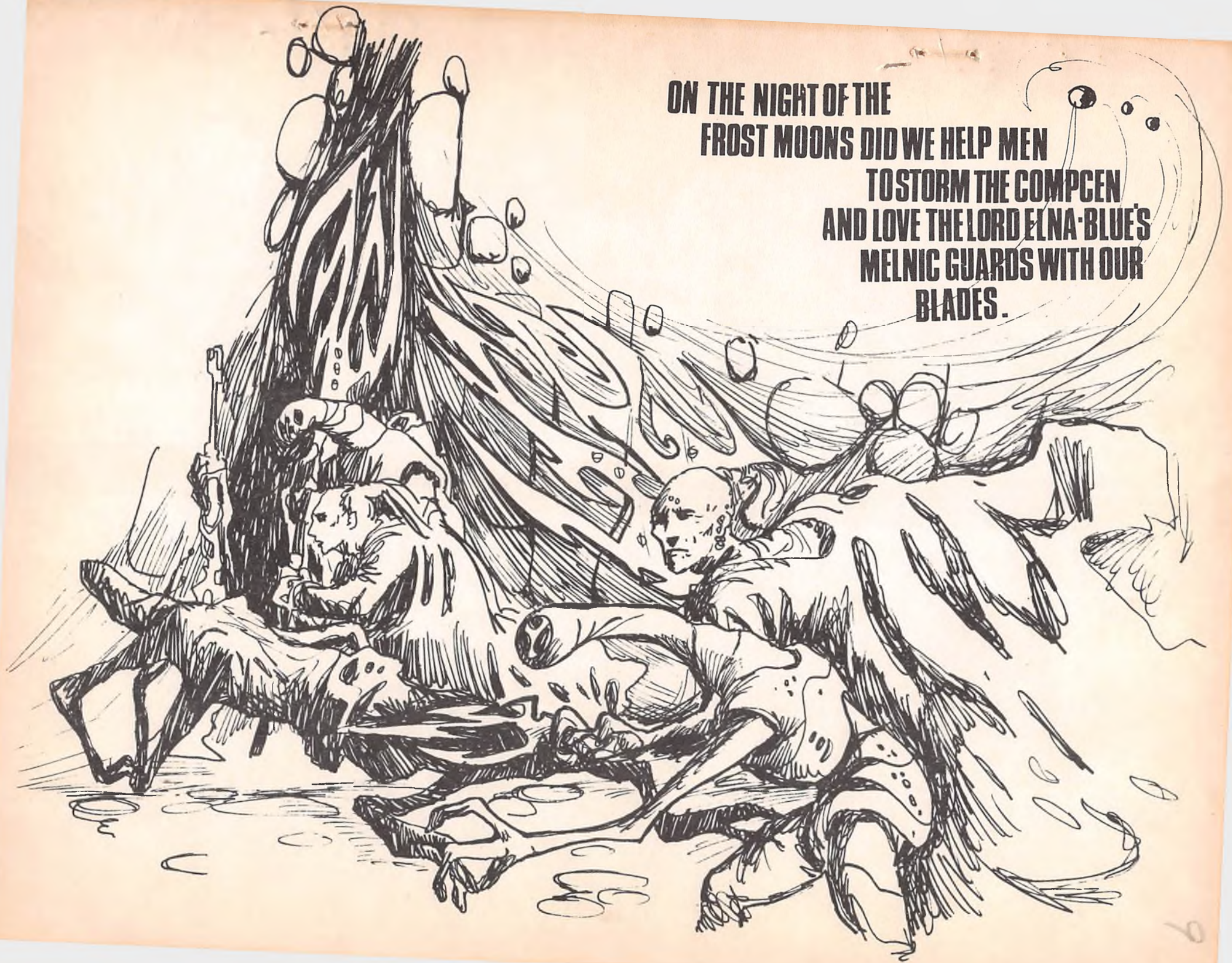


ON THE NIGHT OF THE
FROST MOONS DID WE HELP MEN
TO STORM THE COMPCEN
AND LOVE THE LORD ELNA-BLUE'S
MELNIC GUARDS WITH OUR
BLADES.



BEABOHEMA 9

BeABohema is available for contributions of the usual stuff, trades, letters of comment or for 60¢ an issue, 4/\$2. Back issues: I don't have any more copies of #1 or #2, #s 3, 4, 6, 7 and 8 are 60¢ each, and #5, the last annish, is 75¢. The next issue will be the second annish, for whatever it's worth, and will have the usual, plus some goodies, probably, that I've been saving for some special issue, which I may as well make the next one.

BAB is edited and published by Frank Lunney at 212 Juniper St., Quakertown, Pa. 18951. Artwork should go to Jim McLeod, the ArSe Editor at 7909 Glen Tree Dr., Citrus Heights, Ca. 95610. This is Doych Nudle Press Mark II publication 14. Today is May 27, and finals have started....

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Front and back covers will probably be by Mike Gilbert, but then again, hey might not be.



A curious thing happened to the "editorial" title in the last issue. As some may remember who have been around long enough, it started off as "Bellowings of a Bohema" to go along with the title of the magazine, was soon simply called "Bellowings" and last issue was transformed to "Babblings," a change which completely escaped my notice until I looked through the issue after everything had been collated and then looked through some old issues of BAB trying to find out some information which had become needed by myself.

Anyway, it's simply another reflection of what I went through last issue that I couldn't get the name right. For those interested, the process has accelerated, or else this issue would have been out weeks ago. There's no fear at the moment of BAB folding or anything like that. I have some articles lined up for the next issue already, to go along with the columns I had to put off from this issue, and I still have the urge to put out a fanzine.

*

There's a rumor going around that a Science Fiction Writers, International is being established in England, probably as a result of the dissatisfaction that has become apparent in the SFWA lately. There's seems to be a lot of effort going into finding flaws in the SFWA as it presently exists to write an SFWI constitution that will be more "professional."

And it seems that people are dropping out of SFWA one by one.

And, damnit, that line was simply an observation, not a comment, and it shouldn't be taken as anything more than an observation.

*

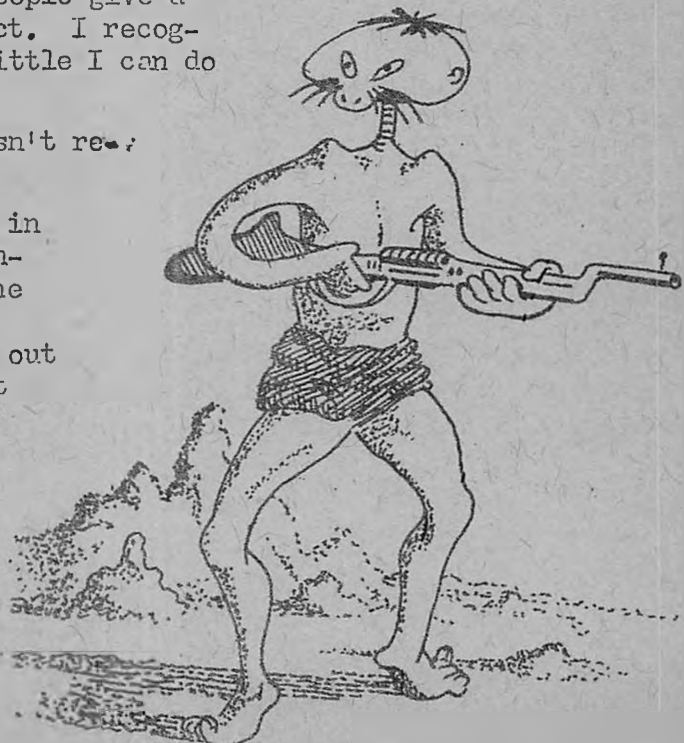
My editorial presence in the lettercolumn in BAB has been regularly decreasing. I believe there's a reason behind it, and that reason is that subjects are increasingly out of my range of knowledge, as is the SFWA, and lately out of my range of interest. And, as Ted White has said, it's none of my business.

So this issue exhibits few of my thoughts. And next issue will probably exhibit fewer. I have this inferiority complex, you see, and find myself unable to believe that other people give a damn about what I think on a certain subject. I recognize the problem, and there's still damn little I can do about it.

From my point of view, silence doesn't reveal ignorance, so I'm hiding everything.

While I don't jump into every idea in the locolumn, that doesn't mean I'm not controlling the letters to a great degree. The column is long every issue...but I receive a great many letters, and I start chopping out portions of them as soon as I get them, but I get long letters. And I do edit, when some things get long, with the exception of Piers Anthony and Ted White, thus far.

BELLOWINGS





Other people get cut, for the most part. The results have caused grief, and cause people like Andy Offut (who I've ignored up to this time) to write to CROSSROADS and say "Please print aside to Dean Koontz: something pleasant I said about you was in the 3/4 of my letter cut out of the last BAB. Get it and frame it or something." And the next page has Snider referring to the letters he would have printed if he were "Frank Lunney and printed 100 page issues." And Dick Geis tells everyone to send all the letters they want printed to me.

I mean, what the hell?

Along the same lines, people have been bitching about what I DO write in BELLOWINGS. Like rich brown in FOCAL POINT: "Frank needs to learn to either write editorials that Say Something or to try something radical and new--like not writing one at all."

Well, I'm sorry Nothing Is Said in the editorial, and all that shit, but there are just so few fannish topics that can be written about that wouldn't be rehashed, and I have enough trouble living as it is now to start controversies and get more shit from people than I am at present. And as Harry Warner has said over and over: fandom doesn't mean that much when you compare it to the world. How many times can it be said that Noreascon is a stupid name, the rise in membership fees is atrocious, and drugs should/shouldn't be tolerated at fannish gatherings? Al Snider is up to it, and is adroit enough to escape the backlash.

I'm just trying to keep what interest I have at the moment alive for as long as I can.

*

There's a shiftback with a parallel in CROSSROADS, it seems. When I started working on this issue I figured I'd forget about the presstype headings because they'd take too long to get done, and I didn't feel like shelling out that money at the moment. So I went back to the letterings guides, and a few weeks ago it turned out that Snider had done the same thing.

I feel all right, now!

*

It's Hugo nominating time, and I'm not going to say anything about what all the readers should nominate. I make no suggestions, recommendations or judgments as other editors are apt to do. The same editors, when circulating their opinions to a giant circulation list, do seem to wield some influence, and I prefer to leave everyone to ponder his own.....

F1

THE INSIDE STORY OF

PROLOGUE: "Frank tells me that others are beginning to write honest-to-goodness excellent articles clarifying the confusions of my last two reports. Great! I say. Let them explain to the better education and pleasure of us all, I say."

Winning Hugos is my subject, as you'll have noted from the title. It's a delicate story, and I'm sure there are many who can tell it better than I. Pray them come forward. I can only question, and think; and if I tell the story wrong, well, there's always Authority out thereamong you who will surely set the record straight."
--"Paul Hazlett" (Perry A. Chapdelaine)

There is something vaguely disgusting about a man who will not once, but repeatedly, trot out a thin soup of half-digested facts, misrepresentations, allegations and lightly veiled innuendo with the sort of smarmy self-justification offered above. It's a trifle too disingenuous.

I am writing this piece for more or less the same reasons I wrote my last--in which I straightened out the "confusions" of a previous Hazlett article--I know sufficient facts to be disgusted by the misuse (or disuse) to which Chapdelaine has subjected them. I do not regard this as a Public Service on Chapdelaine's part, however. Had he any real desire to know the facts in question, he might have asked me or any one of a number of other people, and saved us all from his admitted "confusions." Inasmuch as he has presented each of his three Hazlett pieces as "Inside ----", he had an obligation to research and honestly present the facts. I would guess that his piece on Milford came closest--although it was obviously still quite subjective in interpretation--since it was basically nothing more than a work of journalism in which he reported on a Milford Conference. (But "The Inside Story of the Milford Mafia" it was not.)

The original publisher of CONFIDENTIAL offered a similar justification for the scandal and malicious gossip he printed: "The better education and pleasure of us all." The way to bring truth to light is not to spread lies. Lies always travel faster than their retractions; those who are uninformed love scandal regardless of its veracity. Chapdelaine has undoubtedly started or added currency to false rumors with his pieces which neither my replies nor those of others can or will even entirely cancel.

I don't intend to make this a continuing tradition. I propose in the piece which follows to "kill" Paul Hazlett in such a fashion that I will not be called upon again (by my own conscience or someone else's request) to perform this service. As for Perry A. Chapdelaine, I shall reserve my professional neutrality in all professional dealings with the man, but I believe I can unequivocally state that I wouldn't allow him in my house under any circumstances (not the least of such being the possibility an "Inside Ted White" piece from his typewriter.) Any man who stoops behind a pseudonym to write the sort of pieces he has written earns only my contempt. Their honest publication under his own name would have created a higher regard for him in my case.

PARANOIA: Underlying each of the Hazlett pieces is what appears to me a deliberate pandering to paranoia. Each is written with the implicit assumption that

HUGO WINNING-DEBUNKED



both the author and the audience are part of an out-group, while the basic topic under discussion is a clique or in-group. "Look what I've dug up about those guys!" is the theme Hazlett exploits. "I've tried to show how /The Milford Mafia/ could influence organizational structure and poor policy decisions among the three hundred and some members of the SFWA," Hazlett states at the opening of the present piece: an explicit statement of this paranoiac theme. He underscores it by immediately adding the following advantages with editors and publishers for certain key members /of the Milford Mafia in the SFWA/, (2) infiltration and covert control /of the SFWA/ by editors and publishers who also write, and certainly not least, (3) sparkling Nebula awards which seem to have little meaning, if any, to statistical levels of significance." Keep those points in mind, gentle reader, for I shall return to them later. For now it is sufficient to note their deliberate play upon the out-group paranoia which might be presumed in most of us non-Milford types. Note key words like "infiltration" and "covert control," which imply conspiracy by the Few against the Many.

To understand how Hazlett exploits this factor, and the basic error in his assumptions, we must first understand the basis of the loose social structure of both fandom and prodom (which are interlinked).

Fandom is, at bottom, a

BY TED WHITE

collection of friendships. Prodom is an uneasy alliance of quasi-fannish (if not outrightly fannish) friendships and business associations. Most of the "inner core" of prodom--those pros who make the convention circuit and parties--is a sub-fandom which overlaps and interpenetrates fandom itself. (Many present-day pros are former fans, and some maintain fan-friendships.)

These friendships are formed on a variety of bases, with varying degrees of duration and solidity. But all of them, viewed topographically, so to speak, are clusters. When one maps the friendships and alliances in fandom and prodom, one sees this immediately. Each cluster has its core friendships--the primary individuals around whom the others formed. In tightly-knit groups, this core may be one person who is a magnet to others (due to a forceful or generous personality), or a half-dozen or more people all of equal status with each other. Beyond the core lies the bulk of the cluster: those who are accepted as peers but are less deeply involved, and whose numbers experience greater turnover. Beyond those are the fringes: those who like what they see and aspire to join the cluster.

This is the actual makeup of all fanclubs, as well as those groups which form around specific fanzines. The famous "Sixth Fandom" cluster had people like Tucker, Lee Hoffman and Walt Willis at its core, with others like Bloch, Bulmer, Shaw, Harris, et al, just beyond (their participation was less great), and a great flock of neos of the time, like Harlan Ellison, on the fringes. (Ellison later became the core of his own cluster, of course.) To skip right down to the immediate present and this fanzine, BeABohema has its own cluster working, with people like Piers Anthony, Dean Koontz, "Faith Lincoln," etc., forming a core with Frank Lunney. The "Milford Mafia" is simply another friendship cluster.

Most of us move among a variety of clusters and may concurrently be at the core of one, in the next-outer layer of several, and on the fringes of others. Since clusters reshape, die, or spring into existence as friendships ebb and wane, the social map is a very fluid one, and most people quickly find their way into the swim.

But for every clique (or cluster) there are always those who stand outside it. Some have no interest in joining. (Different strokes for different folks, as the lady says.) Others would like to join, in a wistful sort of way, but don't think they can. Yet others really want very badly to join a cluster which represents a peak of status to them, but find themselves repulsed. Most of us have had that last experience at least once in our lives.

When you're an outsider it is easy to feel paranoid about that exclusive clique where all the BNFs or Big Pros cluster. You have no idea of the real interests which bind the clique together, the durations of friendships involved, or anything like that. You simply see that these are the Beautiful People (well, they're supposed to be), and that they have no room for you. You knock on their door and all the party sounds die and this famous person opens the door and eyes you and then tells you it's a closed party and shuts the door again and you feel hurt. And maybe you get to feeling resentful. "Who are those guys to go off by themselves like that?" But, on the other hand, who are you to force yourself--a stranger--on a private group of friends?

As I say, we've all suffered this sort of rejection at least once in our lives--maybe as kids, if not later--and if someone starts playing on that theme he can re-~~ev~~oke our feelings of hurt and resentment. This is what Hazlett has done--and is doing. Because there's a pyramid quality to status--no matter how high you climb, there's always a tighter, more exclusive clique above you--Hazlett stands a good chance of pushing your buttons when he starts talking about the way in which certain exclusive cliques in fandom or prodom are controlling, infiltrating, or subverting this, that, or the other thing. If one does not stop to think things out,

one may very well end up with a feeling of righteous indignation--at which point Hazlett has succeeded in injecting his poison and doing his dirty work. If he can convince you that "The Milford Mafia" have sneaked into control of the SFWA or that Editors and Publishers are covertly controlling a Writer's organization, or that a special hand-picked elite pull the strings on the Hugo awards, then Paul Hazlett has accomplished what he set out to do. It is only when one stops and asks oneself one basic question that it all starts falling apart. The question: Why is Paul Hazlett (or, more properly, Perry A. Chapdelaine) telling me this?

Because he is himself angered and resentful because he was not immediately and forthwith adopted into those cliques himself, and now hopes to discredit them in petty revenge. The irrationality of his charges are rife with the themes of rejection, and occasionally explicitly so, as when Harlan Ellison demolished a Perry A. Chapdelaine story at a Milford Conference, or Perry A. Chapdelaine was rejected in his bid to edit the SFWA FORUM. (Do you think the SFWA officers were wise? I do.) One wonders if a Hugo might not have circumvented his current piece.

SPECIFICS: At this point we get down to a few point-by-point refutations of Hazlett's latest "confusions." I hope this won't descend into dreary nit-picking, but for the purposes of simplicity I shall deal with each "confusion" (delightful circumlocution) as it originally occurs, chronologically, in Hazlett's article.

To start at the very beginning--with Hazlett's recap of his previous pieces--the conclusions stated in the opening paragraph were not explicit in the previous two articles. If they had been, I think I'd have refuted them earlier.

If we go back to the notion of friendship clusters, and we realize that "The Milford Mafia" is simply one such friendship cluster (with Damon Knight at its core, but at one time including also at the core such antagonists as Jim Blish and Judy Merrill), a great deal which Hazlett presents as an organized conspiracy becomes more readily understandable.

Damon Knight started the SFWA. He did so after several previous abortive attempts to start such a group, and in the face of their failure. Naturally he turned to and exploited his friends first. But entirely to his credit he sought to diversify as quickly as possible, and to make the SFWA something more than an extension of his friendship cluster or, indeed, any single clique or ingroup. I doubt Hazlett can accept this, but Bob Silverberg is not a part of the Milford clique, and Bob was elected the President of the SFWA immediately succeeding Damon. (The third President was Alan Nourse--who was at a total geographical and friendship-cluster removal from Damon and "The Milford Mafia.") Bob is neither an editor (except of an occasional anthology) or publisher (well, he publishes a fanzine for FAPA now and then...). (Neither is Nourse, comes to that.) Bob is a totally professional author who has probably made more money from his writing than any other man in our field short of Heinlein (who took twice as long to do it and applied himself nowhere near so single-mindedly to the task). Bob knows the business side of writing better than anyone else I know. He understands contracts, taxes, and



every imaginably useful bit of information. In this same issue of BeABohema he makes the point that the SFWA exists for him to pass this information on to less-knowledgeable writers. I am quite certain he has gotten less from the SFWA than he has put into it.

I think that if a list of SFWA officers was compiled, the lie could be given quite quickly to Hazlett's assertions that "certain key members" took professional advantage of their positions, or that editors and publishers were infiltrating and gaining "covert control" of the SFWA. In fact, the latter charge would appear to be aimed solely at Terry Carr, since he is the only editor I can think of who has held any position of importance in the SFWA. I believe I adequately gave the lie to Hazlett's charges against Carr last time around. (I think they boil down to the fact that a Chapdelaine letter wasn't published in the FORUM. But that was Alexei Pan-shin's decision--not Carr's) I can think of no "publishers" in any position whatsoever in the SFWA--not even that of ordinary membership.

Then we come to this bit about the "statistical significance" of the Nebula, which is amplified in the main text of Hazlett's present piece in plaint against the Hugos.

So let's jump ahead and consider his position.

First he distracts us with two pages of coy nonsense about Hollywood. This stuff is misrendered junk, the sort of thing that comes out after the facts have been thoroughly digested and all the nutrients removed. I doubt if Hazlett knows any more whereof he speaks in this particular than any other, and the fact that he puts all this drek in the mouth of an "old-timer" is purely a fictional device. What gave the lie to me was the statement (bottom p. 23) that Hollywood stars "signed a slave-binding contract giving her every kind of public adulation, but no bread." Anyone who has much knowledge of the period described (apparently the thirties and forties) knows of the lavish amounts of money those "breadless" stars threw away on houses and automobiles--in the midst of the Depression, in fact. Nor did many stars lack agents--agents who pored over the fine print in the contracts they signed.



In the process of throwing up all this Hollywood muck (perhaps my earlier comparison of Hazlett and CONFIDENTIAL was less than coincidental), Hazlett repeats a lot of half-remembered gossip as gospel fact. His version of the Robert Mitchum pot bust, for example, would make it appear that it was all a publicity stunt. Some stunt! Studios had morality clauses in those days, and that bust (which has been variously represented as a frame-up or a case of Mitchum not giving a damn) cost him several years' income and gave him a bad name it took half a decade or more to overcome.

I kept expecting Hazlett would use this Hollywood hokum to point up some parallel (undoubtedly venal) between the Oscar and the Hugo or Nebula--in which he'd reveal (surprise!) that the Oscar is simply the movie industry's way of promoting itself.

He never did. And thus robbed himself of the only possible validity in his long digression. The rest of his parallels are not only false, but absurd on the face of it.

Back to Hugos, Nebulas and statistics.

Hazlett sets up some straw-man figures and takes a swing at them. Here they are:

100,000 people buy "a good paperback novel" "over a period of time."

4,000 "active sf fans" exist in this country.

400 "fans pre-register early enough to nominate a story."

"If the story (novel, say) was good, it had to sell at least 100,000 copies. Less than 400 hard-core fans have correctly determined the feelings of those 100,000? :: It never happened."

Well, that last comment is true enough. None of it ever happened. Let's analyze the figures.

As a rule 100,000 to 150,000 copies are printed of the first edition of the average paperback. Most sf novels probably run to 100,000, give or take a couple thousand. Of that 100,000, the publisher will be lucky to sell 90% over a period of several years. If he is unlucky, he will sell as low as 40% (some have claimed even less, but are open to charges of falsifying their royalty statements). Average first-year sales run 40-50%--or 40,000 to 50,000 sales. I base that statement on having seen a number of royalty statements, both mine and others'. Since many wholesalers do not return unsold copies, but simply tear off their covers or titlestrips for refund, pulping (or illegally dumping onto the cut-rate market) the coverless copies, it is possible for a book to sell only 40-50% before exhausting its first printing of 100,000. In order to sell 100,000 copies, the average sf paperback must go into at least one new edition, and possibly several. This is a matter of several years' duration. (Recently Lancer reissued two books of mine; the first editions had a reported sale--which I happen to dispute--of about 40% or less.)

However, any really good sf novel will continue to sell in edition after edition, year after year--as books by Bradbury, Asimov, Heinlein and many others have proven. For this reason, a paperback by a major author might eventually sell half a million copies--or more!--simply by accumulating regular sales.

Therefore, the figure of 100,000 is meaningless. It is less likely to determine what is good than what is kept in print--and some stinkers share that honor along with the classics.

4,000 "active sf fans"? I don't believe it. Conventions have attracted less than 2,000--and these included a heavy number of non- or quasi-sf fans: movie fans, comics fans, friends of fans, etc. "Active sf fan" has a precise meaning: someone who is active in fandom--in clubs, con-going, or fanzines. 4,000 is a grossly inflated and unmeaningful figure.

400 nominate the Hugo ballots? In most cases, even less. Most convention committees allow a broader criteria for nominators than for those who vote the final ballot (who must be registered with that convention). The Nycon allowed any fan to vote. Other cons have specified membership in the coming con or the previous con (or cons). One early con-committee did its own nominating.

So what?

The notion that an award becomes more significant if a larger number of people vote for it is without logical justification. Sheer numbers of voters mean nothing if, for instance, most of them are unqualified. And the most obvious qualification is an acquaintance with all the nominees. (The qualifications for nominators are even stricter: acquaintance with the majority of everything published that year which is eligible in each category!) And I can assure you, as one who tallied both nominations and ballots for the Hugos in 1967, that most of those who vote haven't read half the stories they're voting on. Under the circumstances it makes little difference whether they are 400, 4,000 or 40,000. (I'll make you a bet, Perry A. Chapdelaine, that you could not even find 100,000 people in this country who had read half the current vot-

ing ballot's nominees in any given year!) (Or must I point out to him the obvious: that it is not the same 100,000--or whatever the magical number--who buy every book that sells that many copies?)

A great many valid criticisms have been made of the Hugo awards, the voting structures, and voter qualifications. A similar amount of criticism has been leveled at the Nebula for its low voter participation in past years. But Hazlett avoids the valid areas of criticism, largely, I think, because he is ignorant of them.

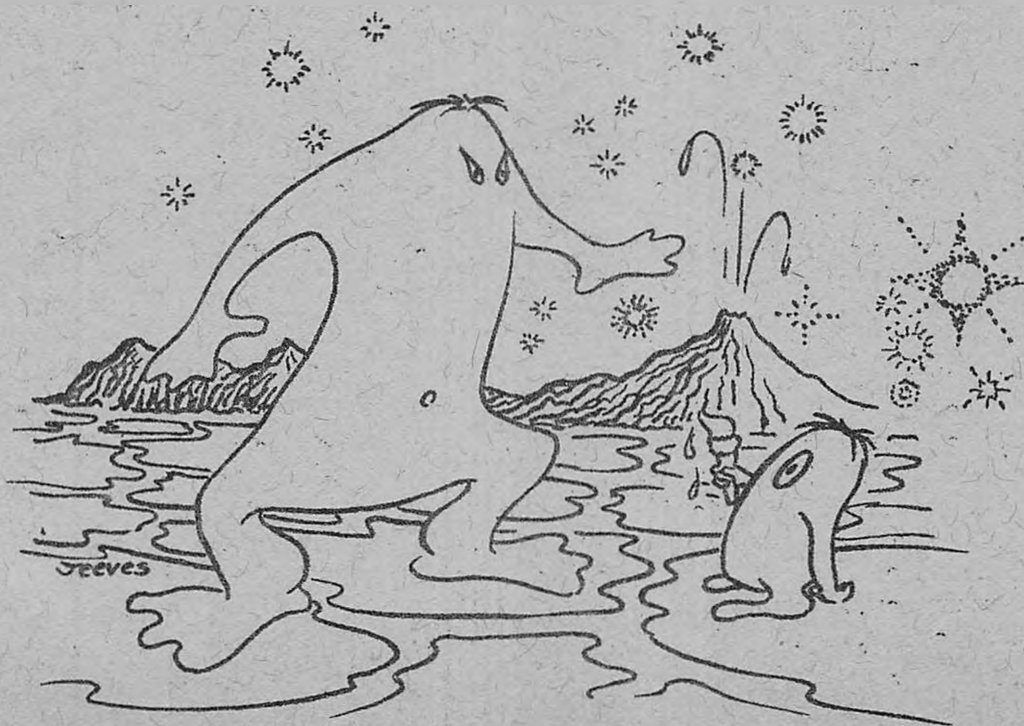
More important, why assume that a great number of votes determine an award's importance? The Oscar is awarded by a tiny in-group in the movie industry--not by the movie-going public. The WWA Spur Award is made by a committee. And, getting closer to home, the abandoned International Fantasy Award--an award generally held in higher repute in the fifties than the Hugo--was awarded by committee.

Statistics don't have much to do with it, you see.

AWARD-LOBBYING: The remainder of Hazlett's piece is a thinly veiled attack on Harlan Ellison (and, by extension, Norman Spinrad/"Joe Bottomless"). As such, it is fully as shoddy as that which preceded it. Which is to say, Very.

I asked Harlan if he was aware of the attack, or intended to answer it. He said he was dead serious when he announced he was renouncing fandom, and would not be doing pieces for fanzines, going to cons (except for a single prior commitment to PgHlange), etc., and that he had no interest in Hazlett and/or Chapdelaine. He offered a few obscene remarks on the subject and then we dropped it.

I don't think Harlan needs a strong defense against Hazlett; the attack is too inept. Hazlett's charges boil down to a hypocritical exploitation of certain presently in-style attitudes. Harlan has his faults, but this is not one of them. Harlan has been fighting hard for Harlan Ellison since he was a small kid, and he never learned to stop. This has led to some pretty forceful campaigning in behalf of his stories (among others he has liked, which he has also promoted with equal vigor) at times, but there is nothing devious or hypocritical about his methods--unlike those of other nominees. (I could tell you some genuine cases--unlike those Hazlett fabricated--



such as the wealthy pro who took twenty local fans to dinner at the propitious moment, and won his Hugo by eight votes...)

More important, the object of Hazlett's attack is presented as pandering to all the "in-thing" attitudes. "Write stories filled with slobs," he says; "That's where the action is, man, and that's where the voters are." Since presumably he is speaking about you and I, friends, we might at this point ask ourselves, "Is that where I'm at?" If you, like me, feel this is an unfair picture of us, you will have a point of your own to score against Hazlett.

What it boils down to is not his contempt for Harlan--or the mythical author he presents--but his contempt for us, the voters.

One has only to take a careful look at the list of past Hugo winners to realize that most of his points do not describe any of the winning authors, and are not applicable to the choice of the voters.

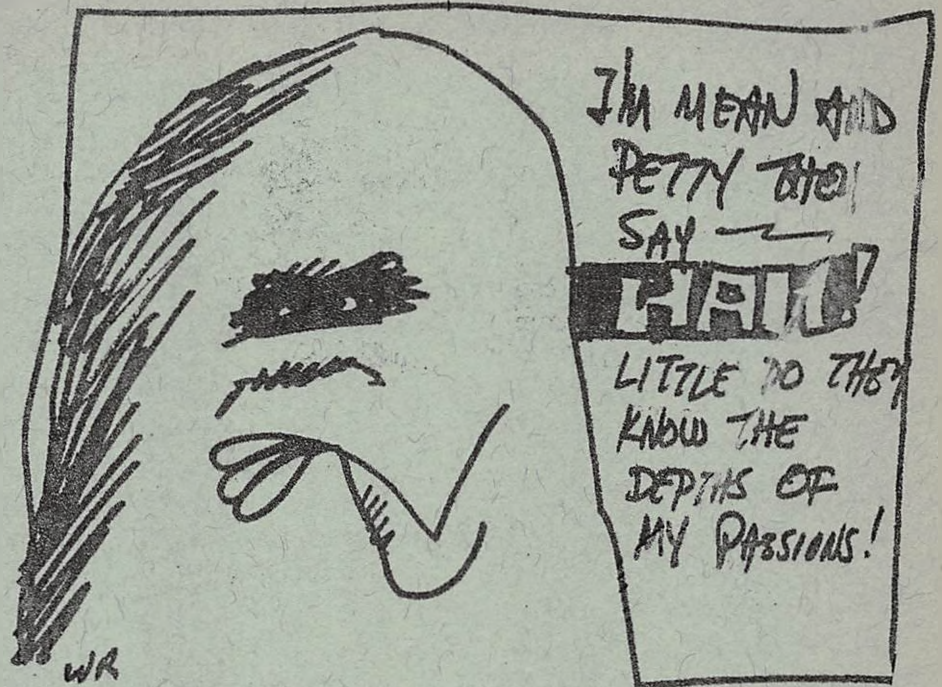
The shame of it is that there are abuses, such as the one I parenthetically mentioned. And fans do tend to vote for the more obvious, superficial values. They are occasional victims of press-campaigns like that for Bug Jack Barron--which Hazlett totally overlooks. The quietly published novel may be overlooked until several years have passed (and it is no longer eligible) and it gathers a "classic" status. Hardcover books only rarely win Hugos--since most fans buy paperbacks. Juveniles--relegated to limbo in most fans' minds--are never even nominated. (Although one author told me he thought one of mine better deserved that year's award than the book which won...ah, but I've still made more money on the book...) Every system has its own inequities; attempts to cure them only introduce others in their place. One accepts this and tries hard to cure extra-system abuses.

AWARD VALUES: "Less than 400 hard-core fans have correctly determined the feelings of those 100,000?"

In this awkward question we reach the crux of Hazlett's inability to handle the facts. It crops up again in "how come another one hundred guys (or gals) didn't also get the awards? One hundred guys (or gals) who did not win have just as fine writings as those who did. How did the other ninety-nine get screened out?"

In other words, "Nobody is any better than anybody else." This is the defense of the loser. "I'm just as good as you are; how come you got the award?"

To deal with the first quote first: The point of any award is not to "correctly determine the feelings" of the reading public. It is to honor an exceptional achievement. We are all more or less aware that calling any single book "best of the year" is something of a hyperbole. Best by what criteria? Best in prose style? Best in theme? Best in freshness? Best how? This is one of the places where the system



of voting breaks down: everyone has his own criteria, which he will defend, and many are in conflict. So a vote only averages those criteria, and will be weighted by such extraneous factors as the author's current popularity, or the fact that his really good one got passed over last year, or he just died, or etc.

It is implicit in any "best" award, however, that it cannot be awarded to the entire field of nominees or contenders. Which is reason enough for "the other ninety-nine" to "get screened out". But it is also indisputable fact that all of that hypothetical one hundred were not "just as fine writings." That would be entirely too remarkable to believe, implying as it would a fantastic plateau of achievement reached--but not surpassed--by the hundred top writers in our field.

Well, of course there aren't one hundred top writers in our field, anyway.

In any case, any time you single out one book in a category for an award, you will be slighting others. This is unavoidable. That's why I'm glad to see both the Nebula and the Hugo awards being given. It doubles the chances for any work of merit. And when both awards go to a single work, you can bet it had plenty going for it--the two sets of voters overlap by the narrowest of margins.

Hazlett concludes by bringing up the question of money. He says, "Editors and publishers...read their own dust jackets and come away sold." He then goes on to make a mildly obscene pun. His observation is apparently on the same level, because it's nonsense.

A Hugo or Nebula doesn't go to a book or story until it has already been sold and published. That is elemental. Therefore, the award does not influence the amount of money the author received for that sale, such things not being renegotiable in retrospect, more's the pity. However, it is true that awards have broken editorial logjams and facilitated the author's next sales. But not to the tune of \$10,000 over Heinlein's supposed \$8,000. Uh-uh. Damned few sf books have even sold for half that sum, and those for the most part were deals whereby the hardcover publisher took 50% of the paperback sale, the author receiving only \$2,000-3,000. More often the case is one of allowing an author to break out of a low-paying ghetto. Zelazny, Delany and Panshin were unable to sell to anyone but Ace Books (albeit Panshin's sale was to the more prestigious Ace Special line by then) until they won awards--whereupon Doubleday (and other publishers) made overtures to them. All have since made plush sales to other publishers. It's a shame it took awards to wake those publishers to them, but not every editor has the perception of a Terry Carr or Don Wollheim (in Panshin's case thirteen other editors failed to see any merit at all in Rite of Passage).

So the award helps. Of course it helps. Why shouldn't it? It promotes sf with the unknowledgeable--both among editors and among readers. We should be grateful. I suppose we should even be grateful that Heinlein is now being given partial credit for the Sharon Tate murders, via Stranger in a Strange Land. Maybe a few of the curiosity-readers will dig the book and try some more.

EPILOGUE: It is relatively profitless to debunk a Know-Nothing. The plain facts are rarely as exciting--perhaps one reason he didn't use them himself--and one has the sense of having written an anti-climax. But it is, I hope, at least a thorough anti-climax. It disturbs me when people with little if any acquaintance with situations set themselves up as interpreters of "The Inside Story." The abuses of fact and common sense in which Paul Hazlett has indulged--all under a pseudonym--are such that I sincerely hope Perry A. Chapdelaine permanently buries him and spends his next five years in an honest attempt to live him down. If not...well, it's his own reputation he is ruining.

--Ted White

The Inside Story of

If God can be dead, why not Freud? Found in my correspondent's letter, it suddenly struck me that the fact of his death has a great relevance to the world of SF fandom, not to mention the narrower worlds of writers, reviewers, editors and publishers.

Long ago John Campbell pointed out that not more than ten percent of a particular European population can benefit from Freudian constructs, yet almost one hundred percent of literary--"fine" literary--analysis is accomplished within a framework which assumes that Freud, as a "scientist" of the mind, described a theoretical framework which has proved to be an absolute, unlike other scientific theories of, say, physics, chemistry and so forth.

As I remember his point, if the findings of psychiatry are absolutes, then psychiatry must be a perfect science leading to perfect ability to manipulate or to predict human behavior. Lacking this ingredient, conversely, it must be possible to improve our knowledge of human motivation, thus it must also be permissible to base story structure upon new and different principles of psychological knowledge.

As Campbell once explained, from the mainstream literary viewpoint, every form of "fine" literature must be written on at least two levels: (1) the superficial, but usually interesting, story, (2) the Freudian symbolism which underlies the story.

Susie, the central character of a story, is depressed. Freudian view holds that depression results from inverted hostility, unexpressed anger directed against the self. Based upon knowledge of Freud, the "fine" literary critic will expose to light any tendency which Susie might show in the story holding a different explanation than that of inverted hostility.

Susie will not be permitted by the Freudian writer or critic to be depressed on the basis of misunderstood apprehensions, or by viewing herself as the victim of unpleasant experiences involving simple frustration or loss, nor is she allowed to have a simple vitamin deficiency; yet modern findings of psychologists who do not believe that Freud is God, will do just that. Meanwhile, the "fine" literary critic rambles on Authoritatively declaring that Freudian constructs represent "real" life, whereas fantasy literature, such as hard core science fiction, represents unreal life. Thus, as Campbell once declared, we find the "realists" are dreaming, and the "dreamers" are realists!



It follows, therefore, that the excessive binding of literature to Freud not only limits the freedom of the writer, but also destroys much po-

BY

PAUL HAZLETT

Why Freud Is Dead

ential social value of the product. That is, Freudian explanations are essentially useless--readers can seldom understand or agree on them, and find it hard to apply them to their own lives. Thus, the literature fails to provide guidance--modeling, or what have you--and readers, by identifying with fictional characters and causes, unknowingly accept imaginary or faulty solutions to serious problems.

By the way, the above example of discrepancy between Freudian epistemology and present-day psychiatric practices on Susie was gleaned at random from "Science News Letter," dated Dec. 13, 1969, page 557, if anyone cares to verify the source. There are virtually an endless supply of such goodies in scientific literature of the past fifteen years which ought to supply the curious with no end of fun games. Newly discovered principles, if true, will permit characterization, motivation, action and many other story qualities to be brought into the mainstream of up-to-date writing.

Since "fine" literary standards usually require that every part of a story contribute to the whole, and that each contribution be appropriately explained, or reader-understandable, within the Freudian context, it follows that Susie's depression must be somehow explained in terms of some well-known literary devices. A flash-back might be appropriate, for example, to bring Susie to remember when she had masturbated as a youth. Since masturbation is strongly linked with self-hostility, in the Freudian world, a whole chain of circumstances can be built up which the Freud-knowledgeable reader will easily relate to Susie's depression in the present time.

The writer who justifies Susie's depression by casually suggesting that Susie misunderstood something that was said, thus became fearful or apprehensive, may have a publishable story. Evaluations by the Freudian experts, however, will indicate poor story construct, or some other criticism probably based on "...the story did not ring true to life!"

Probably every writer, and critic, needs a psychological framework--right or wrong--upon which to hang a story. Those questionable critics--and I include in this category all writers and fans who criticize stories--are usually set in their ways; they display sureness in their story evaluations which surpass that of Freud himself. Such certainty of human motivational qualities provides the critic with a security blanket, and leads to stereotyped stories which are patterned after only a small subset of human qualities. Though they may often fool the naive fan or writer, such critics are no less removed from the world of reality.

So!

In the beginning was the word, and the word was Freud. And lo! the Freudian word has rung down through the reverberating corridors of science fiction as unchallengeable orthodoxy. No heretical Jungian or ethological ideas need apply.

That plaint does not refer so much to the themes of science fiction stories as to the incidental assumptions with which they are sometimes decorated. Not many science fiction stories are based on extrapolation from modern psychological discoveries as they are on an extrapolation from astrophysics or biochemistry, for example. But the science fiction writer who tries to make his stuff better than two-dimensional, like the writer of "fine" literature, may seek to validate the motivations of his characters by ringing in a bit of the psychology he studied in college or read about in some ancient Sunday supplement.

Which is okay, except that the super-ego or Oedipus complex around which he has twisted that plot so niftily may ring false as phlogiston to the hypothetical future or extra-terrestrial culture into which he has dumped his hero. The SF writer who makes an honest attempt to stand outside a human framework when depicting his BEM, is exactly the one most often criticized for not maintaining human "warmth" or for "having cold characters." (See Larry Niven's workd.)

Unfortunately, this blasphemy is not uttered in the sense of the rather reasonable suggestion one runs across in an occasional story that extraterrestrial forms of life have "alien psychologies." No, it is uttered as simple, outright blasphemy against Freud and the Freudian word.

It is blasphemy only because Freud seems to be basic to psychiatry and to other fields, such as modern literary evaluations. I'm convinced the apparent basicness is caused by a communication and cultural-acceptance lag between professions; and, had I the wealth of Alexei Panshin, I'd wager the point with all comers!



As much as any science fiction story, that Freudian theoretical scheme was a brilliant extrapolation from (a) mentally ill people to healthy ones, (b) 19th Century European (and particularly Viennese and Victorian) culture to all human culture, and (c) contemporary man to mankind of all ages and even, to some extent, to animals. Freud was simply an MD and a clinician who derived "scientific" conclusions from clinical procedures. It should not be too surprising, then, to find psychiatry--MDs plus clinical procedures--still clinging to Freud and also, by their stature and intransigence, insisting that Freud is still God. Conversely, to the reasoning fan, writer and critic, it should be no surprise to discover that primary discoveries and advances in the field are now shared between biologists and psychologists. Under such circumstances, Freudian psychology could not fail to have some flaws.

For example, anthropologists studying different cultures have found some evidence that the Oedipus complex isn't the universal factor in human psychology that Freud thought it was. His belief in a modified Lamarckianism (inheritance of ego experiences in the id) and his 19th Century Darwinian concept of man's primitive social condition led him to an elaborate theory ("Totem and Tabu") of the origin of the Pedipus complex that is almost certainly mistaken.

Many lay interpretations of the Freudian structure appear to be simple, appealing and largely valid. (Modern research psychologists will disagree, calling it not simple, and not valid, and pointing out that "appealing" is a matter of taste.) There is the id--blind, unmitigated, instinctual desire; inhibited in turn by the super-ego, the essentially social image of what one should be and should not be, derived from the restraint and example of the parents and other authority. These words appear as solidly embedded in the "fine" literature school of writing as the trinity of the Christian religion. Yet it is as simple to describe four force vectors of human behavior as being composed of (1) a part which is beyond human awareness, (2) a part which is aware, (3) a part which is learned, (4) a part which is inherited. Because one has accepted these four principles as foundation stones for explaining human motivations does not imply there are no more useful categories. Nor does such acceptance imply that these are the best categories. Many modern psychologists are quick to point out that were Freud alive today, he would probably be one of the first

to embrace new theories, scientifically based. He has made a number of very significant and lasting contributions: (1) the idea of an unconscious, or, as many now prefer to call it, an area which is outside of awareness; (2) the importance of early childhood in the formation of the adult. (Freud emphasizes the importance of early childhood on adult personality. This still seems to be true, but now there is a vast amount of evidence which indicates how important it is for the development of intelligence); the identification of defense mechanisms, e.g. projection, rationalization, denial, identification, et al. The same psychologists are just as quick to point to the lack of one shred of evidence that any of his psychiatric theories have led to any psychoanalytic techniques which cured at any degree of frequency greater than would be expected by chance alone.

How does that grab you, Oh Great Freudian Critic?

For a purely academic sortie in support of that statement, we need only look backward instead of forward, at man's evolutionary ancestors. As we go farther back, we must reach the stage eventually at which the ego is not yet differentiated from the id. Freud himself recognized the theoretical necessity of this "pre-ego" stage, possibly because the ego is so closely associated with consciousness and self-awareness, and animals apparently are not conscious in the same way we are. (I'm not sure but I believe in some instances of Darwinian theory, consciousness preceded reflexes --the latter being more adaptive.)

But the ego, according to the Freudian scheme, is the mental apparatus for dealing with reality! Animals, including our ancestors, obviously have to deal with reality, so how do they do it without an ego? There's some evidence that Freud was concerned with this contradiction.

Of course, the contradiction wouldn't exist if we wouldn't insist on thinking of Freud's theoretical structure of the psyche as being universally applicable, instead of just applying it to man as we know him historically.

The solution for the science fiction writer who wants to get out of the rut when he's sketching the psychological motivations of his characters and applying them busily to his plot development is to ground himself in something besides Freud and the neo-Freudians, psychologically. That doesn't mean turning to Freud's contemporary, Adler, who has been embraced so heartily by many American psychologists that his terms are popularly thought to be "Freudian." Nor does it mean necessarily turning to Freud's other contemporary, Jung, although Jung's off-trail theory has some definite science fiction possibilities.

There's a lot of fresh, new stuff in this general field, some of it just beginning to get published. There's a whole sideline of psychological theory that took off from the basic thought of Henri Bergson, and has developed through such men as Piaget and Viaud.

Time magazine, December 12, 1969, page 61 describes some of Jean Piaget's gems: Jean Piaget emphasizes man as a developing thinker instead of man the universal neurotic. Where Freud found that slips of the tongue are keys to the unconscious, Piaget found that mental 'mistakes' children make are clues to intellectual processes that are precursors of grown-up thinking. "An infant...initially may suck at almost anything that comes near his mouth; soon, when he is hungry, he learns to persevere only when his lips close over a nipple. The reflex-driven gropings by which he learns to recognize the nipple and distinguish it from a rattle...are a first use of trial-and-error logic."

Piaget considers three other distinct but sometimes overlapping stages besides the above one. The other stages; ages two to seven, seven to eleven and eleven to fifteen.

"During the second stage, the child thinks about everything in terms of his own activities; he believes that the moon follows him around, or that dreams fly in through his window when he goes to bed. Erroneous though these ideas are, they help the child comprehend that actions have causes. In this period, the child is no ego-centric by choice. Parents should understand...that intellectual immaturity and not moral perversity is the reason why a preschooler continues to pester his mother even after she plainly tells him that she has a headache."

I suspect that one reason Robert Heinlein's works have such appeal to young and old alike is because he usually emphasizes many of Piaget's principles; i.e. growth through trial and error, through experience and through natural maturation. (See comments in Peter Weston's SPECULATION on Robert A. Heinlein, Volume 2, Number 12, Sept. 1969.)

"The child reaches the threshold of grown-up logic as early as seven as usually by eleven. Before that point, he may think that water becomes 'more to drink' when it is poured from a short, squat glass into a tall, thin one with the same capacity. The reason for this stubborn misconception is that the child is paying attention only to static features of his environment, not to transformations. Now, at the age Piaget calls that of 'concrete' intellectual activity, the child can deduce that pouring does not change the quantity of the water. He has begun to reason and to grasp the essential principle of the equation.

"Between the ages of eleven and fifteen, the child begins to deal with abstractions and, in a primitive but methodical way, set up hypotheses and then test them, as a scientist does...adolescents' fascination with their ability to visualize alternatives is what makes them so eager to test new life-styles and utopian ideals.

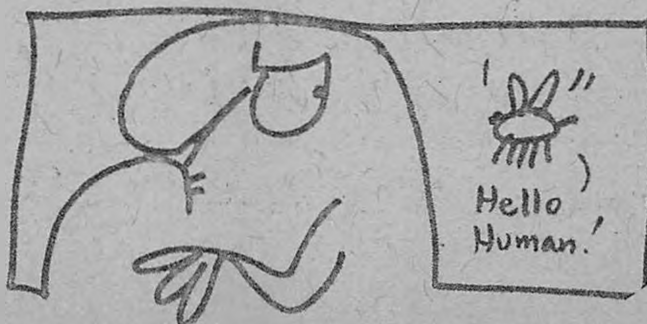
"...man's capacity for logical thought is not learned but embedded, along with hair color and sex, in his genes. These rational tendencies do not mature...unless they are used."

But even more significant than Piaget's specific, fresh ideas, is the pioneering work, started on animals and just beginning to be extended to man, centered in the Max-Planck-Institut für Verhaltensphysiologie at Seewiesen, Germany.

The basic research in this new field, ethology, has been done by such men as Lorenz, Portmann, Chauvin, Tinbergen and Uexküll, and it is now being popularized by writers like Ardrey and Desmond Morris. It opens up a completely new vista on the way animals think--by whole patterns of pre-established behavior, either inherited or learned--with strong implications for a whole substructure of human psychology underlying the Freudian scheme. It has significant but unexplored ties with the findings in general semantics developed by Korzybski, Hayakawa and Benjamin Lee Whorf with the mythological symbolism of the Jungians, and even with Hubbard's off-beat Dianetics.

After all, is a literary field that put man on the moon long before the airplane was invented going to bind itself to a 19th century psychological paradigm?

--Paul Hazlett



FANDOM'S VOCAL POINT



BY AL SNIDER

Send all fanzines to be reviewed to: Al Snider, Box 2319, Brown Station, Providence, Rhode Island, 02912 during the school year. During the Summer try 1021 Donna Beth, West Covina, Calif. 91790. I get lots of fanzines for lots of reasons. If you want yours reviewed, please tell me so.

THE SMALL FANZINE RETURNS:

Not so long ago everyone was very concerned over the rising tide of giant fanzines. 100 page wonders from the presses of the Bills, St. Louis, and more recently Quakertown and Texas were shocking fans who were used to more traditional fare. Bob Tucker was known to have remarked that if he couldn't pick it up, he certainly couldn't read it. Rick Sneary wrote that he just couldn't stay interested in a fanzine long enough to get through more than forty pages.

And besides the sheer bulk, massive fanzines found that Sturgeon's Law was increasing geometrically as the page count rose. It seemed that bigger fanzines tended to be less selective about material, and the wrong people found their way into the same pages that were occupied by the right people. This is to say that brilliance vied with mediocrity for space. And in many cases it seemed that brilliance wasn't winning out.

The shift to large fanzines was almost totally unexpected. As Bill Bowers points out in OUTWORLDS, "Seven or eight years ago, the mere thought of high school students emitting non-interesting near 100-page globs of material with such distressing frequency was more unthought of than it was accepted as a possibility." I'll examine the fanzines that are still pursuing this goal later, but first, please consider the return of the small fanzine.

OUTWORLDS, published by Bill Bowers, is an outgrowth of the death of DOUBLE:BILL. He announces inside that he plans to publish it regularly, and stick to the small size. He mentions that before he was identified with large, irregular fanzines, and that he hopes the change will be a pleasant one. The first issue is beautifully produced, in the typical Bowers fashion, but leaves a little to be desired in the content section. Shorts on all kinds of subjects, plus what are obviously judged to be witty inclusions, do not a meaty fanzine make. And when I say "meaty" don't think that means big. As far as I'm concerned there is more meat in a short issue of SPECULATION than in a lot of big, fat fanzines. It only takes talent and a couple of pages to make interesting chatter. However, the intelligent, witty, and skillful words contained in OUTWORLDS are not of this genre. But then, it is a first issue, and most of the things Bill had on hand for DOUBLE:BILL were probably inappropriate. Given some time and the Bowersian Energy, and Bill will probably have a booming, regular, attractive fanzine on his hand. As the publisher of a small fanzine myself, I can't help but welcome him to the crowd.

THE TEXAS GIANTS:

The reason I mention these fanzines is that they serve as a strange contrast to the small fanzine. While the aforementioned zines seem to be well constructed and illustrated, MATHOM and PEGASUS are huge, rambling affairs that lack cohesion and beauty.

MATHOM is published by Lisa Tuttle of Houston. Lisa starts out the issue by telling us all how bad a giant, scattered fanzine is. I think I'll have to agree with her, since the 60 pages that follow that statement provides ample proof for her analysis. In this issue we are presented with a short editorial, some amateur fiction, a story relating the obscene aspects of early Mickey Mouse cartoons, poetry, minutes of the local club, an explanation of the local club, Zaharakis on absurdity (per usual), fanzine reviews (and weak ones at that), a trip report, more fan fiction, an article on behavioral engineering, more fan fiction, and more, and more, and finally a lettercol. My review of this mag is simple: talent exists in the editor and in some of the contributors, but Lisa has got to learn who has talent and who doesn't. Most of the fan fiction is truly abominable, even when matched up against other fan fiction. My advice to her would be to 1. Find someone somewhere who can illustrate, 2. organize material on hand so that it forms some kind of cohesive magazine, and 3. find a typewriter other than the one with that terrible italic typeface.

It could be much better if it were given a little more love and a little less goshwow.

PEGASUS provides a somewhat similar case. Joanne Burger, the Editor, is definately a better organizer than Lisa, but not by much. I have heard much praise for Joanne's work, but almost all of it is based on her listings of published science fiction. Some of the material is very good, such as a serious article by Robert Coulson on the big pulp boom and Joanne's science fiction publications for any given month. The book reviews are even well constructed, but somewhere along the line Joanne makes a big mistake when she unleashed Darrel Schweitzer on her readers to tell them all the latest and greatest about fanzines. If Darrel would stick to talking about fanzines we might all be able to tolerate him, but his ramblings are a bit much even for me to take. The clever trick of inserting a parenthesis here and there is supposed to identify a Geisian conversation with an alter-ego, but with Darrel it comes over like a load of wet mud. My suggestions to Joanne are simple: 1. Bomb Schweitzer, 2. find new articts, 3. organize regular features together (like, stick all of the publication lists together, put the lettercol at the end of the magazine, etc.) and, 4. use headings to decorate the beginnings of articles.

I can see how both fanzines would be fun to edit. Features are typed up in a relaxed atmosphere, and then slapped together whenever a group of friends show up to help. If that is their goal, then I'm sure that they're doing fine. However, if they want their readers to enjoy the magazines a little more, then there is plenty of room for change.

Both fanzines are thick and full of words. How they find time to do it I really don't know. But, however it's done, I hope they can continue to publish at a regular rate.

THE FANZINE HUGO:

You hold a fanzine in your hands right now that should be nominated for a Hugo. Now, remember that I said "nominated", not "awarded." This is a bad place to discuss Frank's zine, but although I think Frank has done a lot with it since he started, I don't think he's ready to put a rocket on his shelf.

I think we can break the running down into two categories, the genzines and the newszines. In the genzine faction we have several front-runners.

Speculation, edited by Peter Weston, heads my list in the area of genzines. It has been continually outstanding in its features and its presentation. The people Pete has working for him have done some excellent work.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW, from Dick Geis, while not deserving two Hugos in a row, does certainly deserve to be nominated for a third time. The strength of his 1969 issues was staggering, and certainly merits reward.

BEABOHEMA from Frank Lunney, also deserves recognition. While not yet up to the quality of the above, it certainly has improved. Besides, with as much work as Frank has put in, if we don't reward him with something he could very well quit. Besides, as much shouting as has been done in its pages is impossible to ignore.

In the area of newszines, I think one stands out above all the others. LOCUS, from Charlie and Marsha Brown has been regular, outstanding, and very, very interesting. The artwork has been very well done, and the news reported has been factual and current. In my opinion, Locus will run a very tight race with Speculation, and I certainly wouldn't be surprised if it won. Either way, I wouldn't be unhappy.

RELATED AWARDS:

This year the BEST FAN ARTIST Hugo should go to Tim Kirk. His work has been outstanding, with a cartoon sense that has rarely been equalled in my experience. Besides that, he's a hell of a nice guy!

The BEST FAN WRITER Hugo is, perhaps, the hardest of all for me to decide. I tend to lean toward two people in particular. Both of them exhibit much the same style. Bob Vardeman and Bob Tucker are from a different generation of fans, but are definitely of the same mind. Flip a coin when you make the choice.

INFORMATION:

MATHOM, Lisa Tuttle, #6 Pine Forest Circle, Houston, Texas, 77027, 30¢, the usual.

PEGASUS, Joanne Burger, 55 Blue Bonnet Ct., Lake Jackson, Texas, 77566, the usual, no price.

SPECULATION, Peter Weston, 31 Pinewall Ave., Masshouse Lane, Birmingham 30, UK, 35¢, 3/\$1, trade or contrib.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW, Dick Geis, Box 3116, Santa Monica, Cal., 90403, 2/\$1, and by arrangement.

LOCUS, Charlie and Marsha Brown, 2078 Anthony, Bronx, NY, 10457, 5/\$1.00..

TOO SOON OLD AND TOO LATE SMART

Discussion of issues is something that I have always liked very much. Much of the time is occupied by the verbal and written arts of expression. However, when arguments are reduced to personalities, those who employ such tactics are expressing more of their own indecency than anything else. Hemmed in on all sides by a world they cannot cope with, they find themselves forced to fight it in order to prove to themselves their own worth.

To them, arguing is necessary. Every day is another adventure in the endless battle to boost a sagging ego. What they know they cannot prove to themselves, they must prove to others.

And Piers, why can't you try and be nice for a while? Would it hurt you to make an attempt to make friends, or do they endanger your own self-image?

I've tried to send you my fanzine, not through others, but to you. If you'd wanted it you would have given me your address. Apparently you didn't, so I just sent issues to your old location. But then I forgot, having a secret address makes you feel "important," doesn't it?

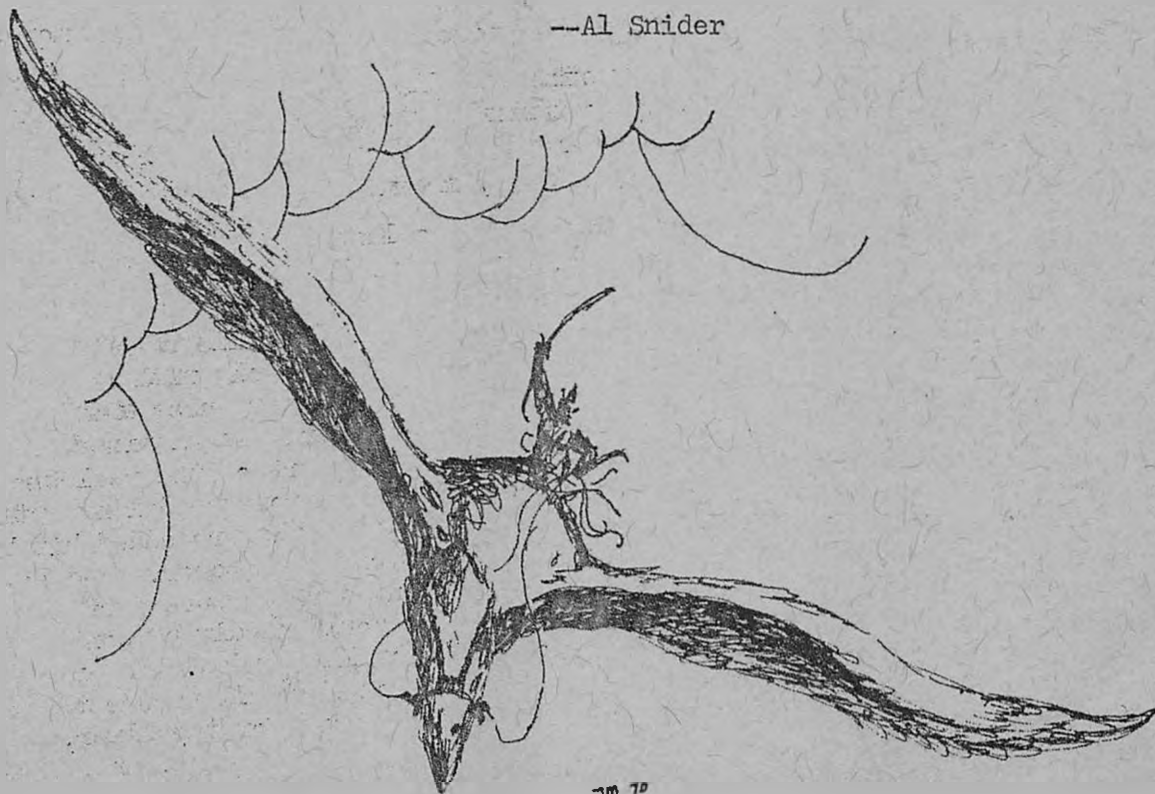
You admit to being a dirty, gut fighter, and seem to approach the "put-down" and the "back-stab" as an art. Fine, but did you ever stop to consider why? Why do you have to keep kicking in everyone's teeth? Does it make you feel important or powerful?

It may seem that way to you, but to me you only look a little foolish. I usually don't lecture, but forgive me if I advise you to grow up.

You don't have to be afraid of us. You don't have to knife us or kick us or call us names or ignore us. There are a whole lot of us out here who would like to be your friends.

Grow up. Give us a chance to learn to like you.

--Al Snider



turnip country

BOOK REVIEWS

Nightwings by Robert Silverberg,
Walker & Co., \$5.95.

What happened. That's the skeleton of most stories. Since most what-happeneds are things which have happened or could have happened to the audience of the book, this becomes a device for illuminating certain aspects of human character or existence. The use of the what-happened device, apart from the device itself, can be thought of as one characteristic distinguishing "good" literature from the rest.

Two examples of whole genres that are or have been classed as the rest: science fiction and mystery. Mysteries because mystery stories are often just puzzles in which the reader is supposed to have the thrill of working out the what-happened. Science fiction, however, presents different and more complicated methods. One of these is the what-will-have-happened. A quick example is 1984. What-will-have-happened is the purpose of the book, and thus one of the most intriguing parts is the reading of Goldstein's book-within-the-book. In 1984, as with other good sf, the what-will-have-happened is lowered to a device for the purpose of what will be, in general. The car, the traffic jam; remember? Another variation is what-had-happened. With this one, Lord of the Rings makes its really intriguing information that which is only hinted at, the history of the First Age. But in general, work that relies on reader interest based on "discovering," usually with the characters in the story, what will have happened, cannot really be good. The device, unused except for its own value, is the Idea which sf is sometimes supposed to be and nothing more.

Silverberg's Nightwings, like many other really good pieces of sf in recent years, employs the device to do some very worthwhile things. And yet the device is so evident on the surface that the work exists as sf on every page, in spite of its human-business-at-hand. And that, sports fans, is what we like to see, right?

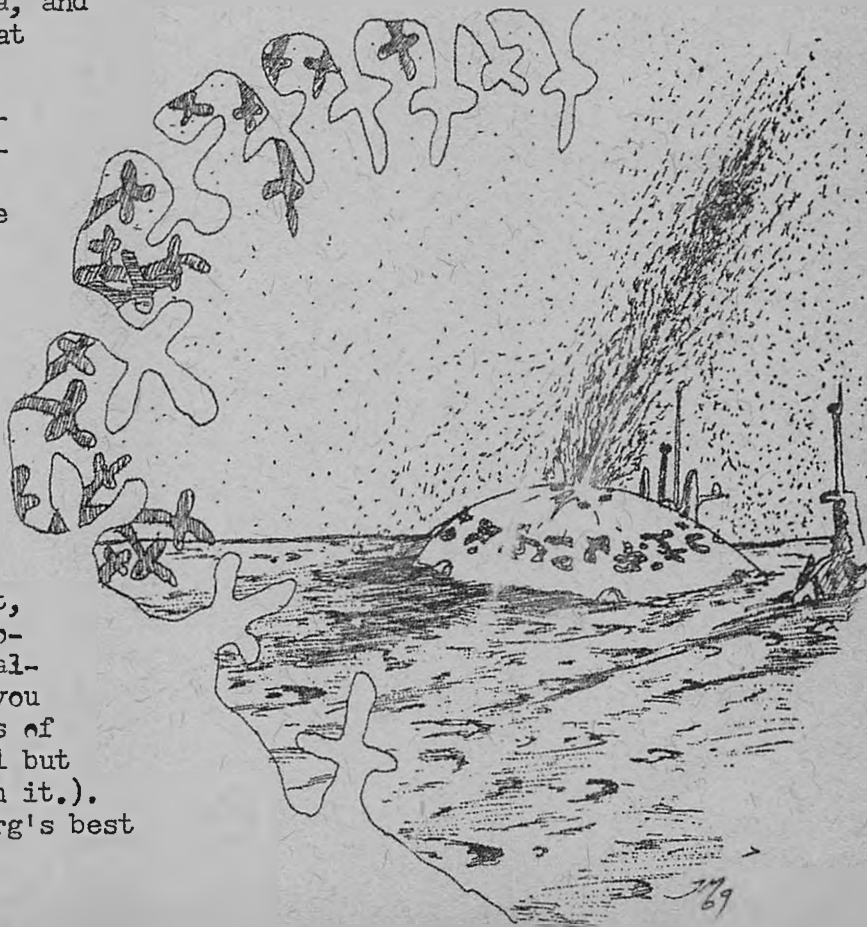
The first third of the book, which won the Hugo last year for novelette, begins building a picture of a future age, after some cataclysm, where some but not all scientific wonders are preserved and everyone is a member of some Guild, in a sort of caste system. The narrator is a Watcher--one who continually scans the skies with instruments for signs of invaders from space. He travels with a Flier, who does just that, and a Changeling, a mutant outcast. Silverberg uses what appears to be a straightforward style, but when the operation of the work is examined closely it becomes apparent that the style and form are as much a part of the real business of the book as the what-happened. (I borrow unabashedly from the Delany article in SFR #33, for those who care.) As the parts of the future world are added bit by bit we are involved in a view of that world which is that of the Watcher. And so when the Changeling is revealed as an alien spy and the invaders capture Earth overnight, this is seen not so much as a global tragedy which could hardly be conveyed anyhow, but as the destruction of a man who sees his way of life ended. We are simultaneously subjected to tremendous guilt and shame, and through it all we see that as important as anything else to the Watcher is his strange love for the Flier, called Avluela. The novelette closes with Avluela stolen by the Changeling-spy, and the Watcher on his way to the city of Perris with the Prince of Roum, a proud-but-humbled

sort of Oedipus at Colonus, formerly a Dominator now dethroned by the invaders, who summarizes the subjugation of Earth both in his blind misery and the fact that he is felt to "deserve what he gets," for his mistreatment of the Watcher and Alvuela earlier in the story. Why this is true only becomes apparent in the second section.

Here the process of discovering what already happened is continued with the Watcher, now rechristened Tomis, learning the story of Earth's evil practices in ages past, when alien beings had been stolen to Earth for zoo-specimens. Guilt and shame. And as the story continues the Prince of Roum repeats his earlier offenses with a Rememberer of Perris who had sponsored him and Tomis. The mental anguish of Tomis is extreme, for he is ordered to betray the Prince--in spite of the sins of this lecher it is obvious that he is no more evil than Earth itself, and the torment of the sensitive Watcher, still suffering from the overpowering failure of his profession, causes him to become, by some interpretation, a traitor to Earth in order to spare the Prince. He has found records of the mistreatment of the invaders' ancestors on Earth ages before, and offers to give them to the new masters in exchange for the life of the former Dominator, who represents to Tomis the system under which he lived a lifetime. The Prince soon gets his punishment anyway as a result of his own sins, and Tomis, his soul purged through every shade of shame and self-contempt, again undertakes a pilgrimage with a worse sinner, toward Jorslem (Jerusalem) and the rejuvenation halls.

In the third section our picture of what will have happened is rounded out even as the metamorphosis of Tomis (and by implication the human race, in the future) is completed. He learns of the scientific processes used to create the Guilds, the origin of the Changelings. Now the story of the invasion of Earth is virtually abandoned, and the personal development of Tomis takes center stage. He is rejuvenated after being found worthy, and admitted to the Guild of Redeemers, a new guild which forces away his last prejudices (against the Changelings). He finds Alvuela, and there is thus an almost too-neat happy ending.

But Silverberg can easily be forgiven any excess moralizing and sentimental-hopeful ending. The neat structure of the three sections provides a logical development and application of the emotional story being told. In the first, it is the story of the destruction of the Watcher and his world; in the second it is the guilt of Tomis applied to all men; in the third it is the cleansing of Tomis and hope for men through brotherhood (honest, guys, it doesn't sound that gooey or simplistic in the book--although in fact it is, and so you have an idea of the limitations of ...not the quality of the novel but rather of Silverberg's goals in it.). This book is probably Silverberg's best



to date (I have not read To Live Again or Downward To Earth). His objectives are not all that large but they are handled in an extensive and deep manner, with a mastery of technique and feeling not common in our genre or anywhere else. This is science fiction as we all wish it had always been written--although it has obviously taken Silverberg years to get here, even as it took the whole field.

--Gabe Eisenstein

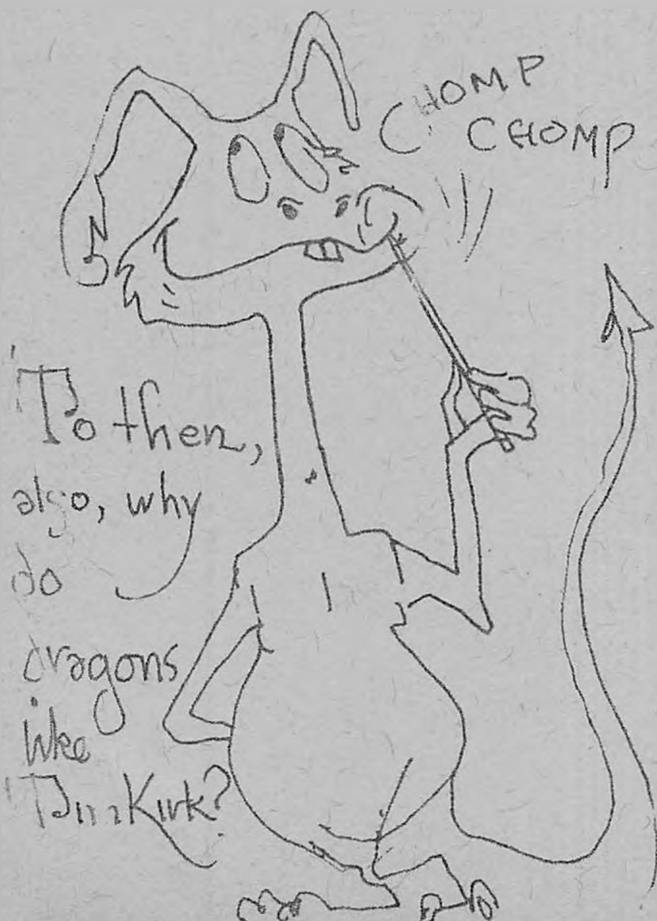
Omnivore by Piers Anthony, Ballantine 72011, 75¢

This is a curious specimen--a novel that most likely would have received a Hugo nomination had it been less ambitious in what it attempted. Omnivore concerns itself with three things, any one of which could have formed the basis for a complete novel: (1) Subble, a "rebuilt" and considerably improved man who functions as a government investigator, who begins each new assignment with a blank slate insofar as personal memories are concerned, and who is therefore devoid of emotion and personality; (2) The planet Nacre and its indigent life-forms, all of whom--including the sentient species--are representatives of the Third Kingdom (fungi); (3) The relationship between a trio of the novel's major characters, Veg, a spaceman whose name derives from his dietary preferences (vegetarian), Aquilon, a beautiful artist, and Cal, a genius with a debilitated body who lives by drinking blood.

Anthony emphasizes each of these elements in alternating chunks of the novel, bringing one to the fore for a few pages, then letting it recede in favor of another, and so on throughout the book, instead of handling it as most authors would have and letting one emerge as the central thread with the other two occupying clearly secondary importance. This effort flaws the novel,

for while all three elements are developed skillfully, none, invariably, is developed as fully and vividly as it would have been if he had concentrated on it throughout. It is probably possible to write such a book in which all three threads are successfully developed to their full potential, but Piers Anthony was not able to do it, at least not in a comparatively short work such as this (218 pages in fairly large type).

The result is a novel which, as a whole, is insufficiently integrated and a good deal less tightly constructed than it might be. I hasten to add that this is a matter of overall impression, not technical inadequacy. Stylistically, what is attempted is done very well; it is simply a matter of a certain looseness being an inevitable consequence of alternating emphasis on essentially separate story concepts. There are also a couple of minor flaws, including the author's tendency to



utilize a character as a mouthpiece for a somewhat pedantic lecture on, e.g., literature or the importance of fungi in everyday life.

Still, Omnivore is an extremely worthwhile book with much to recommend it. The writing is uniformly excellent, characterization is fine (including Subble, who as an entity lacking individuality or emotion is, to put it mildly, a rather difficult subject), and Anthony's portrayal of Nacre and its dominant species, the "mantas," is memorable. In particular, as others have remarked, there is a singularly superb segment in which Subble engages in single combat with one of the mantas, and there are other scenes of almost equal effectiveness. I strongly suspect that if Piers Anthony had written this book about Nacre and the Nacreans, saving Subble for another novel, Omnivore would have easily been one of the five best books of the year. As it stands, it is a novel which attempted more than it accomplished, but is still very much worth reading.

--Ted Pauls

Nebula Award Stories Four edited by Poul Anderson, Doubleday, \$5.95.

Poul Anderson has done things a little differently from his predecessors with this year's SFWA anthology. For one thing, he has eliminated the story introductions (except for his wife Karen's What Has Gone Before for "Dragonrider"). For another he has called upon fifteen others to write non-fiction for the book: Willis E. McNelly (Professor of English, California State College, Fullerton) covered the novel-year in a long foreward, and thirteen writers contributed obituaries to an "In Memorium" section. Anderson's Introduction covers the magazine year, with Brian Aldiss commenting upon NEW WORLDS.

The book strikes me as very well done--though I do miss those story introductions. And my favorite sentence is this, culled from Anderson's Introduction: (re NEW WORLDS) "Rather than scold what I seldom understand, I asked one of that country's most distinguished writers in our field to comment on it." Ah, the rationality of it all! Michael Moorcock's main complaint about the critics of NW was that they really didn't know what it was they were criticizing. Brian Aldiss has some unfavorable things to say, but he knows what he is talking about. Poul Anderson admits to not being able to discuss NW intelligently, so he intelligently refuses to discuss it at all. I wish others would follow his lead.

McNelly's Foreward is very interesting. I'll lay odds you'll disagree with him at least once. (I do many times. For instance, I don't think he was quite fair to Rite of Passage, and he horribly overrated Clarke's 2001 while downgrading Kubrick's.)

The stories: The three award-winners are "Dragonrider" by Anne McCaffrey, "Mother to the World" by Richard Wilson and "The Planners" by Kate Wilhelm. Anderson filled the volume (which, because of the long McCaffrey, did not need much filling) with "The Dance of the Changer and the Three" by Terry Carr, "Sword Game" by H.H. Hollis and "The Listeners" by James E. Gunn.

Nebula Four strikes me as the least of the SFWA volumes.

So we stop and look. Point A: The members of the Science Fiction Writers of America liked these stories well enough to put them on the ballot. Point B: Three of them were liked well enough to earn awards. Point C: The other three were liked very much by the editor.

And Point D: On the whole, the stories do little for me personally.

Overview: The Nebula books are not really best-of-the-year anthologies. Which is to say, neither the editor nor the organization has compiled a fat collection of the top stories of the year. What has really happened is that SFWA has (marginally) decided upon the Nebula winners and the editor has put some of his favorites of the year in the spaces between award stories.

This is not a criticism. But we must remember that the Nebula book is not a definitive best-of-the-year collection; it is a reading anthology.

As a reading anthology, Nebula Four is very good. None of the stories is bad. Of course.

There is no way you can say one of these stories is really bad. If you do not like one of them, then all right, you don't like one of them. Just because you one reader does not like it does not mean it is bad. The story was written, it was sold, it impressed SFWA and/or it impressed the editor. (I have the feeling Poul Anderson would have preferred to leave out "The Planners" had the choice been his.)

So, none of the stories is bad. But if this were a definitive best-of-the-year anthology, only two of them would belong.

"Dragonrider" would not, despite its excellence, because of its length. Two-part serials are more often published as books than in books. There is no room in a definitive best-of-the-year anthology for an over-110,000-word novella. (In this volume it takes up more than half the room reserved for fiction.)

"The Listeners," "Sword Game," and "The Planners" are fine reading-anthology stories, but none of them (except perhaps the Wilhelm) rate among the best of the year. "The Listeners" was a good choice in that it is a good story that has not otherwise been reprinted. "Sword Game" is a fun story that has caught many people's fancy. "The Planners" has for me two interesting concepts buried in an otherwise incomprehensible story. Many people have liked it but there are many other Wilhelm stories I prefer.

That leaves two very fine stories. "The Dance of the Changer and the Three" and "Mother to the World." If you have not read either of them it will be worth your while to get the book.

The Terry Carr story is beautifully told and very chilling in its own quiet way. It is understated because of its quietude, but it is in no way obscure--despite its incomprehensibility. (Those familiar with the story know I didn't just contradict myself.)

The Richard Wilson one can also be described as beautiful. It is also economical. (It could have been drawn out into a novel.) This is just its second appearance, and if you don't read Orbit you missed it.

To some people the story might seem useless. An after-the-holocaust story with two normal characters is "useful" in that it is universal. After all, everyone is normal. (I'm normal. Aren't you normal? Find someone you think is abnormal. Ask him. He'll tell you he is normal.)

An after-the-holocaust story with abnormal people as characters is "useless" because it is not universal.

To begin with, one of the two characters in "Mother to the World" is normal. The other is not: she is mentally retarded. So the story is "useless"? Hardly. If usefulness is needed, then take as the theme not "how do we live?" but "how do I learn to accept her?" If you don't want to bother with that, relax and enjoy the story. Move with it. It is a truly beautiful and very moving story. Of the four 1968 Nebula winners (the novel was Rite of Passage), it is the one I think most

deserves its award.

If you haven't read these stories, this collection is a fine place to find them.

Next year's anthology will be edited by James Blish. I'm not going to try and predict what he will select, but Frank willing I'll list the contents of my version of Nebula Award Stories Five:

"Time Considered as a Helix of Semi-precious Stones" by Samuel R. Delany; "Passengers" by Robert Silverberg; "Nine Lives" by Ursula K. Leguin (Best Novelette); "Dramatic Mission" by Anne McCaffrey; "The Man Who Learned Loving" by Theodore Sturgeon; "Not Long Before the End" by Larry Niven (Best Short Story); "A Boy and His Dog" by Harlan Ellison (Best Novella).

By the time this sees print you'll know the Nebula winners. How close was I?

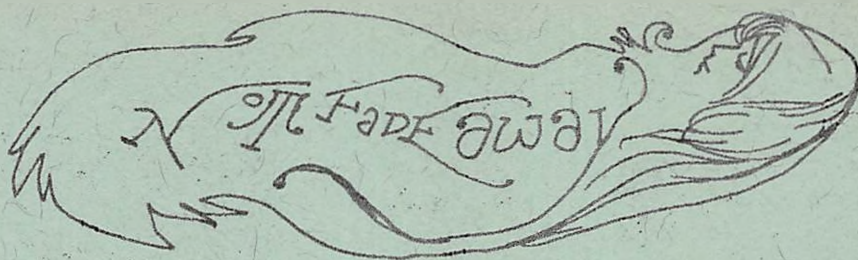
--Jeffrey D. Smith

The Unending Night by George H. Smith, Tower 43-305, 60¢.



Here's another winner from Tower Publications Inc., folks, the shoddy outfit that has in recent months degraded the genre with such atrocities as The Alien Ones by Leo Brett, and Dorothy Skinkle's Star Giant. It literally appalls me that material of this calibre can continue to exist in a field which has produced, in the past year or so, novels like The Left Hand of Darkness (LeGuin), Isle of the Dead (Zelazny), The Jagged Orbit (Brunner), Let the Fire Fall (Wilhelm), Macroscope (Anthony), The Palace of Eternity (Shaw), Black Easter (Blish), Nightwings (Silverberg), Galactic Pot Healer (Dick), and others. I am half-seriously convinced that The Unending Night was originally written as a science fiction movie script during the worst years of the 1950s--and rejected by Hollywood on the basis of falling short of its criteria for quality!

The plot, in brief, concerns a catastrophe caused by the malfunction of a huge thermonuclear reactor which explodes, wrenching Mars from its orbit and sending it hurtling past Earth within the Moon's orbit, causing tidal waves, earthquakes and volcanoes ala When Worlds Collide. The accident was caused by the stubborn egocentricity of the reactor project head, the dashing, charismatic genius, Dr. Lance Rilke, who refused to listen to the counsel of his quiet, unassuming genius brother, Dr. Lee Rilke. It should go without saying that both brothers are at the outset of the novel in love with the same woman, a beautiful, dashing girl reporter and writer whose socio-political opinions are a combination of Ayn Rand and Heinrich Himmler. Naturally, quiet, unassuming Lee Rilke saves the world, and in the process discovers that the woman he really loves is bright, wholesome, unglamorous Miranda Vernon, a British astronomer who's been pursuing him (romantically) all through the book. Lance, who by this time has wiggled out completely, gets killed in the final chapter, as does the broad with the super-race complex.



Everybody else who's still surviving after the tidal waves, earthquakes and volcanoes lives happily ever after.

Some of the writing, especially the dialogue, must be read in order to be believed. Lines like:

"I'm afraid we've disrupted the basic unity of the solar system itself," Miranda said.

And:

"Oh, Lee, it's...it's all so hopeless." Miranda's lower lip trembled and she began to cry.

"Not hopeless, just terrible," Lee said and pulled her against him. "Science brought this about, and now science must come up with something to prevent or at least mitigate it."

Sixty cents? Buy two packs of cigarettes; even if you should develop cancer, heart disease and fallen armpits all at once as a result, your money would still be better spent than if you had purchased this abomination by Mr. Smith.

--Ted Pauls

Fourth Mansions by R.A. Lafferty, Ace 24590, 75¢.

If I called this SF novel, which isn't very good SF, an important advance in modern literature, would anybody continue reading? I mean, the best the guys on the back cover could come up with was "thundering melodrama and quest into the depths of the human spirit," and Lester del Rey cut the book up as much as possible, so either it's not much or everybody has been asleep. Well, keep on reading anyway...

Del Rey says two things in his review that I would like to use. He says the book will appeal to those who "seem to regard Kurt Vonnegut as America's answer to William Burroughs." Now I am probably missing something in the connotations Lester attaches to both men as literary figures, but the mention here is relevant because it is in fact Lafferty who is using the techniques of Burroughs (who is, in case anyone cares, as American as any writer this side of Twain): consciously or not --in fact, I would assume that this is simply his natural mode, which should be seen as a general trend in literature that is an effect of wider technological changes. This, then, is my thesis: the methods Lafferty is feeling out in Fourth Mansions represent one of the directions literature can take if it is to keep step with the other arts in the wake of cultural reorientation caused by the electric media. Vonnegut may be reaching in this direction, but it is only with Slaughterhouse-5 if at all.

There is obviously a vast gulf between Lafferty and Burroughs, but I think it resolves to not much more than this: at all of what Burroughs calls the "inter-section points" you will find, in a Burroughs novel, Burroughs himself; with Lafferty

you find a fantastic creation who is moving with some large concept, carrying along symbols or fantasies as Burroughs' characters carry along human traits.

I quote del Rey again simply to show by how much he misses the object of the novel: "The basic idea of the novel is that various mysterious groups are trying to dominate the world and that a tremendous hidden struggle for power is going on." He is trying to deal with Lafferty's work in terms of the story--what happened. And on this level it would, I agree, make for a poor novel, and not very good SF. Maybe the fact that, as he says, nothing really comes of the "story" would provide a clue that this was not Lafferty's object in writing. The book is quite obviously not a linear narrative, any more than Ellison's short story, "The Beast...etc" or Naked Lunch. As Lester says, "Everything is cluttered up." Very perceptive. But hopefully there is enough of an audience who can appreciate the existence of something between events of "reality" set up in a straight line and "everything cluttered up" to make Lafferty's work the success it deserves to be. The elements of a novel can be purposefully arranged without being set up in a line, orderly and gradual. The object is, you see, to illustrate the relationships and interactions of the complex themes Lafferty is dealing with. Now it's possible that he could fail in this task, but we should at least realize what he is doing.

Fourth Mansions has as its most basic theme essentially the same question left at the end of Past Master: will man progress, will it all be over very soon, or will we just repeat the same old crap? Now the question has been clarified allegorically; in a system of cities which always advance for four levels and then return to the first, the fourth mansion is the highest level but merely the "end" of a cyclical process. The question is whether man can reach a fifth level, and I don't think intimations of evolution in the manner of Childhood's End are unintended. The desire to break out of the rational human limitations (existentialist as Camus) is certainly a basic human feeling, and therefore will determine the course and events of "reality" in accordance with the quotation Lafferty includes from Jung, which says that the world must act out psychological conflicts which are unresolved in the mind. Reality is the key here; if you believe in the visual, rational and continuous "reality" of Descartes you will not be able to accept Lafferty very seriously. Foley himself (the protagonist of sorts) takes a while to really decide that things are happening that aren't "real". Eventually, however, he "integrates his archetypes" and becomes fully conscious. This is in effect what we try to do as we experience the novel, although Foley leaves us behind right at the end. The commentary on the inside first page of the book calls the work a "weird overview of reality," but it is rather an inner-view or inter-view of the several subjective realities of the characters. The way these different realities overlap and interact is the difficult process of the novel, and the reason I dare call it a true literary advance. Even Burroughs is not confronted with this problem, for he has basically no more than two characters to interact--himself and The Man.

The several realities are sketched appropriately wispily--del Rey objects to the lack of a credible background, still seeking his story--and take the forms of legend, allegory, fantasy, symbol and actual speculation. And there is theology here, and cosmogony, and politics, and myth and of course psychology which is the same as science. And the enchanting comic lyricism everyone admires in Lafferty's writing, with the assortment of brilliant inventiveness that fascinates even if one



doesn't maintain a hold on the relationships developing and shifting between the themes and symbols. Lafferty doesn't, like Ballard, paint a single naturalistic, delicate landscape as one character's state of mind; instead he sketches one cartoony worldscape after another, and then lets the paints run together, keeping track of certain colors through them all, watching how they change.

Fourth Mansions is to be read more than once. The complexity of what is going on thematically and symbolically can barely be absorbed more than subconsciously on one trip. Furthermore, I think it would be justified to take most of Lafferty's symbols as objective correlatives, perhaps with an equal causal relationship with the "real" events. The book is rewarding on many levels, but it is Lafferty's actual technique here--the illustration of subjective realities interacting according to the terms of philosophic questions posed through the characters--which merits serious attention, for it is this and similar experimentation which, I believe, makes science fiction the vanguard of artistic development in literature.

--Gabe Eisenstein

The Grass is Greener on the Other Side, or Is It?: A Review of The Dark Symphony by Dean R. Koontz, Lancer, 75¢ and Magellan by Colin Anderson, Walker, \$4.95.

I suppose there have been many times when everyone is unhappy with his and/or her life (my concession to the Women's Liberation movement) and his or her society. These two novels have this factor as their core. But both are radically different in quality and readability. The Dark Symphony is essentially a beautiful book that is easy to read and has the unique form of a musical composition. This is a brilliant idea as the story is about a society of musicians and advancement in it is by musical ability. It also is a proof that Life is a dark symphony, not Death. Magellan is not a story of that great explorer, but a tale of a people searching for happiness through immortality. The book is terribly dull, and I had to force myself to finish the thing. The author made the mistake of writing his book as one long chapter. This aids Anderson in having one event and thought flow into another, but it is a hindrance for the reader who won't go through it in one sitting. (I can almost guarantee no one will want to.) To be quite truthful, I don't know if this would be worth a paperback price, but it is definitely not worth \$4.95.

Koontz's hero's name is Guillaume Dufay Grieg, Guil for short. He seems reasonably happy in the Musician society. He is a youth of 17 (no, this isn't a juvenile, Ted), and he manages to pass the test of the arena to gain a class in the society. This disappoints Guil and his father, the Grand Maestro of the city, but at least the youth doesn't end up in the disposal furnace. But there are the Populars, the mutants, left from a war that had devastated Earth, just outside the city. It is here that the Musician society, one of the many former star colonies of Earth, decides to locate. They have isolated themselves completely from the Populars, except for their use in dissection movies, but trouble is brewing. Poor Guil is the center of a Popular plot of revenge against the Musicians for crimes committed against the mutants.

When Guil finds out that he's really a Popular, he realizes how rotten the Musician society is. He hates the sadism of what is supposed to be an advanced society and decides to help the mutants. But when he sees the Populars, especially his real father (Guil, or Gideon, was substituted for the real Guil when he was a baby), he hesitates. He is disgusted with many aspects of the Popular society and his father's religious fanaticism. He feels that they may have been wronged, however, and deserve some revenge. But he sees that he and his girlfriend, Tisha, fit in neither world. He wonders if the world he saw through the Pillar of Sound, a world of Death, will be their only chance of survival.

The novel is exciting, several of the characters are well developed and fascinating, and the world Koontz creates is excellent. While the regular chapters might not raise sympathy for the mutants, the sections preceding them, titled First:, gives the background for the Populans' plot and the sympathy does come. Finally, I think Koontz takes a clear anti-establishment, anti-war and anti-everything else stand in the book. He's quite good at it, but later in the novel he almost pounds the reader over the head with it. But looked at in terms of a musical piece, it might seem that the author was using a crescendo to make his point. Oh yes, after what I thought was a great book, I felt that the ending was a disappointment. But it was worthwhile reading.

Magellan, on the other hand, was terrible. Walker should have quit with The Left Hand of Darkness, when they were ahead of the game. Our hero, Euripides Che Fortho July 10701, of 100% Deprived Child Status (I loved the names in the two novels) is a bore. I couldn't have cared less about what was happening to him. Koontz had gene control in his book, and the city of Magellan does, too. The city is supposed to be a Universal Society, a perfect world that is a reaction to the rest of the Earth which has been destroyed in an atomic war. The trouble is that they can't reach 100% perfection, and there are unhappy individualist rebels like Euri (boy, did the gene experts goof on him), who hate the collectivist society. To achieve final perfection, therefore, a giant computer, Chronophage, is being built at the core of the Earth. Each man will be Liberated as they achieve immortality and all their other desires. Euri and others constantly speculate as to what it will feel like in eternity. The society becomes more and more agitated as the day when Chronophage will take over approaches. The city has been built near the ruins of war and a death-games cult springs up. Euri is a part of this, because he says the even odds and the chance to die bring excitement into his life.

And, yet, everyone hopes for the eternal freedom that will come one Liberation day while playing their games of death. Though death can be looked at as a form of liberation. The excitement among the people continues to increase as the hours dwindle away. These hours seemed an eternity to me as the pages dragged. I didn't realize how lucky I was, however, as things get worse when Liberation arrives. Liberation was not as Euri pictured it, but that came as no surprise. Only a few smart ones knew what to expect, and they take advantage of this. If you like weird imagery and dreary symbolism, this section will delight. I hated it. The funny thing is, though, I thought the ending was good. In fact, if you took most of Koontz's book and had a good ending like Anderson's, you'd have a really great novel.

By the way, read the blurb on the inside cover flaps of Magellan. If that isn't enough to turn you off, nothing will. I'd like to meet the author of that piece of genius.

--Sandy Moss

The Winds of Darkover by Marion Zimmer Bradley, Ace Double 89250, 75¢ (with The Any-thing Tree by John Rackham).

Several issues ago, I had occasion to review in the pages of this magazine a novel by MZB (The Brass Dragon, reviewed in BeABohema #6) so intrinsically shallow and putrid that even her considerable abilities as a story teller were unable to render it worth reading. It is thus only fitting--not to mention fair--that I now examine in these pages her most recent novel, one that is a worthy vehicle for her skill and craftsmanship. The Winds of Darkover is the latest in her series of Darkovan stories which began, I believe, with The Planet Savers and The Sword of Aldones (Ace Double F-153) in 1962. It has good, smooth writing, fast-moving adventure, believable characters, realistic dialogue. Most of all, though, it has Darkover.



I am convinced that on some level of the author's mind the world of Darkover exists, as real and as vivid as Staten Island (and certainly more interesting...). It is because she believes in Darkover that she is able to make it believable for us; it is because that world exists as an independent, integrated entity that details of background are consistent from year to year and novel to novel. The towering majesty of the Hellers mountains, the plethora of non-human types cohabiting the planet, the great families of the Comyn, the stolid Darkovan morality, ancient Carthon...all these elements infuse the novels, give them a substance, a richness, that reinforces their other good qualities: the reality of the world makes the action more interesting, the characters are full-blown, the dialogue more believable. Bradley's Darkover novels do not achieve the heights of such works as Pavane, The Left Hand of Darkness or Nightwings, but they manage to leave 95% of the Ace Doubles material stumbling far behind in the cloud of their dust.

The following passage is a fair sample of the narrative quality and "aura" of The Winds of Darkover:

Storn Castle stood on a height defended by chasms and crags. Brynat knew he could congratulate himself for the feats of tactics and engineering which had broken the walls and poured men through them to storm the inner fortress. Storn had been built in the old days to be impregnable, and impregnable it was and had remained through seven generations of Aldarans, Aillards and Storns.

When it had housed proud lords of the Comyn--the old, powerful, psi-gifted lords of the Seven Domains of Darkover--it had been known to the world's end. Then the line had dwindled, outsiders had married into the remains of the families, and finally the Storns of Storn had come there. They had been peaceful lords without any pretense to be more than they were--wilderness nobility, gentle and honorable, living in peace with their tenants and neighbors, content to trade in the fine hunting hawks of the mountains and sell fine wrought metals from the forges of their mountain tribe, which dug ore from the dark cliffs and worked it at their fires. They had been rich and also powerful in their own way, if by power one meant that when word went forth from the Storn of Storn, men obeyed; but they smiled instead of trembling when they obeyed. They had little contact with the other mountain peoples and less with the lords of the farther mountains; they lived at peace and were content.

The plot: Following the fall of Storn Castle to brigands, the blind Lord of Storn, using psi-powers and Darkovan technology, goes into a deep trance beneath the protective shield of a force-field, thus depriving the bandit leader, Brynat, of the opportunity to use and abuse Storn for his own ends. While in this state, Lord Storn develops a telepathic contact with Dan Barron, a spaceport air traffic controller in the Terran enclave of the planet, as a result of which Barron gets a couple of spaceships wrecked and is sacked. He is sent into the Darkovan mountains to teach the mountain people how to grind lenses and make telescopes. Storn continues to develop the telepathic link, and ultimately takes over the body and submerges the "Dan Barron" personality. He then journeys to Carthon to meet his sister, Lady Melitta, whose escape from Castle Storn he had urged. They hope to hire there a mercenary army to retake the fortress. This idea falls through, so they journey on to the castle of the Aldaran family, and there they meet a girl named

Desideria, a Keeper trained in the utilization of matrices, crystalline devices which act as psionic amplifiers of a sort. Barron, Melitta and Desideria return to the Storn lands, the former by this time having regained control of his own being, and there enlist the aid of mountain villagers to conjure up a goddess, Shaara, who breaches the ramparts of Castle Storn and disposes of Brynat and his henchmen. Barron decides to remain among the Darkovans and live happily ever after with Melitta instead of returning to the Terran enclave, and Storn, revived from his trance, settles down to live happily ever after with Desideria.



The Winds of Darkover is an extremely well-done and deeply engrossing novel which I would recommend to any SF fan for a very pleasant evening's reading.

--Ted Pauls

The Wanderer by Fritz Leiber, Walker \$5.95.

Since it won the Hugo for best novel when originally published in 1964, The Wanderer must command a certain serious respect from any reviewer encountering it for the first time in this Walker edition. As far as this reviewer is concerned, however, the novel's distinction is principally attributable to its having been written in a comparatively weak year. It isn't a poor novel, by any means, but there is little about it that is truly outstanding. Certainly it would not receive a Hugo nomination today. That may stand as an uncommonly clear illustration of just how much the sf field has improved in half a decade.

The Wanderer is a peripatetic planet, turned into a gigantic spaceship by its inhabitants, which pops out of hyperspace near the Earth in order to dismantle the Moon for fuel, and in the process creates havoc on Earth (tides, earthquakes, volcanoes, etc.). Leiber devotes some attention to the motivation of the Wanderer's inhabitants and the galactic civilization from which they are fleeing, but in large part it is a standard catastrophe novel a la When Worlds Collide. In order to tell his story, the author employs a frequently used device: relatively short chapters and sections, switching back and forth among a large number of characters. The result is extremely uneven. Some of the threads of story which flow through this novel's 318 pages are, compared to the main strands, so peripheral and so weakly done as to constitute nothing more than annoyingly irrelevant interruptions. Neither the theme of the aliens' hegira nor the symbolistic use of sex are sufficiently powerful to unify the bits and pieces into a coherent whole; so that the only level on which The Wanderer truly succeeds is the essentially superficial one of portraying the varied aspects of global upheaval.

The principal story involves a group of people who are attending an outdoor flying saucer seminar in southern California when the new planet appears in the sky. Perhaps half of the total wordage in the novel is devoted to an account of their ac-

tions and reactions, much of it amounting to yet another rehash of what has been standard in natural catastrophe or Atomigeddon stories for a couple of decades. Woven in and around the sections of this familiar adventure are shorter accounts of a number of other people's experiences: Wolf Loner, an adventurer sailing a 22-foot dory from Bristol to Boston alone; the crew and passengers of an atomic luxury liner hijacked by Brazilian revolutionists; Sally Harris and Jake Leshner, a couple out for a night's fun in New York; Don Guillermo Walker, "self-proclaimed linear descendent of the original William Walker," who is supposed to trigger a revolution in Nicaragua by bombing the presidential palace; two British friends, Dai Davies, a Welsh poet (and lush), and Richard Hillary, an English novelist; Lt. Don Merriam, an American astronaut stationed at the permanent Moonbase; Barbara Katz, a Palm Beach fortune-hunter, and Knolls Kettering III, the wealthy old geezer she has managed to pick up; Bagong Bung, a gun-runner and treasure hunter in the Gulf of Tonkin; Asa Holcomb, an old man dying on an Arizona mesa; Gen. Spike Stevens, the commander of the Reserve Headquarters of the US Space Force, in his secluded underground installation; three Harlem cats blowing grass; and Fritz Scher, in charge of the Tidal Institute, in Hamburg. If I haven't forgotten anyone.

The writing itself, characteristic of Leiber, is uniformly excellent, and the pacing is good, which is a considerable achievement in view of the novel's construction. But the predominant characteristic of The Wanderer is unevenness. Some of the separate story threads and the portrayal of some of the characters is sharp and impressive, but at least half of the large number of individual characters are cardboard non-entities and some of the subsidiary plots are completely uninteresting. If the exceedingly brief Asa Holcomb part is quietly sensitive, the Spike Stevens section a tour de force of a very particular sort and the Don Guillermo Walker part at least interesting, they are balanced by the Barbara Katz-Knolls Kettering interlude, which reads like a bad idea from J.D. Salinger's discard pile, and the utterly pointless and boring Dai Davies section.

It is worth reading, but it is far from Fritz Leiber's best work and, these days, far from Hugo quality.

--Ted Pauls

Swordmen of Vistar by Charles Nuetzel, Powell Sci-Fi, 95¢.

A couple of months ago, in anticipation of writing an article for my own fanzine, I read three and a half Charles Nuetzel books. When I was finished, my mind was so shot I couldn't possibly write about them. I did take notes on the first half of Swordmen, though, and I'll share them with you.

The first two chapters could have made a fine sequence. Thoris of Haldolen--the hero--and Princess Illa, daughter of the God-Lord, are shipwrecked by a storm. They remain afloat by hanging onto the broken mast. There are flashes of excellence, but only flashes. Most of this sequence is dull and even stupid. Thoris is in love with Illa, but she is above him; she's never even spoken to him before. However, she seems to be in love with him now, but won't admit to it. He is just a common warrior. Sge says, "Don't tell me what to do!" and does everything he tells her to. Quote: "Princess Illa was surely a feline creature with great contrasts, startling surprises." Indeed! So much as to make Chapters 1 & 2 ridiculous, despite the power with which any other writer could have infused them.

Chapter 3--They make it to shore. The insane dialog (or multilog, with Illa taking seventeen different sides) continues. They are captured by cannibals. So is a member of a different tribe. Thoris doesn't tell Tekop that Illa is a princess.

(Nuetzel: "I have, where possible, attempted to modernize the Professor's original translation..."--Thoris: "Say, what are you fellows going to do with us?")

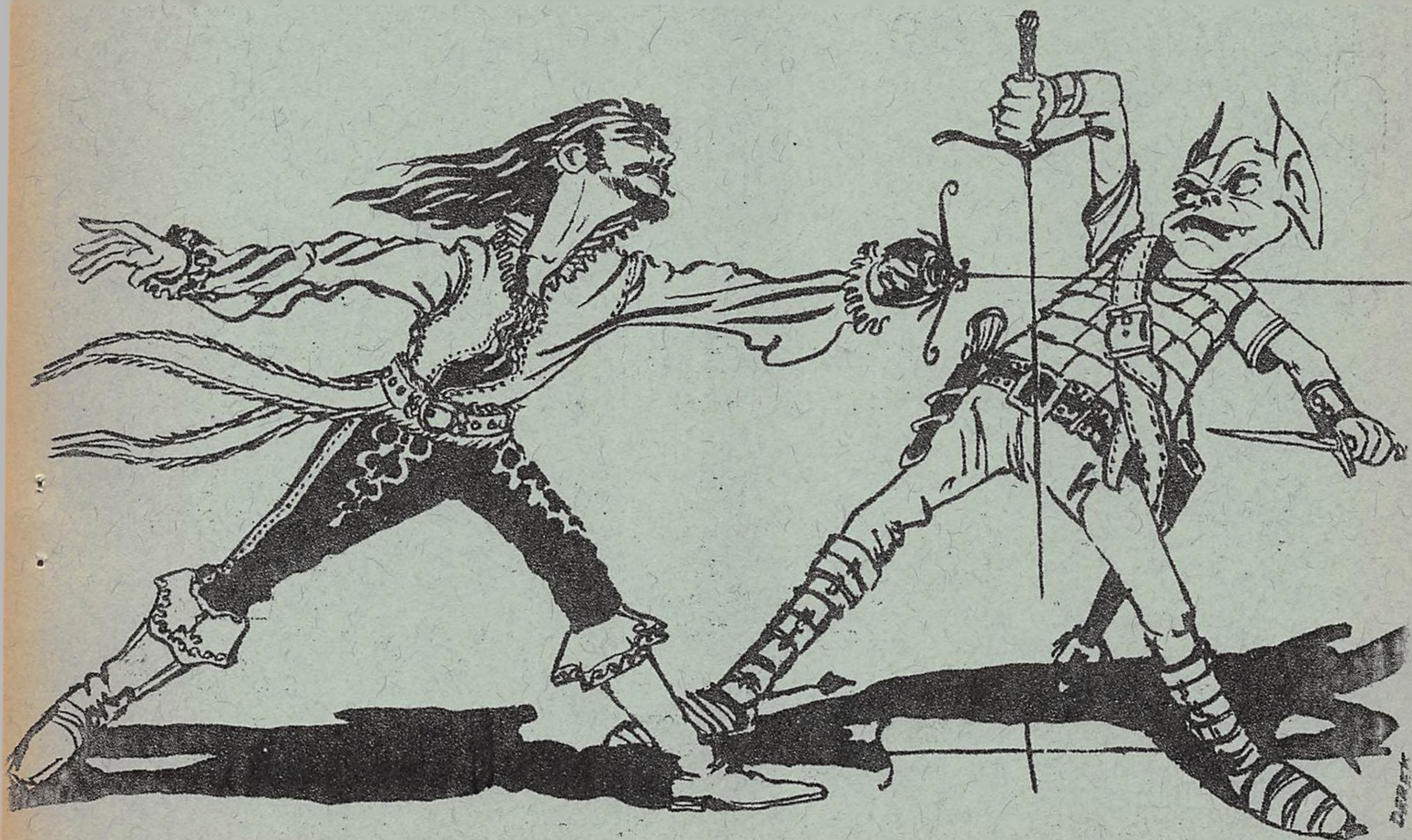
Chapter 4--Again, the hint of a very powerful sequence. First, the three escape. Then, to get Illa, Tekop attacks Thoris. (Nuetzel doesn't use the words, but implies "a fate worse than death.") Thoris goes after him and kills him. Through sheer ineptitude, Nuetzel manages to make this highly frustrating, because the reader knows how well this scene could have been done.

In Chapter 5, Illa tries to get Thoris to admit he loves her--a great offense. (Remember Pirates of Venus?) Nothing else happens. Oh; yes, they are in enemy territory, must not let anyone know they are from Haldonen, and must reach a friendly country.

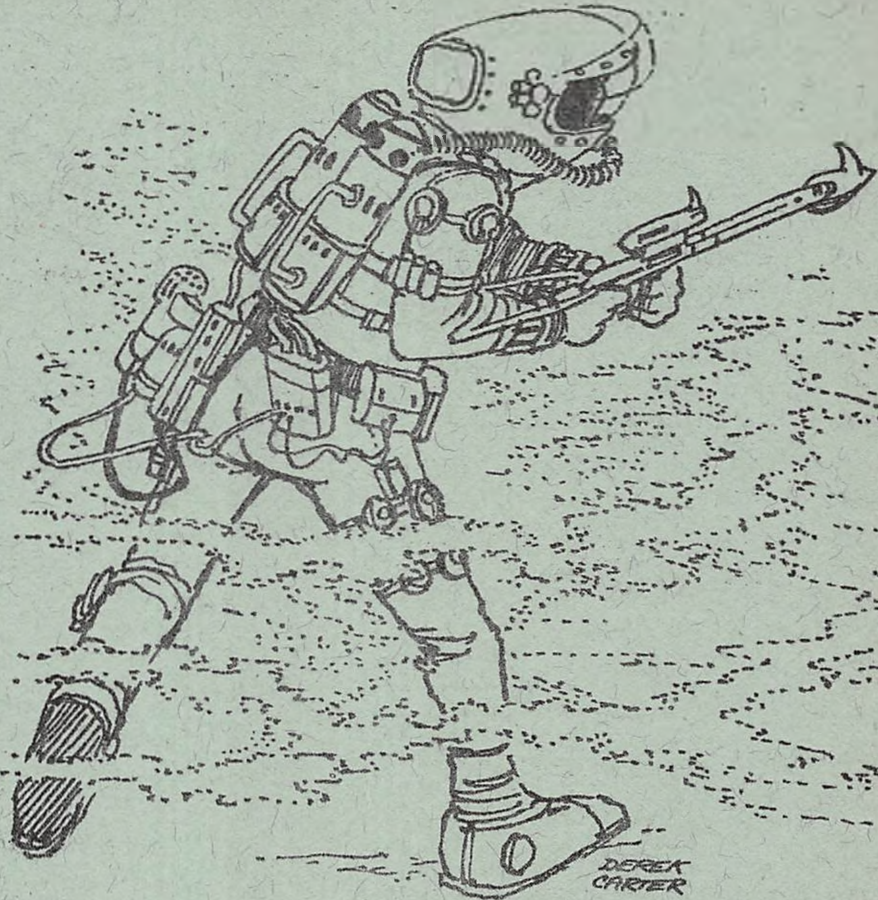
Chapter 6 harks back to (I believe) The Warlord of Mars. Thoris sees an unfair fight and bounces in on the side of the underdog. The only survivors are Thoris and Opil, a girl who does not seem satisfied that Illa is Thoris' slave. Thoris takes Opil home...

And on and on. Swordmen of Vistar is a better book than either Warriors of Noomas or Raiders of Noomas, so you know what to expect from them.

--Jeffrey D. Smith



CUM BLOATUS



Ted White ((This is Ted's loc on BAB 7, and is dated January 14, 1970.))

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As far as Hazlett/Chapdelaine go, I have said my piece in the article, and I hope that it will end this nonsense for once and for all. I don't propose to keep on batting down his wild pitches, issue after issue.

As for your editorial, while I have no objection to your styling yourself as a fanzine for the outgroup, it seems to me that you run the same risk of fostering the out-group paranoia that I dealt with in my article. That is to say, there is always some nut running around convinced that he has been vilely persecuted by some in-group or other. To give his complaints currency is a calculated risk. Perhaps his outburst will prompt a more reasoned statement of the facts from someone else. But just as likely he will unfairly poison a few minds. Certainly Robert Moore Williams has almost no justification for any of the charges he has leveled--most professionals I know regard him as "a fool" or worse--but apparently he has swayed Chapdelaine and perhaps others as well. When one is ignorant of the actual mechanics of publishing and prodcom, he might seem more plausible than he in fact is.

The question of the SFWA is a case in point. Most of the complaints of the know-nothings like Chapdelaine are foolish on the face of it. These people bombard the officers with such letters, expecting instant replies and instant action. As

far as I know, their letters are answered, but their nuisance value is such that they restrict an officer's time for more necessary work. It isn't true that they can find no voice in SFWA publications like the FORUM (which you cannot judge, but I can), but if, as you say, "A separation is becoming apparent in the ranks, and even growing because of the few articles which have appeared in BAB," then I think you are doing the SFWA a disservice. ((I wonder. It's sort of like two people who have to live together, but never talk to one another, and have no opinions at all about the other, and aren't really interested. The first time one of the people opens his mouth, the distance between them will vary--closer or farther apart. A view has been expressed that has existed all along, but the mere expression of the view has changed the status of the two people. Which is what I meant when I said the ranks may have been widening. I know a number of SFWA members who would be unaware of the SFWA if they didn't pay their dues each year. The BAB articles have at least brought out some facts. But as you will say now, it's not really any of my business ...))

Bear in mind, Frank, that the SFWA is none of your business. I say that in all kindness. It is a writers' organization, and not a fan organization. Until you have sold a story and are eligible to join, it will remain none of your business. However, the SFWA, imperfect as it may at present be, is a positive force for sf, and as such deserves at least your tacit support, if indeed you believe in positive forces for sf.

((I believe in positive forces for sf, I guess. But as I typed the above paragraph I speculated on why I should care anything at all about the SFWA. I guess you deal with it well enough below: it's just that I feel more at home backing any group which feels "oppressed," in this case the "out-group" of the SFWA.))

It seems to me that in your statement that you "don't like authority," and your evaluation of "the group centering itself in the New York area" as an "author-ity," you are setting yourself up against a phenomenon without much understanding it.

To begin with, this "authority" has no power over you and isn't really relevant to you. Even if one accepts it as the worst that could be feared, it plays no part in your life.

More fundamentally, what right have you to set yourself up against authority solely because it is authority? If someone in authority calmly told you, "Don't play with that fire or you'll get burned," would you go so far as to burn yourself to prove your opposition? This isn't exactly a facetious question, because I believe a number of kids these days are doing more or less exactly that. And I speak as one who rebelled against adult society himself throughout my long adolescence. You will have to accept the pragmatic fact that although authority is sometimes misused, it basically exists because it is right. People don't become authorities from ignorance of their subject. The present-day sneering at authority is largely by ignorant people who wish to preserve their ignorance--such as Chapdelaine. If I tell you that I am an authority on jazz, on some types of sf, on several periods of fan-nish history, etc., does this automatically make me someone to oppose? I came by my authority honestly; why knock it? (I could also pass as an authority on drugs and sex as well, have what I am sure is a great deal more experience with both than many people. Would that restore my faded lustre--or simply polish it off for good?)

((I think the basic disagreement at this point is a semantical one. You're defending "authority" as a person knowledgeable of a certain subject, while I was actually condemning "authority" that tends to control the lives of people to an extent it shouldn't have the right to control any life. Even if a person does have knowledge of power, it doesn't necessarily mean he can guide the lives of the ignorant people to the degree where they can't control their own destinies.))

Getting back to this New York area phenomenon, I've noticed what I call Out-of-town paranoia, which is a new form of out-group paranoia: it is shared by most people who don't live in or around NYC, which, of course, is most of the country. The simple fact is that New York is the capital of many areas of U.S. culture and commerce. Part of the reason is that it is the largest city; part is due to the nature of the people who live and work here, and part is due to the fact that size attracts size: since it is the capital, it attracts the most talented people in many fields. They in turn enrich its reputation and help attract yet more people. I'm not a native of the city; I've only lived here ten years. I came because it is the center of publishing in this country and I wanted a career in publishing, originally.

Because NYC is the center of publishing, it naturally has to be the focus of the business-world of sf. This is where the editors mostly are. You don't have to live here to sell to them, but it makes it easier to meet the people you want to deal with, and even writers from the West Coast and England come here periodically for that purpose (John Brunner was here this week).

At the same time, as a big city (eight million in the city proper; many more in the surrounding area) it will have a large number of fans and pros on a simple per capita basis. NYC has always had several fan clubs, for instance, and I suspect better than one hundred fans live in the immediate area. (The Lunarian Christmas party attracted forty or fifty alone.)

The temptation of an outsider is to assume that we are all of us of one accord: that NYC fans and/or pros think and act towards some common purpose (which is probably construed as Domination of the Rest of the Country). In actual fact, the NYC fans and pros are fragmented into many different groups, some of them feuding with each other, and have never been able to get behind a single common goal since the 1939 MyCon I Exclusion Act.

The in-group to which I belong is the Fanoclasts, a fannish fan group which has at various times included a number of pros and would-be-pros, but never dominated anything but the MyCon3, which was our con bid and our con. We're entering our tenth year, hurray, and we're still an informal club, our meetings semi-parties where we get stoned, listen to rock records, and talk about whatever we like.

We are a damned negligible force in the SFWA, or sf, as such. And this despite the fact that our members have won two Nebulas, several Hugos, and a Spur award. We don't even dominate AMAZING and FANTASTIC to the degree I sometimes contemplate. The thing is, we're anarchists and we dislike power-plays and like that. The MyCon3 was the most active thing we ever did, and we're unlikely to ever bid for another con.

But we're a small corner of the NYC pro world, and probably unknown as such to most NYC pros.



Another in-group of sorts is the Hydra Club. To show you how up to date I am, I will tell you that I haven't been to a meeting since 1960--and haven't been invited to any, either. I don't even know who is in it any more --although it's ostensibly a pro club, the meetings I attended were attended by few pros of any stature. Yet another in-group is a poker-group which includes my agent and the publisher of a paperback house, plus various writers. It meets weekly. I don't play poker and have never been invited, anyway.

God knows how many other in-groups there are: they don't advertise, most of them. Damon's in-group, by the way, is three hours (or more) driving time from NYC. Then there's the Pohl-del Rey axis, if you're getting incredibly petty about searching out in-groups: the Pohls and the del Reys live on the same block in Red Bank, New Jersey, which is down the coast a short distance from NYC and area. At one time there was a Brooklyn Heights in-group, of the Carrs, Alexei Panshin and Joanna Russ. But Alex and Joanna both moved away (in different directions). I mean, this in-group stuff is nonsense, pure and simple. I see the bulk of NYC prodom just once a year: at the Nebula Awards Banquet. And many of them I don't recognize except by name.



This notion that there's a "Self-Admiration Society" is Robert Moore Williams'. I don't buy it. The closest thing to it is the Milford Conference group--and the fact that a story read there and liked by the majority of attendees might fit the category from an outside point of view. But for any story you can name to me as written by or approved by this "Self-Admiration Society," I bet I can find someone you think is a member of it who dislikes the story in question. Just because a bunch of people are friends, doesn't mean they all automatically think alike.

Example: the biggest favorite for the Nebula this year is The Left Hand of Darkness by Ursula K. LeGuin. All kinds of people like it--including me. Mrs. LeGuin lives on the west coast, and I doubt most of us have ever met her. I've been admiring her work though for years. Is she a part of this "Society"? What do you make of the fact that most of those you consider to be a part of this "Society" admire her book? Is it possible she simply wrote a damned good book?

Skipping on to the book reviews, I notice Pauline Palmer (who she?) didn't like Left Hand of Darkness. Since she seems to regard it as a misfired satire, though, I must conclude she is not particularly sensitive to its actual virtues. It is a slow book to get into. It builds carefully and without melodrama. But the actual drama is there, and so is the extraordinary sense of time and place. The book is a love story--not a satire at all--and how she missed the entire core of the plot is beyond me. Perhaps she can't accept the kind of love recounted.

Letters:

Ah, there, Piers Anthony! To set matters straight, I do not regard you as an "important writer of today." Likewise, I do not regard myself as one. Based on what I've read and tried to read of yours, you are a less even writer than myself, and I regard myself as a journeyman at best. This is not to say I don't like your stories or haven't enjoyed them. I am not a hypocrite: I bought "Hasan" and "Orn" because I did like them. Since I've discussed these stories with you at length in private correspondence, I don't think I need add to that statement.

I also discussed with you at some length the faults in Omnivore--a work I regard as greatly inferior to its sequel. The fact is, I would not have bought that novel, had I been an editor at a time when it was submitted. Harlan cited your name with those of vastly more important--established as important--writers, and I disagreed with him on that score, and pointed out his error in saying Campbell would never buy you. I had not kept tabs on the number of your appearances in ANALOG; simply that you had appeared there more often than I (I never sold anything there), which I regarded as "depressing" in a kidding sort of way. I also noted that you were part of the first three-author byline I'd ever seen on a single story; my mistake in wording this made it come out as "with...three collaborators".

I don't recall whether or not I knew when I wrote that letter to PSY that you'd won the F&SF/Pyramid contest, but I did know that yours was the only professionally publishable submission, and that it won, in effect, by default. So it would not have impressed me that much if I did know at that time.

You've taken a lightly written paragraph of comment, Piers, aimed at a different topic and only parenthetically mentioning yourself, and you have refined it into a set of "misstatements, and insecurities and fouled-up memory," and a case of "paranoia." Come on! The very fact that you have remembered and thrown this item at me on several occasions since proves my point: that you remember your disagreements and grievances far more than your agreements. You still attach far more weight to that simple off-hand comment than it deserves. What if I went through old YANDROS and other fanzines looking for slighting references to myself by you--which I'm sure I could find if I tried? I don't remember them any more, and couldn't care less. As I hope I've proven to you in my dealings with you, that isn't my nature. You should be the first to be aware of it.

At no point has SFWA intervention sped up my response to any given submission, Piers, yours or anyone else's. You'll have to accept my word for that, but I'm tired of hearing about how you sicced the dogs on me that time (this is the second or third mention that I recall), and I think my explanation at the time might have been honored at face value. As long as STELLAR was in limbo, I was very uncertain about whether to accept or reject certain submissions. Yours was one.

Okay, now for another piece of hard truth. I do remember a story from Piers Anthony submitted to me at F&SF. I had not until recently connected it with the novel, Omnivore, and I don't recall what "grade" I put on it--I stopped using letter grades in my pass-ups to Avram after the first few months. But I do recall that although I passed it on, I did not consider it anywhere near as good as some others I passed up the line--like Jasby's "Sea Wreck" or a Thomas Burnett Swann which Avram let slip through his fingers. I think it is Piers' author's vanity telling him it was worthy of "Hugo nominations"; the plain fact that no one would buy it must at least partly contradict him.

I recalled the story as passably written, but not a world-beater--one reason I was "depressed" to see him popping up in ANALOG soon after, and another reason for my generally low opinion of Piers as a writer when Harlan's comment in PSY appeared.

When I found out this was the core piece (the early Macre sections) of the novel, I understood my reactions and those of other editors at last. While superficially plausible, the Macre scenes--as far as I read them--don't hold up at all to logical analysis. The unescorted mission of the three protagonists so far from home base on a planet which has a "killer" reputation is hard to accept for openers--especially the picnic atmosphere of the protagonists. I found the three an ill-matched set and the explanation for what brought them together hard to accept. Veg's actions in attempting to outrace the manta, however, were simply too stupid for me. In a given atmosphere of a visibility of 50 feet (correct me if my memory is wrong, Piers,

but it was some short distance), he raced his vehicle of speeds close to 90 mph? That's driving absolutely blind! Furthermore, the terrain is specified as rough, open ground. Any wheel- or tread-based vehicle simply couldn't attain such speeds without wrecking itself. Etc. But, worst of all, all those incredibly stupid acts of Veg's were simply the author's way of setting up the real situation: the cross-country trek with the mantas. This is called an idiot plot: it wouldn't happen unless the protagonist(s) is (are) an idiot.

Sorry, Piers. You can do better--you have done better--but until you yourself recognize this flaw, this weakness in your writing, you are not going to be "an important writer" in my book. Right now I consider you an uneven writer, capable of some very good moments indeed, but also capable of justifying your bad moments as "necessary" to further a plot. Fortunately, "Orn" (or Paleo, in book form) has some very good moments in it, and relative few bad moments--as we've already discussed.

Well, hell, who cares who I consider "important"?

As a postscript, though, that wasn't the letter Buck showed me, Piers. The letter he showed me was one in which you generally agreed with some comment I'd made about the level of creative writing classes in colleges. (Unless they were both in the same letter; I only remember that part.)

Onward: Publishers, generally speaking, "pay better money" for works they think will earn more. This makes sense, since what they "pay" is really an advance against anticipated earned royalties. If your previous book sold well, you can get a higher advance, next time out, on the strength of that. And although better works don't always sell better (there are other factors, of course), there is a general correlation in that direction.

A minimum advance is quite acceptable; this is not the same as "minimum wages," which, if I remember the original context, smacked of an hourly payment for the writer's time. Hollywood does this, but Hollywood expects its scripts by the yard. It might take three weeks to write a really good book (that's how long it took me to do Marauder Satellite, Piers), on which I've so far earned \$3,500. Or I might take six months or longer to do a poorer book (if it wasn't going well). If I was paid by the hour, that would be ridiculous. And since different authors have different working habits, and take varying times to write their works, there would be no fairness in such a system. Fast writers would be penalized and slow ones rewarded. Worse yet, the painful-to-read hacks would stand to make as much as much more gifted writers. I resent and resist any effort to turn the art and craft of writing into an assembly-line paid on the hourly basis, punch-in time-clocks and all.

The stories in Ultimate's quarterly titles are selected to fit a certain amount of space, unread. Besides which, Williams wrote better twenty and thirty years ago than he does now. I "closed my mind" to Williams, Piers, after reading more stuff of his than I cared to. I don't think he is capable of writing publishable fiction any more. However, it's all academic; Williams is boycotting my magazines and has been for years.

Your statement that "some of those SFWA offices are indeed paid, much in the fashion politicians are paid. By private interests. And appointments to editorial positions." strikes me as requiring substantiation or retraction. It may indeed be true that this rumor is "being mooted;" some truly strange notions evolve in the more paranoiac minds of some SFWA members. As near as I can tell, few SFWA members have visibly profited in any way from their offices, none have been "paid by private interests," and most have lost actual money or writing time because of their SFWA work. Several early officers actually subsidized the organization from their own pockets for several years running, in fact, because it has traditionally run in the red.

You can get tired of it, if you wish, but I reiterate this simple fact: I put in between twelve and twenty hours on each of the six BULLETINS I laid out and pasted up, and I ran off several FORUMS (for both Terry and Alex). My out-of-pocket expenses on the FORUMS were applied against my dues. My time went totally unpaid. Mike Hinge tells me that the work I did brings \$8.00 to \$12.00 an hour now, so I underestimated the monetary value of the time I donated. It would run over \$1,000.00! I received absolutely no payola--not even very prominent credit. (It was buried in the colophon, and I'll bet you most SFWA members never knew I had anything to do with the BULLETIN.) Nobody offered me any jobs, any money as a result of my work on the BULLETIN. If you think I got my job with AMAZING and FANTASTIC because of it, you're absolutely all wet. (I think the offer came before I'd done my first BULLETIN, anyway. If not, then soon after. There was no connection.)

So much for Piers' comments to me.

Williams, in his current letter, makes a virtue of his own ignorance. At least he's consistent. In his second letter he seems to think there is a great deal of hidden significance in the movements of editors from one position to another. He confuses resignations with firings, and generally imparts a murky view. It fits. I'll be damned if I'll explain to him exactly why each editor went from one position to another, but in each case there were reasons which had nothing to do with his suppositions. Of course.

It is interesting that Williams now claims he has documentation of the rights he sold, since he has never up to now offered copies of these for inspection by anyone, nor laid claim to them. Since Z-D also kept records, and passed these along to Sol Cohen, I suspect the question is less clear-cut than Williams now claims. But I could care less.

Williams says he won't ever try to sell nasty Terry Carr any more stories. That's making a virtue of necessity if ever I heard it; it's been years since he's had a book published by Ace, and the notion of a Robert Moore Williams Ace Special must be croggling to anyone who's read a Williams book.

Oh well. A lot of sensible people have said a lot of sensible things in reply to Williams' and Hazlett's paranoiac ravings. It doesn't seem to slow them down much.



I'm reminded of the time I "debated" Jimmy Taurasi on the subject of holding the 1964 Worldcon in New York in conjunction with the proposed World's Fair. Jimmy wanted a "faircon;" we branded it the "unfaircon". To each of my points about the undesirability of such a con--like the fact that it would be out of rotation (the worldcon would be in the east the year before, making two years in a row), that holding it on the Fair grounds would subject congoers to an admission charge each day, or that hotels would be more crowded than usual anyway --Jimmy would nod his fat little head and reply, in badly bent English, "Those are good constructive suggestions, Young Man, and they will help us to improve the Faircon."

In other words, you could show him insurmountable objections, and he'd thank

you, wave them aside, and go on as if they didn't exist. Williams does much the same. It makes no difference to him: that his statistics were totally false, that his suppositions about the character, motivations, or even actual actions of various people in the SFWA and/or NYC prodom are without foundation. He blithely proceeds on the same set of assumptions, convinced that any holes in his thinking are too minor to worry about. His mind is made up, and facts won't change it.

Fine for him, but not so fine for people who don't know who to believe, and who see in his consistency something admirable--more or less on the where-there's-smoke-there's-fire principle; you know, if he is so committed to those ideas, there must be some truth to them! Sure, there is...--and are suckered in. As I've said before, it's easy to let one's own incipient out-side-looking-in paranoia leak out. A lot of us want to believe ill of Those Guys--whoever they might be at the moment. Williams' sickness is capable of breeding, and that bothers me. (No doubt it will cheer him; lunatics love lunacy.)

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((And this is Ted's letter received on the 13th of April...))

Dean Koontz's column seems diffuse and of relatively little interest this time. One item in it bothers me. That is his description of writing a sex book in two days. Assuming something over 40,000 words in one of the things, this means he has developed the capacity to string out a lot of empty words and cliché phrases without boring himself. Perhaps this is admirable. Certainly people like Silverberg (whom he admires) used to do it. But I can't help thinking (perhaps from my own biases) that the capacity for writing prose which bores oneself is inversely related to one's ability to write engrossing, non-boring prose. Which is to say, I suspect that one of the most effective brakes on a writer is his own boredom with his sub-standard prose.

After all, a writer must learn to be a self-editor. There is no other way to learn to improve one's writing. No one else can do the job for you: you have to be able to evaluate your writing sufficiently to know which way is up when you're striving for Up. You have to be aware of your weaknesses and try to deal with them. As you write, the phrases which slip off your typing fingers are likely to be the most immediately accessible--those phrases which come most easily. Too often these are the cliché phrases, and they take the place of original thought or any real application to the problem of accurately limning the situation about which one is writing. One has to develop the mental machinery to recognize the thoughtless phrases, and to reject them and supplant them with more meaningful, more specifically valid phrases. And this can't be totally conscious--one can't spend hours agonizing over each word in a paragraph. You have to learn how to think while you write.

To each his own methods, of course. I find that when I am sluffing off in my writing that my intuition warns me with an increasing sense of unease, the squirming sort of boredom one suffers when one wants to be somewhere else doing something else. When I reread what I've written, I usually find I've taken a wrong turning, or dealt with a scene too shallowly. I find I've been boring myself as a reader. I try damned hard never to bore myself, because when I do it slows down my writing and may even block it with a deadfall. And I find that if I take a contemptuous approach to a story--"this is just for a quick buck"--I am bored by it and can't write it.

This makes me less money than Dean Koontz makes, but it also makes my fiction better.

The reason I am "bothered" by this in relation to Dean is that originally he showed considerable promise as a writer. His recent writings do not. They are filled with "easy writing" that takes the story from Point A to Point B, but adds no scenery along the way. He is skimping on plausibility, characterization, motivation,

plotting, and most everything else that distinguishes a good story from hackwork.

Maybe he doesn't care. But I should think he would. I would. The world is full of hacks. It doesn't need more. But the world has only one Dean Koontz, and if he gives it up to be a hack, it will have no Dean Koontz. Pull in your belt a little, Dean, and Write again.

Leo Kelley's column brings up an old point. It has some relevance, but I suspect his approach is naive.

But first I must say I was sorry to hear COVEN 13 folded. I wasn't surprised, but I was sorry. I understand the editor/publisher set out to create a magazine for the audience which had devoured Rosemary's Baby. This struck me from the beginning as a mistake. The only way you might make such an idea work is with the expenditure of a lot of money in promotion--or even by buying a new novel of that nature by Ira Levin. To this basic mistake others were added: the editor's almost paranoiac distrust of the professional writer, which led him to fill his magazines with names no one had ever seen before--and which therefore gave new readers no hint about the quality or nature of the fiction--and also led to that remarkable editorial in which he lectured his non-pro readers to send in more mss. because otherwise he'd have to buy from professional authors. The title wasn't too hot, but the logo almost killed it right there. The tall-hatted silhouette figures looked like KKKers, and "Coven" is too close to "Klaven" or one of those other Klan-associated words. My local newsstand man refused to display the first issue until I assured him it wasn't a hate-propaganda magazine.

In a later editorial Landis also registered shock and dismay with the realities of newsstand distribution. I don't mean the fact of lousy distribution--which he suffered, of course--but such things as the mechanics of advances, returns, and sales reports. One might have thought he would investigate the situation before plunging into publishing. Apparently he didn't. And that led in turn to the hopeless air of amateurism which as much as anything probably killed the magazine by leading to all the other mistakes which were made.

A shame, because the field needs building up. We need more and different magazines. If COVEN 13 had lasted it would have provided an outlet unique in the field.

I'm told Landis is very upset with me for stating in conversation that his first issue sold only 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ %. I obtained that figure from the magazine's distributor. Landis claims a higher figure--20% or more, as I remember. But 20% doesn't sell a magazine either. Landis claims now that "reader acceptance has been excellent," but this is whistling in the dark, if this "excellent" response comes from too few of the magazine's purchasers or total prospective audience. Most of the magazines in this field have a loyal following. So what?

Getting back to Kelley, he suggests by-passing the newsstands and distributors and pushing for subscriptions. This is a pleasant notion, but doesn't take into account the facts.

Back in 1936, Hugo Gernsback made a last-ditch appeal to the readers of WONDER STORIES. He's go subscription-only if they'd support him in sufficient number. They didn't. In 1951, Ray Palmer offered "life-time" subs to OTHER WORLDS for \$5.00. I subscribed. It took several increasingly irate letters to start the copies coming in the mail, and the sub "expired" when the magazine became FLYING SAUCERS. In the meantime, after putzing around with UNIVERSE and SCIENCE STORIES, Palmer begged for subs to OTHER WORLDS and for free donations of mss. It didn't work.

There are reasons why it didn't work. One is that to handle more than a few hundred subscriptions costs money. Lots of money. Rather than hire the extra per-

sonnel themselves, many small magazines subscribe in turn to a service which handles the subs. The service charges enough to make a profit, of course, and the chances for error go up.

To attract volume subs, you have to offer substantial discounts. All too often these end up costing the publisher money. Another method, used by ANALOG and F&SF, is to join a subscription plan, like the Curtis Subscription Plan. This accounts for the high volume of subs to these two magazines. But the earnings, if any, on such subscriptions are marginal. A magazine could not survive on such subs alone.

Not, at any rate, if it is relying upon the sale of copies for its operating revenues and profits. Not if it doesn't charge a much higher sum for its subscriptions.

Kelley mentions BUSINESS WEEK. If I am not mistaken, this magazine sells advertising or charges a substantial subscription rate--or both. Sf magazines aren't in a position to do this.

I have a pet theory. That is that distributors must be bribed by higher profits. If sales can't be pushed up, the cover price can be. But not from 50¢ to 60¢ or from 60¢ to 75¢. From 60¢ to \$1.00. And the increased income must be spent in such a way that the magazine is worth a dollar.

Signet books is publishing a 75,000-word novel of mine for 95¢. AMAZING STORIES published it in two installments for a total of \$1.20 and threw in around 90,000 words more, in other material. Clearly the magazines are underpriced. In fact, they never raise their prices until expenses force the issue, and then they gain only a short space of breathing time before again their backs are against the wall of expenses. That is why they are so marginal as money-makers.

Kelley is most naive in assuming a fan mailing list could garner sufficient subs to support a magazine. Such a mailing list does exist--probably in several versions. One is maintained in a computer program by Brian Burley. Another is being used by Tom R. amy and the DALLASCON BULLETIN. These lists run in the thousands. But, unfortunately, the low thousands...five to ten thousand tops (and probably including duplications). But that is peanuts for magazine sales. That's about what COVEN 13 sold, in fact. And since you can't expect anything like a 100% rate of return on your mailing (which costs money), you might come up with one or two thousand subs...if you're lucky.

Another alternative was the STELLAR plan: bookstore distribution, with numbered, undated issues. Literary reviews do this successfully. An sf magazine might be able to at \$1.00 to \$1.50 a copy, and with sales in the low thousands. I thought so at the time. I just ran out of money too soon. (Don't try to start a magazine with only a couple of thousand dollars...)

Letters: "Paul Hazlett", I see, is still At It. Who is it he feels Terry Carr "promoted in the SFWA Forum"? Joanna Russ? As I recall, Terry has published speeches by various sf writers, including Russ, Delany and McCaffrey. Of them, he has published books by Delany and Russ. Does "Hazlett" think this is why the speeches were published? Does he really think they were published "to the exclusion of members' letters"? "Hazlett" claims a lofty purpose in making this deliberately vague charge: "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." It strikes me that those who "will always think so" can be summed up as "Paul Hazlett" and (maybe) Robert Moore Williams, the two outstanding paranoids of the moment. Needless to say, "Hazlett" once again reveals his ignorance.

Piers Anthony is such a devoted lobbyist to his own causes that I shouldn't wonder if he isn't incurring a backlash from SFWA members in the form of a refusal to nominate his books (or most recent book, to be technically accurate). I rather suspect John Brunner's rash and hysterical open letter to a good proportion of the SFWA membership a year or so back cost him the Nebula for Stand on Zanzibar. Piers should remember that, among other things, writers are a jealous lot, and it is not necessarily the best of tactics to openly promote oneself. I haven't yet read Macro-scope, by the bye, so I have nothing to say on that score. I will recommend his Orn/Paleo (AMAZING, July & September; Avon) as one of the best novels of his I've read, however.

As to why Camp Concentration isn't on the list, I don't mind telling you (and the world) about that one. To start at the end and work backwards (and as Piers would know if he read his BULLETINS closely), Disch withdrew the novel from consideration. It was nominated (or "recommended," as they say now).

The story begins with Doubleday, however. When the hardcover book was published, several paperback publishers made substantial offers for paperback rights. (I'll let them identify themselves if they wish.) One offer was reputed to be \$6,000.00; another I know for a fact was \$3,000.00 and subject to negotiation upward. Doubleday rejected these, and other offers. It accepted an offer from Avon of \$3,000.00, but when Avon heard the competition had withdrawn in disgust, Avon withdrew its offer, and offered instead only \$2,000.00. And, incredibly, Doubleday accepted this new offer!

Bear in mind that Doubleday keeps a fat 50% of this money, after paying out an advance originally of only \$1,000.00 to \$1,500.00 or so, and after letting its first printing die without reprints or the opportunity for additional hardcover royalties. So Disch received only \$1,000.00 on the paperback sale, after the opportunity to make three times that had been refused by Doubleday!

Angered (and rightfully so), Disch refused to allow the book to compete for awards, and has damned both Doubleday and Avon for their treatment of him, and has reputedly "quit" science fiction.

The culprits in this case are Doubleday's permissions dept. (not the editors) and George Ernsberger at Avon. George has bought Piers Anthony's most recent novels. How does that sit with you, Piers?

As to editorial blackballing, as I recall the discussion was within the context of SFWA Forum discussion of editorial sins, or SFWA action against erring editors. The editor Piers speaks of (if I read him correctly--the one you wrote me about, Piers?) was "blackballing" (not an entirely accurate word) Piers for the nature of his direct dealings with that person. Am I mistaken?

To understand the context of Tucker's remarks to me, Piers, you would have to attend a Midwestcon. In fact, you should, anyway. People sit around the pool in the afternoon and evening and they talk about anything and everything. Your name came up. Tucker expressed his opinion. Other names have come up and other opinions have been expressed. I have no doubt some pungent things have been said about me in my absence. Big deal. Stop posturing about it. Tucker simply doesn't care enough to do much more than comment on a situation when it's raised. He doesn't have the slightest desire for a prolonged argument with you, win or lose.

I'm a little astonished at your assessment of my friendship with Harlan. "I have little respect for the person...who claims to be a friend, then slips in the knife. ...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 am not aware of having done this, but then I am much better aware of the context of my friendship with Harlan than you are.

Harlan and I went through some rough spots in our lives together. We had more than one highly emotionalized scene with each other. And we came out the other side with a continuing respect for each other. I think the reasons for which Harlan respects me are to be found in the fact that I don't toady him. I used to hero-worship him--back when I was a teenager, fifteen years ago. Since then I have developed my own opinions and attitudes and they don't necessarily agree with Harlan's. He knows this. He also knows I'll give him my honest opinion, with no bull-shit. I'd like to think he values that in me. All I know is that Harlan has repeatedly asked me to review his books and stories, even though my reviews of his works have been, up to now, critical. Harlan has, I think, a hunger to earn his respect, his kudos. He knows that when I praise something of his it is because in my mind it deserves praise--not because I'm "Harlan's friend." When I see Harlan unjustly attacked (and most of the attacks on him are unjust) I rise quickly to his defense. When I can do Harlan a favor, I do it--and have, on more than one occasion. (My name was included in that list of people Harlan was grateful to, in Dangerous Visions, for a reason. Harlan also dedicated a book to me a few years back, for a reason. And I happen to feel the purpose and intent of that dedication quite strongly, as Harlan also knows.)

But you, Piers, know none of this. I slipped Harlan the knife? He's "bleeding from the bowels"? Nope. I don't think so. Ask Harlan.

Oddly enough, you term my behavior hypocritical. I think it's rather the opposite. I call 'em as I see 'em. That's rare in this day and age. Is it hypocritical to be even-handed with one's friends? I think not.

And you are again mistaken in claiming of Silverberg, "...he once advised writers what SFWA's recommendations were--on the very ballot..." You should be aware (I'm not sure when you joined SFWA) that from the beginning, when matters of policy and direction in the SFWA were put to a vote, the arguments for and against were presented alongside and usually on the ballot. (probably to conserve space and save money). The president (Demon Knight originally) usually presented the opposing opinion when he deemed the point worth opposing. There was usually considerable discussion in advance, via published correspondence. Silverberg, as succeeding president, simply followed this established precedent. It revealed no arrogance, conscious or unconscious, on his part.

It saddens me to see you go out on the deep end like this and industriously sink yourself, Piers. You don't know Silverberg, and you totally misread his character. If you wish to do this, in the face of advice of people like myself (in personal correspondence), why not? But surely you cannot profess surprise when you alienate these people with your unfounded attacks and misjudged character readings. People are human. You were apparently profoundly upset when I denied you entrance to my apartment after I'd retired for the night. That's a remarkably petty offense on my part. Well, then: cannot you see that you are tendering stronger offense to Silverberg? It strikes me as gratuitous on your part.

I see where Harry Harrison is again calling me a liar, denying the "truth" of what I said (quite passingly) about him, and threatening a law suit. My reaction, Harry, is "Sue and be damned." A counter suit on my part (for which I have excellent grounds) would be a pleasure.

Since Williams immediately thereafter asks about an impeachment of Harrison, I'll state the facts.

What I said was, "Harrison narrowly escaped a call for impeachment when he was Vice-President of the SFWA, for the abuse of his office."

"Impeachment" is a call for the ouster of an officer: not the act of ousting the officer. The call for impeachment could have been made by myself or Dan Galouye--who chose instead to quit the SFWA in protest. There were at least two cases of the abuse of his office by Harrison that I knew of--and possibly others. If Galouye wants his case discussed, he can do it. Others, like Terry Carr, are well aware of the facts, and can attest to the fact that the case existed. In my case, I have documentary proof that Harrison libelled me professionally in an attempt to keep me out of the editorial chair of AMAZING and FANTASTIC. He not only libelled me, he threatened an SFWA boycott if I was made editor. I have photocopies of the letters in the case, and if Harrison wants to make a legal issue of it, I shall enjoy very much making use of them. I was tempted at the time, and dissuaded myself solely because Harrison's attempt to deny me the job was ineffective. I might add that I have also documented Harrison's slander of me to my agent, whom he threatened if I was not dropped (I was not dropped), and which occurred before witnesses. I also have witnesses to other slanders made by Harrison against me, each of which is factually incorrect and falsely impugns my professional and private reputation. It has been only with the greatest forbearance that I have restrained myself from initiating suit. Only my distaste for dragging affairs of this sort into a court of law has held me back. If Harrison initiates any legal action, it will be my pleasure to bring full suit against him.

I might add that I'll stack my reputation against Harry's any day of the week.

As for Williams, after waving the flag at us, he again lies with statistics for our enjoyment. Here's what he has done:

First he has published the (adjusted) print-order and newsstand sales (averaged out for a single issue) of three monthly sf magazines, ANALOG, GALAXY and F&SF. He then followed with the royalty statements (which he later questioned the honesty of) for four of his Ace books. While I haven't verified the date of publication of The Day they H-Bombed Los Angeles, the other were published (in Williams' order) in 1965 (sold 64,082), 1960 (sold 82,583) and 1958 (sold 90,677).

It is immediately obvious that Williams is asking us to compare apples and oranges--to his apparent advantage. However, I wonder if he would care to publish the year-by-year (or half-yearly, if he has them) figures for the sales of his books? Unfortunately, there is no way he can supply the figures we'd actually need to make an accurate comparison: the sales of his books in their first month alone.

The magazines, you see, were allowed only a single month (if that) to account for their total sales. Williams, on the other hand, has had from five to twelve years. In that time people like Heinlein and Asimov have sold many times over that number of copies of their books. Significantly, while even such insignificant authors as I have seen their books enter second printings and new editions, none of Williams' many Ace



novels has been reissued--despite Ace's vigorous reissue program. Also, his royalty statement compares with that of my Ace double, and those of other Ace books I've seen: Williams' Ace books have sold about the same number of copies as have most Ace books of the same period. Does this mean somebody likes Williams? Or that somebody likes Ace books?

In other words, those paragraphs of statistics Williams trots out to boost himself add up to nothing at all. The comparison with magazine sales is invalid (as he must know), and his actual book sales are average for the publisher concerned.

Mike Gilbert seems to be laboring under the assumption that Don Wollheim does the covers for Ace books himself. That's silly. Ace has an art department, and the covers Gilbert is objecting to were done by a man who also did covers for Berkeley and others. Terry Carr has gone into this several times. Anyway, those covers came out several years back: why wait until now to grouse about them?

And finally Robert Margroff: I'm not sure I can, with a few hundred words, justify my statement so that he might find it acceptable, and I'm not up to the several thousand words the subject demands. The situation is very complex, with dozens of variables, and is better felt than described, I'm afraid. But I'm going to make a series of bald statements, and let it go at that. If he still disagrees, that will be unfortunate, but a necessity.

The most common misunderstanding about drugs is to lump them together as "drugs." They are widely varying in type and effect. Some are undeniably dangerous. Others are probably beneficial. When they are lumped together as a "drug problem" the problem is usually in the mind of the commentator, not in the situation commented upon.

The largest single "drug problem" is a credibility gap between straight (adult) society and hip (younger) society. The straights said pot was evil and caused rape and murder and ghod knows what else. (Ainslinger is still repeating this garbage in the recent PLAYBOY Panel on drugs.) The kids tried it and found out this was a lie. They found out (and thousands of years' use by other societies bears this out) that marijuana is harmless and has many positive benefits, some of them medical. But mostly it is fun. Straights next characterized the (then legal) psychedelics as "dangerous," and LSD as a "killer drug." Scare stories abounded. All have been debunked, if you look for it. Even the chromosome-damage story has been debunked. But LSD is still being classed with heroin as a "dangerous drug." Kids tried peyote, mescaline, psilocybin and acid and found out these too were lies.

At this point the straights, who use speed themselves and have for years, had no one to blame but themselves if the kids decided that speed and heroin and cocaine were also being lied about. It was an inevitable (and tragically false) conclusion.

Compounding this was Nixon's (I hope) unwitting collusion with the Mafia. Attempting to throttle the pot trade (from which the Mafia benefits relatively little, due to its bulk and the number of amateurs involved in its traffic), Nixon opened the gates to the other drugs. The present heroin fad is due to the fact that heroin's selling price became compatible with that of pot--and the kids, many of them,



hadn't any experience in detecting the difference.

Also compounding the problem is the increasing adolescent and pre-adolescent rebellion against straight society, coupled with the "machismo" thing--the desire to be "daring" and pit yourself against a real risk of danger. Heroin fits very nicely. If the dangers are real (and many kids know they are), that only increases the risk, and therefore the rep for trying it. Peer pressure is also strong. And since nothing revolts a square parent more than knowing his kid is on shit (heroin), why, what a slap in his face!

But the heroin problem is real--and was forced on the kids by the straights' reaction to the psychedelics. Margroff is speaking of the psychedelics only.

I know a lot of people who have "tripped." I have myself. Two of them are top physicists. There are lots of others scattered through the intellectual community, and most have not followed the Leary route and dropped out.

There are no medically established risks involved in the psychedelic drugs. Most of the stories of kids walking out windows and into traffic aren't true, or leave out significant facts.

There are psychological dangers in the drugs. These dangers lie mostly in the fact that the less mature you are, the more vulnerable you are. The experience is profound and can be deeply disturbing if it lies wholly outside your conceptual experience and you have nothing with which to relate it. That's why it helps to have a good guide. But the dangers are not external: they aren't something that enters your mind with the drug. They are part of your mind: your fears and unfaced problems coming up to the surface. Bad trips come from inside. That's why I'm disturbed to see young kids get into such scenes. But in most cases the kids were pushed into this scene.

How? By repressive legislation which made acid a "forbidden fruit." By making it part of the "revolution." By opposing it in such a way that it became a mark of status to try it and use it. The straights took exactly the worst course. Before they pushed it underground, acid was handled far more responsibly. It was not then a real "problem."

Of course, this legislative repression has also made criminals out of kids who simply want to find out the truth for themselves. This is criminal.

Margroff brings up the bit about trips recurring.

This is not a common experience. But the truth of the matter is that once you have experienced an altered reality you can sometimes restimulate it without drugs. This rarely "just happens." It is usually triggered by something which stimulates the mind in that direction: an association, for instance. Anyone who has had good trips won't object to this at all. Those who've bad-tripped may indeed dislike it. But they have a problem, one which caused their bad trip and will find other ways to resurface until it is dealt with. Don't blame it on the drug. The unconscious mind is constantly searching for ways to communicate to the conscious--and the acid simply revealed a new path for future use. Since this communication is important and desirable, I can't regard it as a "problem."

In the example of the caver who started tripping, I don't know enough to more than guess, but I'd guess being buried in the bowels of a cave triggered fears (of claustrophobia?) and these fears were "trippy."

Finally, Margroff states that the psychedelics are "partially unknown and only partially under study." True. And this is in large part due to repressive measures which have denied legitimate medical and psychological researchers access to these drugs. But acid has been around since 1938. That's thirty-two years.

More is known about it than you think, Bob. But most of this information has been suppressed, just as marijuana research has been repressed, because it contradicts the popular myth of these drugs' danger.

Why are the straights repressing these drugs? That's another question, and one I don't propose to go into here. Basically, I think, they are scared.

Mike Glicksohn

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Canada

My admiration for Piers Anthony, both as a professional and as a fan writer, is not great, but I must admit that he is above all honest. I often find him arrogant, pig-headed and insufferable but at least he has the common decency to make an ass of himself under his own name. Doubtless many people find his forced

iconoclasm amusing; I personally don't but I admire and even applaud the forthrightness with which he does his own belabored thing. If Hazlett had this basic honesty I'd be able to admire at least that when he adopted a highly controversial stand on issue on which he is later proven to be remarkably uninformed. As it is, his articles bring nothing but discredit to your fanzine (and to you as an editor) and I hope the fleeting notoriety is considered worth it.

The thing that struck me about Macroscopic was its uncanny resemblance to a Doc Smith novel. I can't help but wonder if it was not written as a modern "sky-lark" book. The two couples wandering through space, the super science of the ancients available as a panacea to all troubles, the ever-present spectre of the "villain" (if Schon had been named Schwartz I'd be certain) and, of course, the great galactic scope of the novel even down to the galactic scope of the loose ends such as disappearing planets that have no physical or psychological effects on the solar system they disappear from. The only difference is that Anthony preaches a lot about the problems of society and Doc rarely did that.

And since I seem to be on the subject of Piers Anthony, may as well make one comment on his letter (for a man who won't write for fanzines because he doesn't want to waste time which could be spent earning money, Anthony seems remarkably eager to lose money exchanging insults and blowing his own horn in these huge multi-page letters of his). If Harry Warner is a hypocrite--something I would disagree with; tact is not hypocrisy--then Piers Anthony is a cynic. What he says about Harry may well be true, Harry does go out of his way to praise the efforts of most neo-faneds, but to ascribe this behavior to fear of retaliation is downright insulting. Perhaps Piers draws his egoboo by being the loud-mouthed, rude tosser of insults but other people have more refined motives and for Piers to deliberately set out to get a rise from Harry merely because of Harry's reputation in fandom is rather childish.

Harry Warner, Jr.

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21740

You're probably suffering more from big issueitis than from any other fannish malady. It sounds as if it isn't a mortal form of gafia that has had you depressed and exhausted. But the rapid turnover in fandom is undoubtedly part of your problem. After all these years, I still can't get used to the rapidity with which

the cast of characters changes, the manner in which six months' fanac can cause a person to rank as an oldtimer, the disappearance of a fanzine before I've had time to realize that the new issue is late.

The New Wave-Second Foundation fuss is pursuing just the course that I foresaw with horrified foresight. From arguments about schools of writing, instead of arguments about individual writers and their fiction, we have now reached the point at which John J. Pierce is arguing about Justin St. John's opinions and Justin will

undoubtedly reply with a discussion of John's opinions of Justin's opinions. This is exactly the sort of thing that has made most of the mundane literary criticism unreadable: the literature is forgotten in the reviews of reviews. I think it's much simpler to participate in an apa where people write mailing comments on mailing comments. It saves all the time otherwise required to read the fiction and non-fiction that inspires the literary critics' battles.

I'm not certain what provoked Piers Anthony to take out after me like this. I've never read a page of his fiction, so I fail to see how I can be hypocritical for compliments on it which I have never written. Piers has seen so few fanzines and has such slight experience in general fandom that he can hardly be blamed for ignorance of the hassles I've been in over the years. I've spoken bluntly and angered people time and again when I felt circumstances justified it. FAPA has never been the same since the uproar I created and kept alive year after year involving the expulsion of a member, Edgar Allan Martin, on a rigged-up charge that he'd used a reprint to gain activity credit. Burroughs fandom has never forgiven me for public complaints about the bloc voting that gave Erbdom a Hugo. I've made convention committees angry by pounding away at the wrongness of the secrecy most worldcons have kept on the voting totals for Hugo nominations and awards. Just in the past six months, I've been the center of a fuss in Australia's apa and in the middle of the NFFF election muddle. But I have never gone out looking for fights, in my personal life or in fandom. Piers calls violence the heart of life, but I always thought of it as closer to death, physical or spiritual, and I hope that Piers doesn't find himself lugging around an albatross before he makes the same discovery that the Ancient Mariner came across too late. Fandom is not controlled by an editor who requires a violent crisis every eight hundred words, like the editors who control the pulp magazines for which Piers writes, and violence per se is not even attractive in fiction: it's the heart and soul of every B-grade movie, fourth-rate space opera, yellow tabloid newspaper, and True Confession-type "fact" magazine. Violence in real life is broken families and millions of hopeless Asiatics dying because they're caught between two militaristic world powers and it's Dachau and endless litigation over a rich man's will and it's people writing to fanzine letter columns and calling other people names because that's a lesser intellectual exercise than thinking up logical rebuttals. Biologically, Piers and I are probably the same distance from the jungle; if I'm a hypocrite to behave as I'd actually attained this distance from the jungle, I hope I've practiced that attribute long enough to benefit from the exercise, as Max Beerbohm's Happy Hypocrite did. Or to use a more homely example of why I don't feel impelled to be as nasty in fandom as Piers wants me to be: in Hagerstown it's necessary to keep the furnace running from mid-September until the end of April to provide the warmth needed for physical survival, but this need doesn't cause me to want fanzine letter columns to be full of hot air.

Mike Gilbert
5711 West Henrietta Rd.
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14586

As I may
have
sounded
hard a-
gainst

Ace Books and Don Wollheim, it had nothing to do with personalities. Don is a fine man, but the fact that the paperbacks are stuck with many strange fads and marketing ideas. And Ace Books was a



G-G-Gosh!

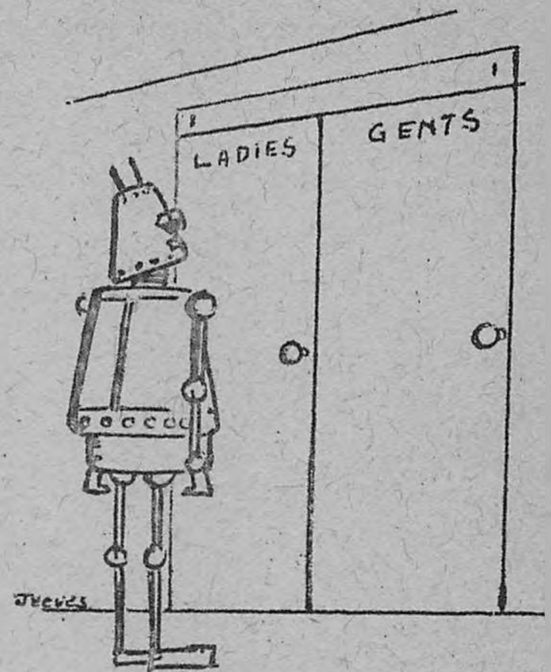
Do you mean
to say there
really is

a
Harken Ellison?!

good example because of a low quality in some of their recent issues have been bad (not that other publishers are innocent) but Ace is usually a standard for high quality and if they committ a ugly it shows up much more.

But such is our times. It may be the business of youth to be weird!

P.S. When I said "high on drugs" I should have realized that I wasn't going to be taken as I meant it. What I meant to say is the phrase is "in-group" lingo (art talk) and "drugs" refers to "head-art" (Peter Max, all the psychedelic art, all the art nouveau). So my sentence means that Ace prefers a certain type and style of art work in vogue with modern marketing principles and nothing more. I expect that I shall (and should) get criticism for not making myself clear in the beginning--



Justin St. John
2760 Crescent Dr.
Yorktown, N.Y.
10598

Re J.J. Pierce's article:
Flattery will get you nowhere.

John J. Pierce
275 McMane Ave.
Berkeley Heights, N.J.
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I ran into the incredible Justin St. John at the Lunacon. He said he had had his name legally changed from Dennis Raimondo six months ago. Also, he has brought out a second issue of his fanzine, only now it's called Apollo. I'm not sure why--he said he'd send me a copy, but none has arrived as of today (April 24). I still cannot make sense out of any of his arguments, but we have declared a truce, so...pace.

First Speaker Lester del Rey is among those who have quit the SFWA. His main gripe is that members hardly read anything before voting on Nebula awards--several people told him they voted for stories from Orbit or Dangerous Visions because "everybody was talking about them." I don't think SFWA is so much "pushing" the New Wave--rather, the New Wavicles within the SFWA are more vocal than the Old Wavicles, and the squeaky wheel gets the grease--proponents of the New Wave get their way because they're more aggressive. History is made by willful minorities; the majority is usually inert.

About Hugos. Remember last year you put me down for saying the Ellison clique would vote for anything by Ellison? You said, "The Beast, etc." wasn't really his best work and that's why it came in low in the GALAXY poll. Well, you know what happened in St. Louis...

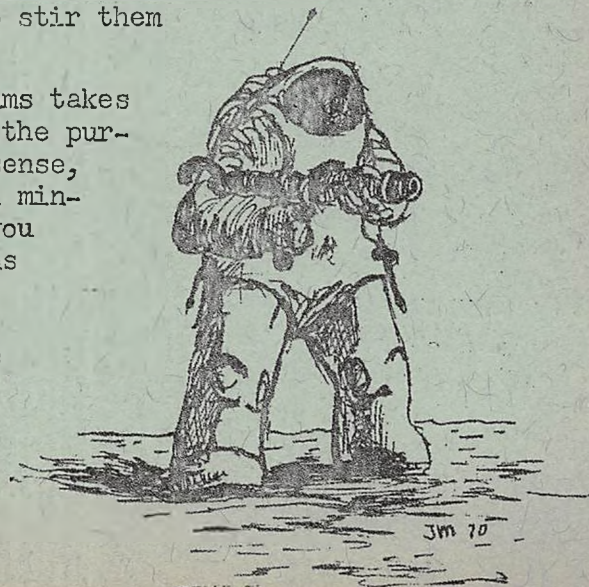
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First, Piers: I hadn't noted James Blish's request for information about my statement on Finnegans Wake apostrophe. I got out old BABs and found it, expecting his remarks to be nefarious and vicious, knowing that would be rather out of place for Blish; but judging by your comments, I could expect little else. Piers,

he didn't "challenge" me on that data, merely requested my source, which I am writing him about today. I think you are getting paranoid and projecting the paranoia as well, seeing attacks where there aren't attacks.

Second, Piers: I am getting tired of all this bullshit (much of it true, of course) about the in and out groups of writers. I agree that there are cliques. There are cliques in anything. That's human nature. I am not in one, and the cliquish members would consider me "out." But Christ, Piers, let's not try to say that because of the cliques the "out" writers can't sell as easily. That's bullshit of the first order. Consider the fact that I have sold 9 science fiction novels in the last ten months, have also sold a story collection in that time. I'm doing my third non-fiction title and have six more optioned. Every story and novelet I've done in the last year has sold, and most of them at top word rates. I would be interested in knowing how much time you spend writing, Piers. I put in a minimum of eight hours a day at the keyboard, six days a week. I've taught myself to enjoy every minute of it. If you hang onto those dated cliches about the creative process being so draining that you can't do more than four or so hours a day or require a week or two rest between each piece, the problem could be that your volume is too small to support you--and that you don't write enough to learn the flaws of your style and techniques from characterization through plot. I am writing more than ever, and much of it better than ever. I think a novella coming up in VENTURE for August (titled "This Alien Earth" or "Beastchild") will prove to be one of the two or three best pieces in that class this year. I doubt it will get Nebula nominations, though it might. But, Christ (again), if I spend a week's worth of time bitching about the fact that the clods didn't see its value, I'll be doing nothing but wasting time. I can use that week to work up a short story or novelet even better and make it even harder for that to be ignored in future nominations. I like much of your work, Piers. I read most everything you do. But a writer's job is to write and hope for acceptance, work for acceptance through his craft--not through bitching and nit-picking. Besides, awards are of a transient nature. Time alone will decide whether anything you do lasts. And I, for one, am perfectly satisfied without immortality, since, in the present tense, I am reaching hundreds of thousands of people through my books, more than the average man can ever hope to reach. And making a better living at it than I could ever have hoped for, nearly five times as much as I made my last year of teaching, and things keep looking better every day. If you produce enough, build a big enough name, you will one day either be in the cliques or above the cliques, and that's how most everyone else got there in the first place. So let's have a bit of peace on this matter for a time. If someone does something fuggheaded, take them to task for it. But for the act, not for their "secret" doings in in-groups, which may be as much imagined as real. And if you can't manage this, the ignore them altogether. There are too many battles in this world to stir them up where they don't exist.

Third, Robert Moore Williams: Mr. Williams takes a lot of space to make a simple statement--that the purchasers of sf books who are fans in the active sense, in the sense of fandom, are in a pitifully small minority. Even using the Dallascon mailing list, you come up with 6,000 names, surely more active fans than actually exist. Compare that to sales of 65,000 to 90,000 copies, and you see where the bread is buttered. In entertaining those people who buy a book for joy, not in catering to the critics. This does not mean you can't write good books and should not be used as an excuse for that. But if you end up striving for ac-



ceptance by only a group of inbred critics, you're destroying yourself. Barry Malzberg was criticized, somewhere (I forget) for saying that the techniques currently raved about in sf were worked through and out of the "mainstream" years ago. Yet anyone who has kept up with the bulk of modern literature would know that this is true. For those who imagine they are setting precedents by adopting "Mainstream" concepts to science fiction, a rude shock awaits in the years ahead. I have often adapted these same "daring" techniques, but I'll be damned if I'm going to pretend they're something new.

Fourth, Mike Deckinger: Your definition is different than mine as concerns the word "professional" and I imagine you see that. If yours was the definition most used, I would be willing to agree to it as a good noun. But I'm afraid that mine is more common. By the way, I would say you are painfully wrong about the number of sf writers who are making a living as writers, and a good living. You list Silverberg, Anderson, Heinlein and say there may be half a dozen more. Well, you can add my name, if you think upwards of thirty thousand is good enough. I would venture to say you could include Harrison, Moorcock, Ellison, Reynolds, Laumer, Dick, Carter, Leiber, Brunner, Caidin. Well, you get the idea. There must be any number of others. And the number of sf-oriented writers who make at least as good a living as they could in most professions outside of the medical must number another fifteen or so. What you may not be aware of is that many people do not write only science fiction. Poul Anderson, I believe, has done a television documentary. Ellison writes television scripts. Lin Carter does scripts for animated television features...or at least has done one, since I've seen that. Hard to tell what these people are working on. I've done a book on the right-wing in American politics, to be published in June. Another book on life in the commune and other underground lifestyles, a book of my poetry and Bode's art to be published late this summer. Enough on that. No writer who is serious about his work, wants to do only one thing. I think the only field where most writers do nothing outside of their genre is in the mystery area. But then look at the lousy quality of most mysteries.

The Reverend Mr. Asimov, next: Thanks for the clarification on the robot stories and for making it clear I was right. I am disillusioned to read that you make mistakes, but I see, now, that I have always been aware of this. When I read your new series for Hall Syndicate, I will keep an eagle eye open for mistakes and report them in BAB if any should arise. Seriously, I am quite aware of the necessity to clarify the point about your oft-reported infallibility. And I should point out that, having met you but once, I found the stereotype image of Asimov to be not quite true to colors. You were a much more interesting and funny man than I would have thought, and much more human and approachable than I would have thought. Down with fandom's stereotypes.

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I have not written to you for some time because I was waiting to cool off after reading SL Goldstein's review of Flesh. I didn't want to sit down and write something intemperate, so I waited. And then I forgot. Until I recieved B/S. Mr. DD Sherman's comments about Goldstein reminded me that I had something to say.

I was flabbergasted that anybody born after 1935 could regard The Alley Man and Flesh as smut. I presume that Goldstein was born after that date; I've been told so, anyway. The sex in The Alley Man is minimal and restrained and absolutely integrated. The sex in Flesh is the basis of the story, along with a number of other elements, and so is not put in for stimulation of the readers. But this does not matter to Goldstein, apparently. He does not like sex in science fiction, and, I gather, in any type of fiction. It's all SMUT.

But he does not define what he means by smut, so I'm really at a loss in knowing how to come to grips with SIG. He'd have to define smut before we could engage in any meaningful communication between us or for the benefit of others. I get the impression that his definition of smut would label the Old Testament as filthy because it deals so much with whores, rapes, homosexuality, bestiality, etc. I also get the impression that he has a problem which was common in the older generation. The Judaeo-Christian attitude towards sex is still bollixing up some of the younger generation.

I wonder if his attitude extends to books in which the sex is implied. He must find E.E. Smith's Children of the Lens smutty, since it is obvious that the protagonists end up enjoying incest.

Piers' letters, as usual, are very interesting. His comments about the Nebula awards are, generally, valid. The awards sometimes go to deserving stories and sometimes don't. Some that should be nominated aren't, and some that shouldn't be are. But it's a hit and miss system, and I know of no way to improve it. If you could shoot a truth drug into every member of SFWA, you would get confessions from many that they read a small fraction of the year's output of s-f. Many would admit that they vote only for their friends' stories or for authors whom they may not know personally but whose stuff they like. Some, as Blish did without truth serum (in the SFWA Forum, I think, but I'm not sure), would admit that they would not read the works of some nominated for the Nebula nor vote for them because they know that the particular author is incapable of writing a good story, let alone a superior one. This is a frank admission, honest, and I congratulate Blish on his honesty. But with that policy he should refrain altogether from the voting.

I'll be honest. I am unable to read the entire output of s-f in a year. I read a small fraction of it. I nominate stories now and then because I like them. I regret that I am not nominating other stories which deserve it because I haven't read them. When the nominations are closed, I then read all the works on the list and vote. Even this is a strain on me, because there are other books (largely non-science fiction) which I would rather read. But the strain isn't beyond my limits, so I read them. And I think, Well, the book or story that should be winning probably isn't even on the nomination list. But it can't be helped. Bad as the system is, I would want the nominations picked by a committee chosen for their excellent taste and discrimination in literature. What about a committee consisting of Ted White, Doc Lowndes, Bob Shaw, James Blish, J.J. Pierce (who is a member of the SFWA on the basis of his recent sale of a story titled "The New Wave Mafia on Mars"), Harry Harrison, Brian Aldiss, Harlan Ellison, Norman Spinrad and Randall Garrett, chaired by Joanna Russ? One veto eliminates a story. How many would be nominated? Yes, you're right.



Buck Pierce rides again in your pages. I can't say I disagree with everything he says. But I deny that Spinrad is just an imitator or disciple of Harlan. Norman is his own man, and he has an integrity that is admirable and not too common. J.J., I wish you'd use all that fire and analyzing and vituperation against something worthwhile. You've had your say about the New Wave vs. Old Wave in many many places many times over. Drop it. Nobody's really interested any more. A dozen or more times somebody you've attacked has replied that there's room in s-f for many different types of stories, and these people have stated that, even if they largely write so-called New Wave stuff, they still enjoy the Old Wave.

Drop this tired old campaign and use your energy against something that needs attacking because it's threatening our survival. Come April 13 I'll be down picketing the California courts because they're considering a bill which is vital in the fight against pollution. And I've spent a lot of time writing my first REAP document, which now exists in rough handwritten form.

It's not that I don't think literary controversy is unimportant. It's just that there are things much more important, because, in every sense of the word, vital. And, anyway, you've been beating that one drum too long. Me; I like E.R. Burroughs and Williams Burroughs, Ballard and Bradbury, Blish and Barth, Dunsany and de Ford, and a number of others at both ends of the spectrum. I recognize fully the flaws of each, but I don't reject a writer because he's not perfect. If I did that, I wouldn't read anything. And I enjoy, and profit by, reading Niven and Ellison, because both, in their own cosmos, with their individual Weltanschauungs, have something to say which sets up a resonance in me.



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I've been very shook by various reviews of Left Hand of Darkness because everybody seems to me to be missing the point. Someone seemed upset because the author, forsooth, "missed the possibilities for humor and/or satire." Good God, it wasn't meant to be either a funny book or a satirical book, but one must, I suppose, cope with people who seriously went to school of English criticism, one of whose proponents, an Exchange Professor from Glasgow, told me, in seriousness, and I quote, that the only function of literature is to make satirical or ironic comments upon the society it reflects.

I was speechless then. I am speechless now. I could only say at that time that it was a free country and he was and is entitled to his opinion, but that to put it forth as factual decision to helpless students expected to accept this was dirty pool and if he wanted to give me an F in the course I would gladly accept it as the price of refusing to accept that view. (He didn't. I got one of the two A's he gave. But he repeated his view again and again.)

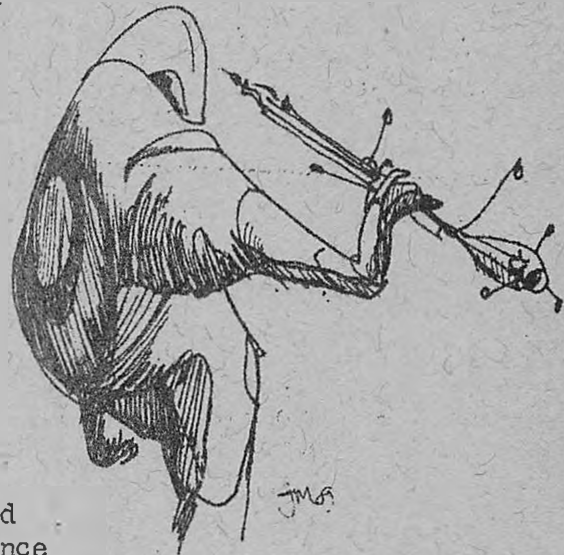
Anyhow, I read Left Hand of Darkness almost crying with joy because here was a book which created its own world around it, with real people, real surroundings, people who seemed to breathe in their own atmosphere, not just a transplanted Earth with a few BEMs added in for "color."

I am afraid the book will become a fad, as too many SF books have done, or a cult, or that something like Women's Lib will take it up. It's not a new idea. Sturgeon used it before in Venus Plus X, which was satire (does Pauline Palmer know it?) about a dual-sexed society. My own chieri are a bi-phased unisexed group of humanoids long before Left Hand..., and if I am accused, in World Wreckers, of copying LeGuin I can only direct my accuser to Star of Danger, where the chieri is very carefully never referred to by gender: I was saving them for another book and simply "planting" them for the future. (Star of Danger was written in 1964-65.) So that I should have been distressed when I saw an idea of my own used. I wasn't. It often happens. I don't know if I pick up ideas which are in the air and am sim-

ply slow to use them so that I am often beaten into print with a new concept, or if minds with similar backgrounds simply run parallel. Leigh Brackett and I for years had a sort of standing joke (she was a great pro then, I a hopeful neo, but she was gracious) that no sooner did I think up a great title for a new story than it appeared on the stands in one of her stories.

Anyway. One-sexed humans are not new. But I think that what Mrs. LeGuin was saying was that there are great dangers in arbitrary or category thinking which relegates any other human being to any category without examining all the relevant information. I once wrote a fairly long essay on the kind of person who can hardly be called homosexual or bisexual, because he simply falls in love with a person, and inquires only afterward what gender this is. I also remarked at some convention panel or other, in regard to someone's protest against unisex clothes ("Marion, you're taking all the fun out of it--I like to know, a mile off, whether it's a girl or a boy.") that I hoped a day might come, sometimes, when a man was willing to talk to someone as much as five minutes before orienting his thoughts around "Is this someone I can screw?"

One thing she did not exploit in her book (why should she? And I'm glad anyhow, since I do intend to cover this in World Wreckers) was the latent anxiety roused in any ordinary person by even the simulacrum of sexual interest in one's own gender. I think of that often when the crew-cut hairy-chested male says to me, with resentment, that you can't tell the girls from the boys. I think he's scared to death that he will find himself sexually aroused by some lovely long-haired thing in trousers and discover too late that it's male...imagine the dismay of a person from a two-sexed world falling deeply, emotionally and sexually in love with a person from a one-sexed world, and having to face the fact that he loves the male in that person as much as the female, and vice versa...? So it's an obvious theme for science fiction and more so now than when Sturgeon was making people nervous with it, back in the fifties.



I am still so baffled by some NEW WAVE writers that I simply cannot make any intelligent comment. Having met Joanna Russ at a convention and found her a charming and intelligent young woman, I started to read her And Chaos Died. Two hours later I put the book aside, feeling baffled, enraged and vaguely insulted. I am not stupid. I am not inarticulate. And my reaction was: "If anyone can find an atom of meaning in it I'll give him sixpence." I would love to know what Joanna Russ was talking about. I have revised my opinion of my own intelligence down thirtypoints.

I can write this way. I did--taking creative writing courses in college. When I started doing serious thinking about writing, I quit and started writing sensible straight narrative prose, being convinced that if I was going to tell a story and have anything to say to people who would read it as a story, I should simply write as I would speak: simply, earnestly, seriously. My motto became and has remained, that excellent maxim by Somerset Maugham: "lucidity, simplicity, euphony." I don't say I am a good writer, nor will I quote sales figures to prove what should be obvious, that somebody out there is reading my books and evidently liking them well enough to keep on buying the new ones as they come along.

But someone objected to my criticism of Sam Delany for his use of certain non-realistic techniques. Why should writers write as if a world they write about were real? I don't think I am rationalizing when I say, because in a world so full of distractions, a piece of fiction is a frail thing at best and the illusion of reality is what keeps it going. Maybe those writers younger than I have grown so used to broken-up TV shows that it doesn't bother them to be interrupted for a commercial for Sam Delany! --or to see the puppet master pulling the strings. But I would still prefer to have the perfect accolade and if this "dates" me, so be it: "I couldn't put it down. When it was all over I had to stop and remember it wasn't real." I want everything I read to LOOK real, at least, feel and smell real. If I cared about Sam Delany personally I'd try to meet him, or wait till he publishes his diary some day. (Who, except neurotic virgins or self-conscious Literary Figures, keeps a diary anyhow?)

Sam Moskowitz Harry Harrison's request to remove his name from your mailing list, like J.G. Ballard's in SPECULATION a few issues back, gives me the impression that the spokesmen for the "New Wave" group turn their hearing aids off the minute criticism is aimed in their direction. As a group they have been so merciless, cruel and calculating in tearing to shreds those representing views with which they were not in agreement or those who, figuratively speaking, caught them with "their hand in the till," that their own lack of backbone is magnified.

They completely lack the broader view or any ethic of fairness and, I fear, propriety. I am sure that Brian Aldiss regards me as against him. This is far removed from the truth. I own everything he has ever written that was or is generally available, including his non-fantasy and have read it. Some of it is of a distinctly superior brand and he can write a blue streak when he wants to. I judge him by his best, not his worst, but I think that his recent book, The Hand-Reared Boy, which is his answer to Philip Roth, is unfortunate not because masturbation is a major theme in the book, but because of the way the blurb is written and the photo of Aldiss, his wife and babies on the back of the jacket. The jacket blurb reads "The Hand-Reared Boy is the first of a quartet of novels which will span the four decades from the thirties through to the sixties, in the form of fictitious autobiography." I am certain that quick reading will give the reader the impression that "fictitious autobiography" is "fictionized" autobiography, and will relate the contents to Aldiss' life. The book tells the history of the "protagonist's" experiments in masturbation, including mutual masturbation between him and his brother, his sister masturbating the brothers with a penis in each hand, students at school taking turns masturbating twenty or thirty boys in their "barracks" bed room a night, a masturbation assist from the maid as well as other sexual experiences. After reading the blurb, the contents, and then coming to the end with a picture of Brian Aldiss, his wife and two babies, one is "disturbed" not by the "stimulating" aspects of the "plot" but by Aldiss relating his entire family to it. I guess I'm a post-Victorian prude, but I considered the entire thing in poor taste.

Jeff Smith Woe is us, Frank. I've been in about the same frame of mind as you have been lately, it seems. The dog I've been kicking around Baltimore, Md. is "What am I living for?" and I don't have an answer. 21207

I'm reading Atlas Shrugged at the insistence of Sharon, the Objectivist with whom I work in the drugstore. After all, she says, she had to read Stranger in a Strange Land for school, so I have to read Atlas Shrugged. (She didn't hate Stranger as much as she thought she would. She hated it, but only a little bit.)

That's a bit of logic that only works for her, but you better believe I have to read Ayn Rand. There's no way out. I don't know why. But I don't have a say in the matter.

(Today I bought a girl at the store for four cents. I almost decided to keep her and stop chasing after Sharon. Linda is certainly easier to get along with.)

How'd I get so far off the track? Anyway, one night Sharon explained some of the basics of Objectivism to me, and I thought they were sick. I took a long walk, saw PATTON all by my lonesome, and took another long walk. I still thought she was sick, with her "virtues of selfishness" and "egoism."

But when I couldn't answer the question "What am I living for?" I looked at other people to see what they were living for. And Sharon is living for herself.

I can't do that; it's not for me. But I will not denigrate it any longer. After all, it is something. And it's better than nothing. Which I have.

Did I write that letter on page 16? I must have been really uptight. Wow. That was quiet, wishy-washy Jeff Smith? Would I be happier if I released my inhibitions like that all the time? I doubt it. I'd probably make a couple enemies, and I prefer having zero enemies. (I hope it's still zero.)

Am I a hypocrite, Piers Anthony, for not always saying what I feel like that? Trouble is, while I often have feelings like those I expressed in BAB 8, those feelings are sometimes wrong. If I were to tell everyone what I thought all the time

Bye bye, love; bye bye, happiness

Hello, loneliness

everybody clap

I would probably hurt some people quite unfairly. And upon realizing it, be hurt myself. No thank you, Piers. In all sincerity.

Like Bob Vardeman, I wondered if Chapdelaine was Hazlett. I knew you were going to publish my letter, and I thought: what if I'm wrong? I didn't want to have to retract the insults I spewed out. Since Chapdelaine did not go flying into the teeth of the Bohema denying being Hazlett, I guess Hazlett was telling the truth. Thank God, for my sake.

Robert Moore Williams is something else. He hits me where I live this time. If I apologize for the nasties I made before, can I ask him something serious?

Mr. Williams: You say you are writing what your public wants, and from your sales figures I would say you are. You almost earned your advances with all but The Day they H-Bombed LA on your list, and I know that's no mean feat.

But why? What do you get out of "stinking 'em up" besides money? Anything? Is there any pleasure in writing this stuff? Or is it a job you take just to pay your way through life?

In short: what are you living for?

I am serious in my curiosity. I can't see things from your point of view, and I want to. I don't want to deny myself anyone's life-view. Not even Chapdelaine's, I guess.

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First, that incredibly fuggheaded letter by Robert Moore Williams. I keep promising myself that I'm not, repeat, not go-

ing to get involved in someone else's spoiling for a feud, but Christ, when a guy like Williams says things about writing like "it ain't easy to stink 'em up just right," Man, that hurts.

I don't think Heinlein, Asimov or Sturgeon think that way. Oh hell, why am I even trying to make a comparison? Most fans know the quality of Williams' work--they avoid it. The only person Williams is trying to fool is himself. A pity.

However, when a cat like that feels he has the right to go after SFWA--well...

Well, let's face it. SFWA is inefficient. Yes, it is. But, hell--it isn't intended to be. And guys like Williams and Chapdelaine keep screaming about SFWA because they're under the mistaken impression that it is.

Or they think the rest of us are "the establishment" defending SFWA because we think it's perfect just the way it is. Well, hell--it isn't perfect, and a lot of members would like to see it improved. But to take these things out of SFWA's private halls and parade them in front of fans reeks of someone being on a power trip.

The temptation is to invite those people out--but SFWA's supposed to be a professional organization, so all I can do is shake my head sadly and wish that one or two members would start acting like professionals. (Or if they can't, limit their time at their typewriters to fiction only.)

I could bitch about Piers Anthony too, but too many other people have first dibsies. Hell, I disagree with Piers on a lot of things, but he's entitled to his opinion, just as I'm entitled to mine, right? (And I like his work, I read it.)

Only thing is, I just wish he weren't so damned longwinded. I'd rather he spent more time writing pro-ac than fanac. Ah, well...take it as a left-handed compliment, Piers.

Anyway, what I'm leading up to is something you touched upon in your BABBLINGS. You're kind of bored with fandom you say--not only that, but there seems to be a lot of internal squabbling.

Well, you ain't the only one. There's a lot of other people who're feeling the same way. A lot of them are the pros who haven't been appearing in your letter column recently. (Not me. I'm still too busy laughing.)

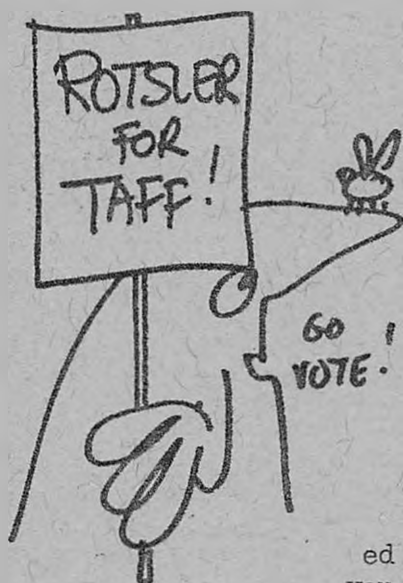
At the SFWA Conference in Berkeley in March, I heard it from four different people: "Fandom is no damn good." And the four different people I've heard it from came from four different areas of prodom--i.e. new wave, hard science, Campbell Conservative and head-oriented.

If I count Harlan, it's five.

Now, I haven't been around fandom long enough (two years or so) to know if this is a continual state of affairs or a trend that's just recently developing. But it seems to me that more pros today are disgusted with fandom than two years ago.

And I suggest that's part of the reason why you're feeling a little like gaffing too.

Fandom is a circus like the rest of the human race. We shouldn't let it get to us--but more and more people are. Take a look at your letter column, Frank. It



reads like a psychiatrist's casebook. People are getting their rocks off in a hundred different ways, working off their neuroses, projecting their problems, etc., etc.

Feh.

Man, I don't know what it is, but somehow fandom is losing a lot of its interest. Ain't no egoboo in the world worth having to put up with the bupkis that you can get from fans.

Maybe it's because the pro squabbles are filtering down into fandom and the fans are taking sides according to the writers they like or don't like--but did you ever stop to notice. The really big names aren't getting involved.

Cause when you rattle with pigs, you end up smelling like garbage.

The temptation is to go through letters like those of Williams, Blish, Chapdelaine and frog-brain Hazlett and reply to them in kind--but only small minds talk about people--great minds talk about ideas.

And fandom has enough small minds as it is.

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Since "Paul Hazlett" has failed to come forward with any of the names or figures he was asked to produce to back up the generalizations and hearsay in his SFWA piece, it's safe to conclude that the piece was not reportage at all; he was just shooting in the dark. (Actually this was evident from the beginning, in the text itself.)

His current proposal to put "fandom representatives on the SFWA Board of Directors" further shows just how far "inside" SFWA he ever got. SFWA has never had such a board, a fact widely known outside the membership. If he is a member, he's singularly unobservant, as well as irresponsible. Perry Chapdelaine, whom I met at the SciCon in London, did not so strike me, though to be sure he does seem to share many of "Hazlett's" views.

The world of fandom is not the main prop of most SF writers. Winning a Hugo does help sales, but since not even Heinlein can win 'em all, it's uneconomical to try to make everything please, primarily, an audience of a couple of thousand convention members. Robert Moore Williams makes the same point in #8 (though, as usual, in the most pejorative possible way). If you must write to other peoples' standards, then it makes more sense to do it for money than for statuettes.

And in the long run it turns out to make even better sense to write for an ideal audience, not any specific real one. I've said elsewhere that when I finished the novelette half of A Case of Conscience, I was sure it was unsalable; and the Hugo for the novel still staggers me. Moreover, my experimental pieces in general have amassed better reprint scores than my conventional stories. I am thinking of posting a sign to remind myself of this--something like, "On every Black Easter it rains money."

"Hazlett's" flying visit to England has produced another honeywagonload of misinformation. (For the record, I have been published here from 1955 on, been here on business in 1965 and 1967, and have lived here since mid-April 1969.) The statement that "English publishers will publish anything because they have nothing on hand they consider any good" is so outlandish that it must be deliberate sensationalism. Just to begin with, it's a calculated insult to those of us who contribute to British publishers. And a phone call to Charles Monteith of Faber & Faber or John Bush of Gollancz would have dispelled this idiot notion, if "Hazlett" really seriously entertains it. British publishers conscientiously employ people experienced in SF as

outside readers--I know two personally--and these readers do screen and reject material. And finally, as a matter of simple fact: though everything I have sold first in England has now been sold also in the States, five of my U.S. books (two of which saw two Stateside editions each) have never been sold here and apparently never will be.

As for SF reviewing here, it is sometimes good, sometimes bad, but it has one advantage over SF reviewing in the States: it exists. SF is reviewed regularly and at length in major papers like The Times Literary Supplement and the Oxford Mail, as well as in dozens of smaller papers. There is no comparable situation in the States now, and furthermore, there never was. "Hazlett" did not have to be an author, or a publisher, who employs a press-cutting service to find out these facts; all he had to do was ask one who did.

No wonder the American tourist is so widely despised.

If there is anyone left still capable of crediting "Hazlett's" fantasies about ingroups and mafias: As editor of Nebula Award Stories 5, I have included in its Introduction a complete numerical breakdown of the 1969 awards voting--the same kind of analysis "Hazlett" knew he could have gotten from Anne McCaffrey, but carefully didn't ask for. Overall, 172 ballots were cast from a membership of 350, which means that nearly half voted this time--a record. The detailed breakdown shows conclusively that his paranoid accusations are nonsense.

As this letter shows, and as my Introduction says, I don't regard these accusations (pace Harry Harrison) as solely internal SFWA business. We give these awards publicly, and we owe it to the winners to dispell, if we can, any cloud that might dim the honor. Were it not for this, I'd have ignored the whole smear. (It should not be necessary to add-but it is--that I have no personal axe to grind here: I've never won a Nebula, was a runner-up only once, see nothing of mine in the pipeline that seems at all likely to captivate the voters, and must shortly buckle down to some non-fiction books which will take me out of the running for a minimum of two years.)

Perry Chapdelaine Rt. 4, Box 137 Franklin, Tenn. 37064	Though nearly a year ago the incumbent SFWA Forum editor advised me there were no rules to being selected for publishing in my very own SFWA Forum--that if I wrote something of interest, it would be published--I believe the Forum is still a private property being operated by person or persons for their own gain.
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Sure! I've heard the argument that "We don't want SFWA Forum to be another Berkeley Barb, or the editor to be censored," and I agree. Those who know me know that I swear and curse and rape only when angry, and then usually in person.

I wrote some eleven months of history on my relationship with Universal Publishing Co. and submitted it to SFWA Forum editor Feb. 28, 1970. The editor approved, but not the president. He had to have the document submitted to him personally, thence to an attorney where it was also subsequently cleared. Now I submit, Gordon, if you treated us--new writers or not--as adults instead of children, I'd have gone along with that route in the first place, without all the back talk.

Later I wrote a note in answer to Ted White's comments on publicity, and how only the big-shots got publicity at the SFWA publicity shindigs. I agree with Ted, and I also wrote some ways in which publicity must be sought from many newspapers in the country as gleaned from personal experience--a set of principles that should interest all. Maybe Terry Carr will use this article, or already has. I don't care, particularly; I just wanted to share a little wisdom from the mouth of a babe; namely, me.

Almost convinced that Terry was up and up and really meant it when he said he didn't believe in censorship in the SFWA Forum, front cover. Also appreciated his stand with UPD case and Gordon on presidential censorship. Then, alas, a third and fourth article, respectively entitled "Conjectures on Telepathy" and "Be Fruitful and Multiply!" which were serious analyses of two areas of usual concern to science fiction writers, were rejected. Just as Poul Anderson's "How to Build a Planet" and background analyses of other writers' is useful for story telling, so these two articles would have been useful for story building.

The short, two sentence rejection slip which I received, from my own paid-for-by-membership-fee Forum said, "I have no use for these nor, after seeing your latest Hazlett effusions, any use for you. I suggest you see a psychiatrist!" (The latest Hazlett cow-prod was "Inside Story of Why England Will Publish Anything." More on good ol' Paul later.)

"Conjectures on Telepathy" was already accepted for publishing in a new slick magazine in England entitled "Space Wise". "Be Fruitful and Multiply!" was also accepted in another whose name at this time is unknown to me. Thus, I submit, they had already proved themselves acceptable to some readers.

(1) It is my belief that a single editor is not in a position to adequately evaluate what is or is not of interest to Forum readers. A professional board should be established permitting representatives of varying interests to pass on such work. (2) The incumbent SFWA Forum editor made a judgment about members' interests on two papers based on something other than objectivity or professionalism.

Naturally this complaint, in BeABohema, is out of place, and should be in the SFWA Forum. Which leads to a nice, neat technique of control: How'n'ell does a bloke get to complain when the media itself is the vehicle of control? (That's why I don't write for SFWA Forum, Miss Anne McCaffrey--you ain't ever been on this end of the schtick!)

SFWA Forum is a lever for ingroupers to get out their bag, and to keep other little bags out. Were I Poul Anderson, Isaac Asimov, or buddy Ted White, I could communicate with SFWA fellow-members through my own paid-for-by-fees Forum. And, Isaac, complain if you want, about using your name in this context, but I submit, sir, that you ain't never been on this end of the schtick, either! And Poul? Well, he knows I'll keep sending him interesting Einsteinian tidbits for the sake of a free brew now and then--HE won't miss any good science!

Robert Bloch said it as toastmaster at the Nebula Awards Banquet in Oakland-Berkleÿ this year, and I quote, "Terry Carr's fanzine."

Now I don't know Terry Carr: Until I meet him I shall continue to image him as dashing, debonair, intelligent, good editor, great integrity, talented, humane, etc. In shot, like Isaac. And I'm not interested in picking on Terry Carr's personality or his personal faults. But he is sitting on one of the greatest of SFWA fault-lines, and I think I've spotted, and experienced, some of the sub-strata sulphuring upward.

Is it any wonder, then, that Paul Hazlett articles are written? Whenever communications are detained, suppressed, distorted, censored or used to build-up particular in-members, Hazletts will exist.

Speaking of Paul Hazlett, who is he really?

The Paul Hazlett article referenced in BAB of the last issue, as referenced by Terry Carr in his less than objective rejection note to me, was not--I repeat not written by me.

I can't possibly understand why anyone who is clean-cut and innocent could let the Paul Hazlett sacred-cow prods bother them; but since they do, I hereby claim all responsibility and blame for them. Alas! I can't claim the credit, as much as I'd like.

I will promise this, however, if those persons (or person) who make up the Paul Hazlett cow-prods wish their names (name) published in BAB, and if they'll write that fact to me, I'll be glad to forward their (his or her) name on to Frank; and I believe Frank would be willing to publish them (it).

"The Inside Story on Why England Will Publish Anything" was written and in stencil long before my own first trip to England.

But I love them; and I'll accept the blame.

Bill Rotsler Read Koontz's column, which mentions the NY sex newspaper SCREW.
3000 Hollyridge They published a batch of my obscene cartoons a few issues back and
Los Angeles, Ca. when I ran into the editor (out here on biz) he asked me for more.
90046 Dirty cartoons are fun.



Now I should like to say a few words about TIM KIRK. I don't know why I want to do this right at this point, but I do. I admire Tim, personally and professionally, very much. I don't know him too well personally, but what I know I like. But Tim Kirk is a Unique Talent and his work should always be given the proper repro. Bad Repro is a No-No, especially with someone as delicate and delightful as T. Kirk, Artist.

I don't want this to sound sickly, but fandom has been blessed with a few good artists--Gaughan, Bode, that crazy Mike Gilbert (who needs discipline, not in drawing, but in content), ATOM and a couple of others--people of superb talent, of professional quality, of a unique nature. And Tim Kirk is one of the best. I've nominated him for a Hugo and I hope he wins.

He's also a very nice person...unless he also happens to be an excellent actor and beneath that calm, faintly saturnine exterior lurks a dragon. (Scratch a Kirk and you annoy a dragon?)

Jay Kay Klein ...in response to Paul Hazlett's query in BAB 7 about why cer-
302 Sandra Dr. tain writers left SFWA, let me add Lester del Rey's name to
North Syracuse, N.Y. the list. He has made no secret of the fact that he felt pub-
13212 lishing Phil Farmer's speech in SFWA Bulletin was an act of
partizanship on the part of high officials of the organiza-
tion. Specifically, he objected to the parts of Phil Farmer's speech attacking
John Campbell. While Les feels anyone may say anything he wishes, even if wrong,
there is no excuse for an organization to promulgate this on an apparently "official"
level. Other have objected to this, also.

Hazlett's query about Fred Pohl is best answered by Fred himself. However, at the 1968 Nebula Awards banquet, Fred gave an address that contained stinging rebukes to SFWA. He actually started out saying it had been suggested that "Science Fiction writers are human. I've grave reason to doubt it." He proceeded to tell of the idiotic actions of amateurs submitting manuscripts to him.

After the audience had laughed heartily, Fred moved on to the idiocies of professional writers submitting manuscripts. There was fewer laughter. Adroitly building up his case, Fred dropped the bombshell: "There has been some doubt in my mind about some of the Nebulas." (No laughter at all!) His point was that SFWA leaned heavily toward the New Wave of so-called Speculative Fiction, which he regards as a "flatulent menace to the integrity of science fiction writing."

And Fred concluded in ringing terms: "I'm for science fiction. I raise my metaphorical glass to it, and say 'God protect it,' because I'm not sure SFWA will."

I ALSO HEARD FROM:

Robert Bloch: "I'm glad to see attention continues to focus on awards and procedures--intemperate and inaccurate as some evaluations may be, there is at least realization that reforms in nominating and voting procedures are needed."

Piers Anthony: "Now that you agree with me, you can come out of the stockade."

Jack West: "I'm out of the stockade."

Mike Deckinger: "The 'Justin St. John, We Love You' material in BAB #8 was long overdue. Last July I received a copy of the first (and as far as anyone knows, only) issue of THE GREENTOWN REVIEW. Prior to this date I had never heard of Justin St. John. My first impression was that it was an attractively produced fanzine, edited by someone in his mid-teens who was going to unusual lengths to sound profound, and only ending up pompous. St. John had no taste for editing nor writing, the content was haphazardly slapped together with little finesse. At one point St. John modestly referred to himself as "the literary heir to Ray Bradbury" and then on the next page completely dispelled this amusing notion by presenting a story of his own that made the worst kitsch seem craftsmanlike by comparison. The only positive note I could derive from the dreary mess was that St. John bore considerable pride in his creation, despite his transparent efforts to appear aloof and scholarly. (He thoughtfully enclosed an order blank for future issues, with the first copy. I easily ignored it.)"

Jeff Cochran: "Paul Hazlett: You want ideas to cover? OKAY!! COVER THIS ONE! I can see it now in BAB 10; 'The Inside Story of Paul Hazlett.' C'mon, man, don't hide the truth! You're Claude Degler, aren't you?"

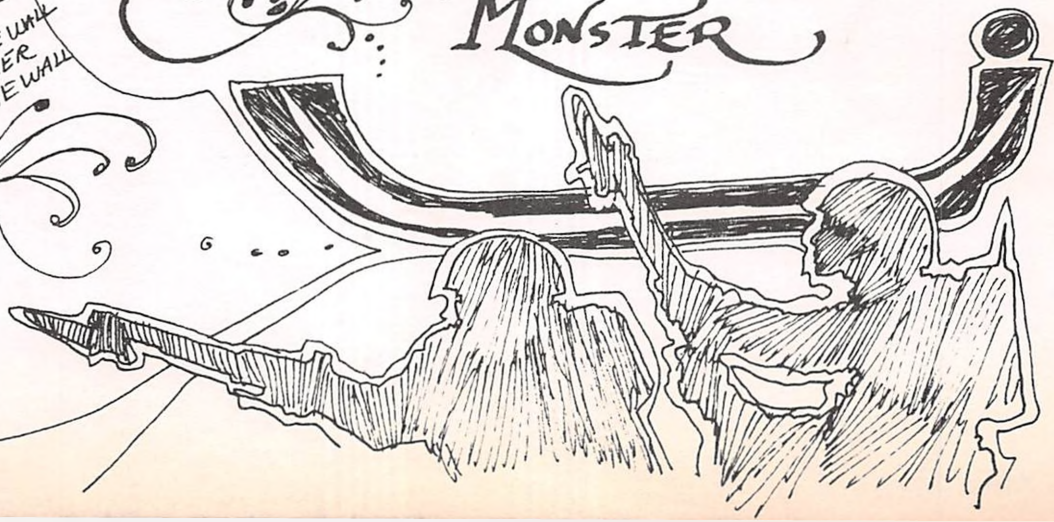
Robert Whitaker: "The BeABohema clique of fandom may be wondering why I, a neofan, jumped upon Justin St. John and insulted him. To begin with, anyone who holds up a writer like Asimov and ridicules his beliefs, ethics, morals and ideas, and thereby concludes that he is a bad writer, deserves to be mashed back into the woodwork from which he crawled out of. A person who cannot criticize by what another has written and has to depend on another's beliefs for his criticism should be mauled and mangled. A person who has the nerve to question someone's masculinity is one who should get a helping foot to make him look at himself. When Justin placed his contradicting verbiage in AMAZING, I found that you were willing to print insults, I sent you the letter, half sure you would publish it. And you did. I hope he has found out about himself. I am hoping he will apologize to Mr. Asimov."

AND: Alex Krislov, Tony Isabella, Henry Kulik, Frank Denton, Roger Bryant, Mark Barclay, Larry Propp, Jeff Schalles, Jeff Cochran (again), David William Hulvey (twice), Terry Jeeves, Frank Johnson, Denny Lien, Dave Piper (who DK'd his letter), Hank Davis, Mary Reed, Terry Jeeves (again), Neal Goldfarb, and George Inzer. Then there were the loads of sticky two-dollar checks, a pound note, some quarters, and the usual junk.

Yes a monster's on the loose
 It's put our heads into the noose
 And just sits there watching
 The cities have turned into jungles
 And corruption's strangling the land
 The police force is watching the people
 And the people just sit and understand...
 Now we are fighting a war over there
 No matter who's the winner we can't pay the cost...



American where are you now
 Don't you care about your sons & daughters
 Don't you know we need you now
 We can't fight alone against the
 MONSTER



NIXON!
 MONSTER
 DON'T FORGET!
 THE DRAFT RESISTOR
 WHEN THEY HAUL
 HIM OFF TO PRISON
 AND ME...
 WE ARE ALL OUTLAWS...
 IN THE EYES OF AMERICA...
 WE ARE FORCES OF
 CHAOS AND ANARCHY
 EVERYTHING THEY
 SAY WE ARE WE ARE
 AND WE ARE VERY
 PROUD OF OURSELVES
 UP AGAINST THE
 WALL
 UP AGAINST THE WALL
 MOTHER FUCKER
 TEAR DOWN THE WALL