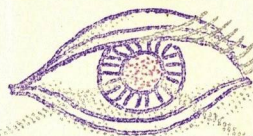


# Point of View

NUMBER 2



DECEMBER '63

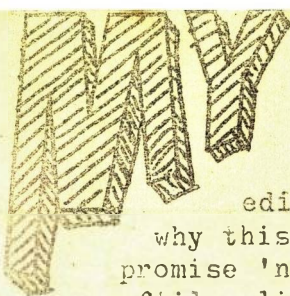
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SPECIAL  
CHRISTMAS  
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# Point of View 3

It is sorely tempting to devote this editorial once again to telling you how and why this magazine is so good, but last issue I did promise 'never again', so I'll save my comments and craftily slip them in in the 'letters dept' on page 32. This editorial will follow in the illustrious footsteps of such names as John W. Campbell of Analog, and Dave Hale of 'Les Spinge', and will Try To Say Something Serious. Biased with a view to controversy-raising, of course.

It's interesting what traps apparently straightforward reasoning can lead one into, when applied for instance, to social structure.

A thief removes an article on display outside a shop and is caught and brought to trial. He comes before a magistrate who is distinguished from other men by his firm belief in the correctness of the ideals on which our society is based, and by his ability to apply them.

Depending on the number of previous convictions the thief has either a penalty imposed upon him, to make stealing seem less attractive, or is locked away from society, as a deterrent and to protect society from him.

His is told that it is wrong to steal. To the magistrate, this is obvious. Not only is crime detrimental to the health of the community, it is, to him, morally repellent. To the criminal this taboo where crime is concerned is obviously absent, else he would not continually commit the offence. To him, it is not 'wrong' to steal.

Wrongness, then, is subjective, meaning different things to different people. Normally in a society the majority agrees with the current definitions of right and wrong, either through tradition, instinct, reasoning, or because of what some would describe as 'conscience'. Of course, the minority who don't agree with the accepted definitions of 'wrong' acts can't be left running around causing chaos. They have to be sacrificed for the sake of the majority. Thus wrongness is subjective, but can also be said to cover acts committed against the views held by the majority.

Let us take a look at the influences that have

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YOUR POINT OF VIEW

"THRU TIME & SPACE  
WITH HORDVITCH LEAROYD II"  
BRIAN ZUGORSKI.

"POINT OF VIEW" APPEARS 8 TIMES  
A YEAR. COPIES SENT FROM CHARLES PLATT 8 SOLLERSHOOT  
WEST, LETCHWORTH, HERTS, TO CONTRIBUTORS, LOC WRITERS, TRADERS.

MY POINT OF VIEW — CONTO.

EVEN SUBSCRIBERS (SEE

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moulded our society into its present form.

1. The instinct of man to form communities and associate socially, resulting in communities of individuals in which laws become necessary to preserve order.
2. The widespread application of science, in communications, household equipment, automation, etc.
3. The herd instinct in man to follow a leader, the leader often being simply 'the majority'.
4. Tradition, associated with religion. Views on right and wrong, with perhaps the exception of sexual offences, are virtually the same as they were over 1500 years ago.

These are the basic factors that have contributed to our society's present form. When a man does something classed as wrong, he is acting against the majority views of society.



which has, in turn, evolved as a result of these factors. There is no absolute right or wrong, (unless the words handed down from generation to generation, recorded by writers certainly possessing vivid imaginations, supposedly spoken by 'The Son of God' can be considered 'absolute,') as the meanings of these words are governed by the overall beliefs of society. The fact that these beliefs have remained remarkably consistent over the centuries does not make them absolute; entirely credible future civilisations can and have been constructed with 'right' and 'wrong' & given entirely different meanings. Chances are future historians will regard our definitions as barbaric.

Consequently, in objective-absolute terms, viewing society from the outside, the criminal in the long run has as much right to commit his 'crime' as the judge has to imprison him.

But the judge only has any right at all to sentence the criminal to imprisonment so long as the rules of society he is using are at all valid. Let's take a look at society and see whether it is valid.

We have seen the structure of our social system has evolved as a result of several main factors: tradition, the bible, herd instinct, and the instinct to form communities. Now tradition is one of the most obstructive, hindering, misapplied, unconstructive and useless forces known to man. No more than mental inertia, it is merely an encouragement to stagnate. This force is obviously not a valid reason for society to continue in its present form.

The bible is, of course, 1900 years or so out of date, besides being unavoidably inaccurate and in places self-contradictory. It was written in a social situation different from our own by and with respect to different races with different customs and ways of thought. For these reasons, apart from the matter of whether Christ was or was not the Son of God, religion cannot be an influencing factor in deciding what a modern, technological society should be like.

The instinct to combine in to social groups is found in all human beings and is an influencing factor in any society of human beings. It applies to criminals as well as religious groups. This is neither a factor for or against changing our social structure, since it would continue to apply.

All that remains to be considered is the herd instinct. Something like this that merely causes a man to follow the actions of his fellows with disregard for whether he really wants to or not should obviously not be accepted as a valid reason for our society's structure.

The criminal's act was 'wrong' because it broke the rules of a society that has evolved as a result of the previous list of influences, all of which have been examined and found undesirable, out of date, or invalid. There is no logical basis for the society we live in; because of unfortunate circumstances it's just happened to grow this way. As such it has no real right to impose its unfounded concepts on reactionaries.

In a perfect society no one would be dissatisfied. From this statement it is obvious that our society is far from perfect; there are a large number of discontented minorities. I would suggest that a society in which there was ultimate free expression would, after an initial state of chaos, resolve itself into something a lot more acceptable and better suited to the human race than the inflexible system we have now. At the moment such a change is obstructed by self-perpetuating beliefs that might have been worth having once but that are now misapplied and therefore valueless. The result is that the social framework is not only unplanned, and therefore not matched to its inhabitants, but that the situation becomes still worse as the framework does not evolve and human habits and ideas and knowledge do.

To conclude: a 'wrong' act is a subjective thing, and as the word is commonly used applies to an offense simply against the views of society. Our society is as it is as a result of causes that we have seen are undesirable, and in no way guarantee a good social system suited to human beings. If it were not for the fact that these causal factors are absorbed from birth onwards, so they eventually seem to outline the only possible way of life, the system would not be self perpetuating and would have naturally evolved into something more satisfactory long ago. As it is, with our customs and habits and beliefs passed on unchanged from generation to generation, the framework is in stable equilibrium; a little push, from a small minority dissent, would not produce an appreciable net effect. A bigger, majority, push on the other hand very probably would.

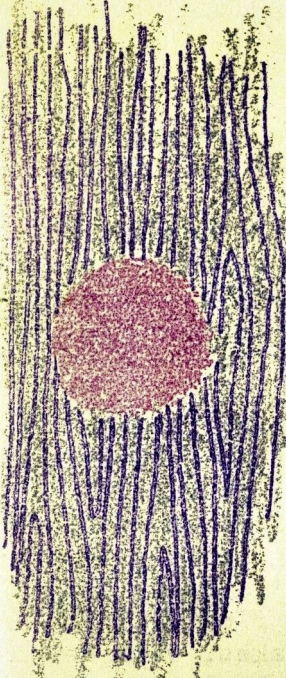
The Editor.



# A BRIGHT IDEA

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BY REG HALDRICKS



Jeff Berryfield carefully painted a round red spot, one inch across, on the good post of his back porch.

That ought to fix it.

He brushed back his mop of white hair and peered at the spot. Could he see signs of movement? No, he guessed he was imagining things; it was too early for that.

This new paint of his ought to save plenty of time and trouble. Leave more leisure for sitting in the sun and thinking about his next invention.

One of these days he'd sell some of the gadgets of his; yes, sir, he'd make some real money. Somehow he'd never gotten around to any business deals so far -- always been too busy tinkering. Trouble was, if you wanted to market an invention, you had to iron out the snags. Like that water-fuelled motor; it went fine, but damned if he hadn't forgotten to add a stop control, so the old automobile finished in the creek. (Well, he'd got it off a junk heap, anyway.) And the automatic bricklayer..... the doggone thing forgot to put a door in the new workshop he'd built with it. And it worked from the inside, so he'd have to pull the place down to get it out again. He must get round to it one of these days.

Maybe he could do that now, with the time he'd saved on painting the porch. Wait a few weeks, that paint of his would suck in nitrogen and carbon dioxide out of the air, reproduce itself, and gradually spread till the whole porch was a nice cheerful red. All he had to do was sit back and watch, with maybe a glass of rye

to help him concentrate. Yes, sir, quite a time saver.

The President motioned Jeff to a bright red leather armchair, and pulled up a couple of red chairs for himself and his companion.

Jeff sank gratefully into the upholstery and admired the huge red room, with its red ceiling and red carpet and the red picture frames on the walls. Pity about the pictures. Still, there was a fine view out of the bay window across the wide sweep of the red lawn in front of the White House, (only it was the Red House, now, like all the others), way across to the row of fine old stately red birch trees.

"Sorry to drag you all the way to Washington, Mr Berryfield," said the President, "but you see how we're fixed. The whole eastern side of the Union is red now, and some of the Canadian seaboard as well, of course. About ninety per cent of California, and my advisers tell me it'll reach the western coast in about six weeks. We've had to float all the important documents out to the middle of the lakes, with decontamination proceedings before anyone can look at them. So it's getting to be quite a problem .. oh, by the way, this is Mr John Sellers, of the Federal Security Council."

The President's companion, a fat florid man in a bright red dinner jacket, growled something unintelligible.

"Pleased to meet you, Mr Sellers," muttered Jeff. "Say, I'm awful sorry Mr President, I just don't know how to say how cut up I am about all this -- it was so darned stupid of me to see not to have seen what would happen." He wriggled awkwardly in the chair and hitched up the pants of his antique best suit, (which of course was now red too.)

"Yes, well, no good crying over spilt pai.. er, milk, so I guess we'll just have to play it from the given lie, even if it is a bunker. And that's why I called you to see me Mr Berryfield. I was rather hoping you'd be able to find some way to get all this paint off our country."

"Say, I really am sorry, Mr President, but you must appreciate that I can't invent things to order. Tell you the truth, I've been trying to sort out some kind of .. of antidote ever since the paint spread out over Ohio, and... Well, had a few ideas, but none of them has worked so far."

"Look here, Berryfield," snarled Sellers, "you've damn' well got to find some way. I'm going to tell you something that ought to be classified by rights, but that shows you how desperate the situation is. Five Russian spy



planes have been over the States photographing the red countryside, and we had to shoot them down, of course, though I must admit one of 'em got away. And the .. er .. Russians have sent us a very nasty note about it; I can tell you, it's even worse than the one they released to the public."

"Why did you have to shoot the 'planes down?" asked Jeff.

"Goddarn it! They were over our territory, weren't they? We can't have them photographing the red paint whenever they like! It's a military secret!"

"But everybody knows about it," protested Jeff. "I don't see why you don't ask them to send observers over to take a closer look at it. Maybe they could help us think of a way out of the mess. And it might help international relations, at that."

Sellers went purple. "Are you crazy? Do you want Communist spies swarming all over the country? When did they ever let us inspect them? Listen here, Berryfield, it looks as if an atomic war could start any day over this business, and you're the one to blame for the whole crazy set up!"

The President raised a conciliatory hand. "Well, you must admit that the fault is largely yours, Mr Berryfield. Now what we propose is this. We'll make an unlimited grant of chemicals and equipment to you, if you'll promise to do your level best to find some way of -- er -- unpainting the countryside, or at least stopping the paint from spreading to the rest of the world. Will you try for us? And I can also tell you that we've agreed that if you, or anyone else for that matter, can find a way to get our land green again, well, they'll receive a Federal emolument of a hundred thousand dollars."

Jeff took the cheque from his pocket and looked at it again. A hundred thousand dollars was a lot of money, even these days. Lot of things he could do with that.

Didn't think he'd move house. He'd got kind of attached to the old place.

But he could buy some real useful things for his workshop. Could use a double beam oscilloscope, and a proper set of spanners, and, yes, a proper gas supply instead of those old spirit lamps...

A big car bumped up the dirt track, scaring the



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hens and knocking down the aerial mast, and stopped with a screech a few yards from the porch. Two men with identical check shirts jumped out and converged on him.

"Berryfield?" drawled the tall thin one.

"That's me, son."

"We're from the FSC and ..."

"Oh, the Government, huh? I'd like to say how grateful I am to you boys. Look, I've got it right here, the cheque your friends in Washington sent me. I'm real proud..."

The man stared contemptuously at the cheque. "Yeah, that's swell, pop. Too bad you won't never be able to spend it".

"How do you mean, son?" asked Jeff.

"Berryfield," squeaked the short fat man, "We've come to arrest you under the Suppression of Communism Act, 1968."

"Shucks, you've got it all wrong. I ain't ever had nothing to do with the Communists. Republican, that's me."

"Listen, bud, Sellers himself heard you say some pretty treasonable things to the President. Want the Russians to walk in and case the joint, if I've heard right. And what about this paint of yours?"

"But I got rid of it, didn't I..."

"Yeah, but why did you choose that colour?"

"Red?"

"Yeah," squeaked the man, jabbing his forefinger at Jeff's chest. "Red." He produced a gun from his armpit.



The other man brought out a rubber truncheon.

"Coming quiet," he said in a bored voice, "or do we use the tranquiliser? We don't aim to let the neighbourhood know where you're going."

"Okay, okay," said Jeff, raising a conciliatory hand, "guess there's no sense in an old fellow like me trying to act tough .. started to rain hasn't it? Mind if I take the old storm stick?" He reached over to the wall and picked up a battered old silk umbrella.

"Sure you haven't got a sword in that thing?" squeaked the short man. "We don't want any tricks ..."

Jeff pressed a button in the umbrella handle and shot up in the air. The tall man made a grab at him, dropped his gun, but managed to grasp Jeff's ankles. The short man was just in time to catch his companion's legs, and the 3 of them made a human chain as they sailed through the air.

"I call it my umbrellacopter," shouted Jeff. The strain on his arms and legs was terrible, but he couldn't kick free because the man had both his ankles gripped vice tight.

Their combined weight overloaded the umbrellacopter, and after about two minutes they lost height and drifted with the wind until they burst with a crash of splintered glass and a chorus of warning shouts through a big second-floor window. A plump official in a striped suit shrieked like a woman and dashed off to get help as they levered themselves up off the floor.

"Resisting arrest," gasped the tall man. "You know that forfeits your right of appeal under subsection six five zero, don't you?"

"Makes no difference," puffed the other, "records had you down for resisting arrest before we started. It's jail for you, bud -- indefinite preventive, right tight away where you can't cause no more trouble. And boy, am I glad" he said, rubbing his calves.

The cell was quite roomy, really, about fifteen feet square. And private, too, not like those monkey cages in the regular State jails. This one had only a grating in the door and another in the roof to let in a little light. If he had only had his iron-softening gadget....

Oh, well, he'd have to fill in some more time with his computing machine. He'd never thought of making a com-

puting machine like this before. Lucky the prison bread was so plastic; when you'd chewed it up a bit you could use it for lots of things.

He got out his store of chewed bread and pulled a few extra hairs from his forelock, then sat down on the bunk and started to manipulate them into a complex structure.

A noise like a puff of wind and a clunk of tin cans made him look up. there Nothing there. Must be those rats again.

Funny, he'd been there for three weeks and never noticed that closet in the corner. Could be useful. Maybe he could keep his bread computer in there.

The door of the closet opened and a girl in luminous white tights walked out. "Do you be Jim Berryfield?" she asked. Her voice sounded exactly as if it was being transmitted over the old pre-satellite short-wave radio.

"That's me," said Jeff, staring at her shoes, which were made of metal and seemed to be floating an inch above the floor. "Did you, er, bring that closet with you when you came?"

"This does not be closet," she crackled, "is matter transmitter. I am self sended from my world to interview you with a view to commercial transactions. We at this moment for first occasion make call on Earth. We have telestudied you people, and this be our question: Does it be true that you are man who have stopped paint to spread over American continent?"

"Well, yes, I guess so. Tell you the truth, though, it was me that started it in the first place."

"Good. I have auctority to offer you free passage, very large sum of money, Earth-type atmospherical accomodation, return when you like, if you shall come to display to us the method used to uncolouring surface of your planet."

"Well, okay, then, Miss. I'm kind of ~~kw~~ tired of this place anyhow. Not really all that fun, making computers out of chewed bread. Guess I'd appreciate a change. How do you come to be interested in decolourising my red paint?"

"I explain. Ten thousand years ago we have talented inventor just as you. He made same mistake, but is not to finding cure. And still today I believe you are calling my home world, Mars, 'The Red Planet', is it not? Come, step with me inside matter transmitter."

END:REG HALDRICKS.





The loss of 'Science Fiction Adventures' some months ago came as a shock to many people who (like myself) had had no idea that any such change in Nova publications policy was considered. It showed that the sf boom currently in evidence was not universal.

Well, I thought, with one less magazine to support, they'll be able to keep going for a few years more. It seems I was wrong; for in a recent inter-



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view I was lucky enough to have with John Carnell. I learnt of the forthcoming death of not only "Science Fantasy", but "New Worlds" as well. The latter will go some time in March 1964, the former sooner than this. By the time this issue of 'Point of View' is on sale the news will be well known in fandom.

... What are the causes, though, of this decision to drop the last sf magazines published in Britain? At a time when sf books are more widespread than ever before, one would have imagined that magazines would also be flourishing.

... The reason they aren't depends a lot on the fact that their size is not suited to modern display and modern tastes. As Mr Carnell pointed out, a book is nearly always given a better display at a stall, if only because display racks are designed for the pocket-type size. He believes that this is actually one of the main factors contributing to the fall in circulation of New Worlds from approximately 18,000 five years ago to about 10,000 today, a drop that is typical of all branches of fiction published in what is known as the 'digest size' magazine. In fact he went as far as to say that the medium sized sf magazine we are accustomed to is a thing of the past; out of date, it is doomed as a class of publication. In Mr Carnell's opinion there will be very few, if any at all, left on the market, here or anywhere else in the world, in five years' time.

For the situation in the USA is little better than it is in Britain. 10 months ago "Analog" tried going to the other end of the scale, and increased its size. It seems hard to believe that a magazine like this, which has lived through more than 25 years of booms and depressions, with a current circulation (as published in the December issue) of over 80,000, may probably be facing a major crisis also. Does the larger size mean that Conde Nast, having bought up Street and Smith, the previous publishers, and found that they had so inherited a science fiction magazine, of all things, have decided it must have a larger circulation.... or else? Or that better and more advertising was required, and could be attracted if the magazine was the same size as the rest of the Conde Nast publications? It may be that the end of "Analog" is a lot nearer than any of us imagine.

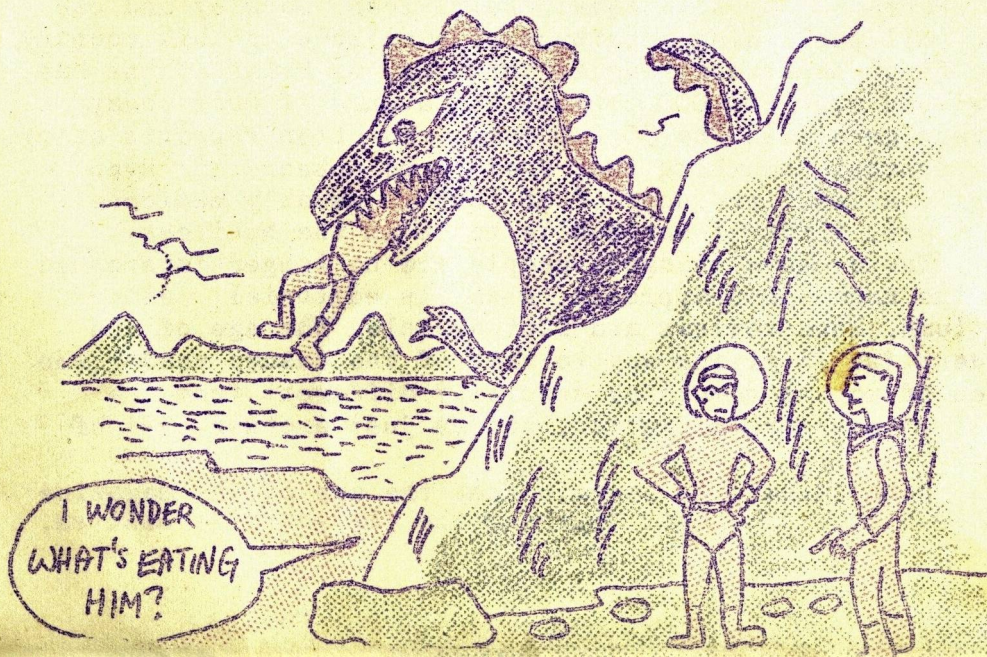
"Fantasy and Science Fiction" is consistently voted the top magazine, at world sf conventions. But this does not alter the fact that its sales are dismally low (as revealed



join em' philosophy, he predicts that next year in the Autumn we will very likely see the birth of a replacement for "New Worlds", in the form of a magazine that isn't a magazine; a pocket sized collection of new sf that looks like an ordinary paperback book, and as such will gain all the benefits of better display, and will, of course, appear in book shops that do not normally handle magazines. Something like "Storyteller" magazine in format, it should sell well, since it is suited to the conditions of the current market. Mr Carnell has great hopes for it.

It's something of a shock to find that the magazines one reads and which seem eternal are in fact a dying race. But this is the situation, in Mr Carnell's view. A replacement for the sf magazine is essential; the glossy magazines that are now using sf more for short stories are no substitute for the opportunities presented to the new writer by publications such as "New Worlds". John Carnell is rallying to the challenge of the paperback book; it is to be hoped that other editors will react as constructively.

END: DAVID WHITE.





# NIGHTMARE CHILD PART 2

BY EDWARD FREDRICKS

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Just a child. His actions couldn't really affect anyone. His childish fantasies were restricted just to his juvenile brain -----weren't they?

## SYNOPSIS

Richard was a baby faced little boy, pampered by his parents, who liked getting his own way. But one day, his subconscious mind would rebel against the everyday acts of cruelty and viciousness. For there was in Richard a part of him that, although small, was morally good. And powerful.

One summer night he finds himself in a nightmare. He is being chased by a dark figure who he regards as being a composite of all the people he was wronged in the past. He knows the figure is out to kill him. It has him trapped, his back against the wall of a building.

There was another abrupt change of scene. Suddenly they were mere feet apart on the flat roof of the building the boy had been standing beneath. Richard turned and ran over to a window in the side of a part of the building one story higher than the rest, projecting upwards above the flat roof. The lower half was open and he thrust his leg frantically through, turning to see the shadow of his attacker looming over him. He saw the yellow teeth glint in the sun as the man sneered, took a step back, and raised the knife ready to strike. Richard desperately tried to force the window open, but it was no use. He saw the flashing knife swishing down towards him.

He raised one arm in a pitiful defense. A hopeless gesture. But it saved his life. His wrist met that of the attacker swinging down at him, and he heard the knife clatter out of the man's hand, bounce once on the window sill, and then slide what sounded like down a flight of





stairs inside the building. He turned round again to his attacker, cringing, waiting for the next attack. But none came. The figure stepped back a pace, still facing him.

"No way out, boy. You can't defend yourself. I'll be back again tomorrow, and then..." He laughed, eyes narrowed and gleaming, and retreated to the parapet. In a blur of motion he vaulted over the side and was gone.

Richard collapsed like a jelly, suffering great spasms of reaction from the terror he had experienced. "Mummy, oh, mummy..." he moaned.

At this point in the quiet bedroom the boy almost awoke. His mind reached the border between sleep and consciousness, but slid back. The dream was unfinished. It would not be finished until the dark figure had cornered him. And then....

Somehow it was already the next day. 28 hours had van-

ished unaccountably, as so often happens in a dream. He was in the park again, walking over the grass. All around were the happy people, looking and acting like so many marionettes. He had tried to forget the 'attacker', and pretend he didn't exist. The park was reassuring in a hollow sort of way, just as a happy programme can be to a miserable tv viewer. The boy walked slowly over to the tennis courts, then suddenly broke into a run as he saw two familiar faces. It was, it was! His parents were there. Now everything would be all right.

He ran up overjoyed, sitting down between them on the bench and taking one of their hands in each of his. They didn't look at him, for some reason, but he knew they were aware of him, which was all that mattered. The words poured out as he released all his tensions and fears and depressions and told them all about what had happened, and how the figure would soon be coming after him. To kill him! There wasn't much time. They'd have to do something quickly. XX His small, innocent face turned up to each of his parents in turn, questioningly, pleadingly.

It was then that he realised, he sensed, that something was wrong. Slowly his father, symbol of power and security, looked down at him. His face was not the same. It was terrified. His all-powerful, all-knowing father was almost in tears! Only then did he notice that the hands he held in his were shaking, shaking with fear.

His mind was terrified and disillusioned. He could rely on nothing! The foundation of his whole life had been ripped from beneath him: his parents were powerless to help. They remained immobile, hands clasped together, staring at nothing at all. Slowly a tear trickled its way down his mother's face. There was no possible help. In the distance, a dark silhouette was approaching.

Richard ran off through the park. He stopped by a family clearing up a picnic.

"Sir, you've got to help me!" He tried to control his voice, to quell the hysteria. The man looked up, tired, middle-aged, permanently irritated.

"What's that, son?"

"I'm being chased -- it's going to kill me!"

"Look, son, some other time. We're just going home -- can't you see that?"

"What's he want, Harry?" His wife, fat through too many



children and too many carbohydrates, wrinkled, tired, annoyed and dissheveled, waved a wasp away from the neat pile of refuse she was methodically stowing away in the bushes. "What's up with him?"

"Says someone's after him. Some fool game or other".

"But you must help me! Look, there it is, can't you see?"

Richard almost burst into tears. He had known it would be like this.

"I don't see anyone, do you, Harry? Come on for heaven's sake and let's get this lot packed up and go home. Go and play somewhere else, sonny."

There was no possible help. There was no possible help. He ran on through the park. To an old lady:

"You have to help me!"

For fear of losing count of the stitches in her knitting she didn't look up, pretending to be deaf. To a Policeman:

"You have to help me! That man over there wants to kill me!"

"Oh he is, is he, son? Well, don't worry -- that's right, sir, the second on the left -- we'll soon see about that. Here, take this gun and shoot him with that. Now run along, I've got to be back at the station by six..."

The boy stared at the bent stick, the 'gun', that the policeman had given him. There was no possible help...

He sank to his knees as the figure confidently approached. There was no possible help: reality was all around him, but he was helpless. It wasn't real at all. At last he realised that all along the people round him had just been scenery. He and the figure standing in front of him were the only living figures. At last he knew what it was like to be alone.

"Please...?" he sobbed. He shut his eyes and grovelled on the ground in senseless panic and terror. <sup>THE FIGURE</sup> raised its knife to strike. Richard's quivering mouth gave the beginning of a scream as the knife hissed down...

...and he awoke. His body was soaked in sweat. Half the bedclothes were on the floor. The dream had been so incredibly real he wasn't at sure where he was; it was hard to believe, in fact, that the images he still remembered so vividly were not real. He remembered, then, what his dream had been about, and in a moment was out of bed and running along the corridor to his parents room. He opened the door and stood looking into the room, breathing fast.

Light from the hall splashed into his parents' bedroom, reflected off his mother's perfume bottles and cosmetics, his

father's shaving mirror. It was all so familiar and reassuring.

Disturbed by the noise and the light, his mother turned over, and awoke. "Is that you, Richard, darling?"

"Yes, mummy. Oh, I've had such a horrible dream..." His father's voice, deep, but kind-sounding, came from the darkness.

"Another one?"

"Yes -- there was this man, or rather, he wasn't a man, he was ... was ... Oh, mummy!" He ran round to her side of the bed and let himself be comforted by his mother's gentle arms.

"There, now. Everything's all right. You can stay in here with us for the rest of the night if you want to -- would you like that?"

"Yes, I would." His mother and father resigned themselves to another sleepless night, as Richard pushed his way into bed beside them. He snuggled down between his father and mother. "Goodnight, Mummy. Goodnight, Daddy."

Two tired 'goodnights' came in return. Safe and satisfied with himself, Richard's pink angelic face looked out from the security of his prents' bed into the dark security of their bedroom. The main part of his mind was satisfied, secure, and content. But deep down, the subconscious hates and rages against his everyday selfishness and sadism stirred restlessly. Release in sleep was not enough, not enough. Fantasies could provide only so much of an outlet for suppressed emotions. There was only one real release for a mind, if it was powerful enough and needed release badly enough.

Out in the darkness the air shimmered slightly. The grass was flattened as if by a solid form resting on it. Something began to appear.

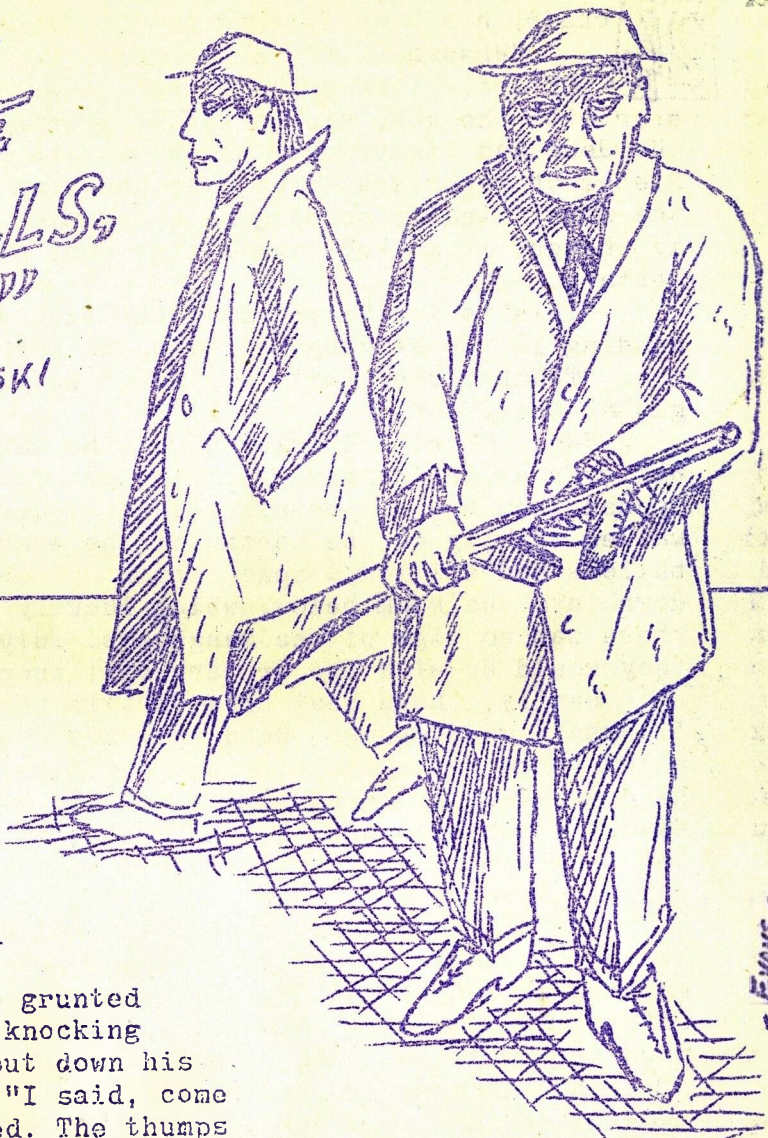
Richard's conscious mind was on the verge of being dulled with sleep. At either side of him his parents lay wide awake, knowing the more they wanted necessary sleep the less easily it would come. Richard's eyes fluttered shut, then open again as a breath of wind disturbed the still Summer night and made the curtains swish inwards. From outside came a small sound, its noise easily detectable in the utter silence. It was the sort of noise a rabbit or a weasel would have made, had there been one there.

So it was that Richard and his parents were wide awake when the curtains swished in again... and didn't fall back.



# REAL LIFE THRILLS, INC."

BY BRIAN ZUGORSKI



Jason Thackeray was sitting peacefully in his apartment reading a book before he went to bed, when someone knocked on the door.

"Come in," grunted Thackeray. The knocking continued. He put down his book, annoyed. "I said, come in," he repeated. The thumps continued unabated, harder and harder. Regularly. Why, it was almost as if the door was being...

The door burst open and two men spilled into the room. They were dressed in dirty grey raincoats with grey hats pulled down over their dirty grey faces. The taller of the two brandished a sub machine gun casually in Thackeray's direction. "One move and you get it," he snapped.



Thackeray goggled at the man and half slumped out of his chair, his book falling to the floor.

"Whaaaaa...?" he gurgled.

"OK Joe -- the desk in the corner," said the tall gangster with the gun. His companion grabbed the bottom drawer of the desk and vigorously shook out its contents over the floor. Pieces of paper scattered over the room as he waded through the mess, finally holding up a crumpled printed form. Thackeray thought it looked like his grocery bill, but couldn't be certain.

"This is it, Larry" said the smaller of the two men, handing it to the gangster with the gun.

"Thanks, Joe. Let's go, man." He levelled his machine gun at the floor.

"No..." cried Thackeray, but he was too late. He shut his eyes as the hammering of the gun filled the room. When he opened them again, the air reeked of dust and explosive. He walked shakily to the centre of the apartment, where the gun's bullets had drilled a neat circle out of the floor. He looked down into the room below, which luckily was not occupied, but there was no sign of the gangsters. Idly he wondered what they would do with the grocery bill they had taken with them.

Really, these Real Life Thrills people were just too bad. It wasn't good enough. He'd only had their Selectomat installed three days, and already they'd made two mistakes. First he'd ordered an opera singer, to lull him to sleep. They had send a brush salesman. Now, when he had dialled the code listed in their catalogue for 'Girl, dancing', they'd send a couple of hoodlums.

He sat down at his typerphone and punched out an irate letter of complaint. He pressed the transmit button savagely, gaining satisfaction that the message was now at the RLT, inc. offices and would be there to greet them first thing in the morning. Serve 'em right.

Thackeray picked up the RLT, inc. catalogue and started looking through it. What would be really nice for when he woke up the next day? Who would he most like to see? The President? No, he didn't go in for the Famous Men analogues; it was so obvious that they couldn't really be real. An analogue was, of course, indistinguishable from the real thing, but the presence of the President in his room just wasn't credible. In the end, he settled for 'Postman', an archaic image in the age of the typerphone, but he still liked the idea of being greeted by a smiling, cheery fellow bringing him his



mail individually wrapped in .. what was the word? envelopes? He set the room to repair itself and clear up the scattered papers and let his bed lull him quietly to sleep.

The next morning he was up early, waiting, when the man came to the door. Thackeray's smile faded as the caller walked boldly in, set down several pots of paint and a pair of steps, and started unpacking a portable blowtorch.

"What the hell are you doing here?" he demanded.

"Come to paint your room," the man replied, looking up innocently from unpacking a set of antique twentieth century brushes. Thackeray groaned. It was too much.

"Get out!" he said, finally losing his temper.

"But I got to paint your..."

"Out, out, I said! Take your stinking paint back to Real Life Thrills Inc. and tell them that if they don't send a mechanic round to fix my selectomat today I'll .. I'll .. I'll stuff the damn thing down the garbage grinder!" He backed the painter out of the room, ignoring his protests, and slammed the door.

It really was too bad, he thought, sitting in his relaxo chair and mopping his forehead. Not that he should be particularly surprised; the mechanic who had installed the selectomat had been so clumsy it was surprising it worked at all. That didn't stop it being annoying, though. He picked up the RLT booklet and flicked through it again. He would try just once more. His eye travelled down the columns, until arrested by 'Model, attractive young charming female'. Now that really would be nice. The analogue activation fee was reasonable, too, at only 300 units an hour. A 35 year old bachelor, Jason rather fancied the idea of spending the evening with a 'Model, attractive young charming female'. RLT inc. would be a very useful organisation if it weren't for these annoying faults. Their analogues always acted the part of the appropriate human being faultlessly, never broke down, and would, of course, do anything -- absolutely anything -- the customer wanted.....

He dragged his thoughts back to the present, dialled the arrival time and date, then the selection number, put on his coat and transmitted himself to his assembly line job.

He arrived home that evening tired from a hard day's button pushing. Why they couldn't automate some of these tedious processes was a mystery. He was so tired he could hardly concentrate enough to push the selector buttons on his mealomat. But the thought of RTL inc and the young model that would

soon be arriving, plus the emotional bolster of four or five benzadrops, soon brought him back to life. He sat waiting for the meal to cook itself, absent mindedly studying the selectomat. He wondered if there was some simple fault in it. He was no expert on the subject, but his job on the production line did involve a University standard of electronics....

Carefully he unscrewed the face plate, and peered inside at the gadget's works. It wasn't too complicated; after half an hour or so he thought he had it figured out. As the dial rotated it opened and closed a switch. Depending on how far the dial was turned, or in other words, what number was dialled, the switch sent out a number of impulses to the RLT inc. office, where the appropriate analogue was activated and sent off at the appropriate time.

After much experimentation Thackeray discovered the source of the trouble: the switch that opened and closed was slightly sticky, so that the last number dialled in any sequence came out one less than it should have been. He screwed the face plate back on triumphantly, then picked up the RLT inc. book.

He made a quick list of the personalities he had selected, followed by the analogues that had arrived. First had been Singer, opera, no. 680. Number 679 in the alphabetical list was salesman, brush! That was right. Then he had ordered 'Girl, Dancing' and had got -- he looked one up on the list -- yes, there it was: the preceding category, whose index number was one less, read: 'Gangsters, after national secrets'. That explained the grocery bill they had removed from his desk drawer. Lastly, he had dialled 'Postman, 20th century,' and had got.... He looked at the category above. Yes, there it was: 'painter, house.'

It was all very simple, really. Nothing a twenty-first century highly trained mechanic-electrician couldn't solve in an hour or two. It would make a good story to tell his mates the next day at work.

Then he remembered -- because of the faulty selector he wouldn't be getting his 'Model, attractive...etc' after all. He looked at his watch. There were only another 5 minutes or so before she was due to arrive. There was no time to cancel the selection. Still, by using his method of looking at the preceding choice in the RTL inc. booklet he could find out who really would be coming. At least he could prepare himself for the disappointment he would be receiving.

He picked up the booklet, turned to the correct page.



He found 'Model, young attractive charming female', and looked at the category immediately above to find out what would really be arriving. Suddenly he froze. There was no mistake. There must be, though. It wasn't allowed surely... But of course, since the suicide legalisation act that had recently been brought into as a last defense against population growth, it was legal to take one's life in any way one liked.

The selection read: "Murderer, pathological." THAT was who would be arriving instead of his young model! There was a footnote: "It must be realised that this selection will result in the subscriber's inevitable death, which will be deemed to have occurred by the subscriber's own hand, and for which the company takes no responsibility."

Very nice, thought Thackeray. That let RLT inc. out, but it didn't help him. He had hardly any time to escape. He

sprang to his feet.... and the door latch clicked. Jason shrank back against the wall, cringing from the tall figure in the doorway. "It's a mistake!" He stuttered. "Stop!"

"Sorry," said the other. "I'm from RTL inc -- I was told you wanted a mechanic to service your selectomat?"





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# CURRENT ECONOMIC PROBLEMS.

(FIRST OF A SERIES)

The author of this article informs us that he prefers to remain anonymous for personal reasons. He is at present studying economics at Cambridge University.

There is at present a lot of discussion about the country's economic state, involving many suggestions as to how it might be improved. There is one idea, however, that to the best of my knowledge has not previously been considered with regard to finding ways of strengthening our economy. In fact at present it is regarded as a crime, although I hope enlightened laws of the future will alter this absurd classification of a profession that is valuable to the country. I refer, of course, to shoplifting.

As everyone is aware, there are at present numerous obstacles to the would-be apprentice shoplifter. In the long run he just hasn't got a chance. All this must be changed if Britain is once more to become the greatest nation in the world!

Let's get down to facts. As soon as these are seen in proper perspective the whole business becomes ridiculously obvious.

The only person who loses money as a result of the shoplifter's theft is the shopkeeper, (who has previously paid the manufacturer for the article, which is then stolen from him,) and he takes shoplifting into account when estimating his profits. On the other hand, the manufacturer finds more of his goods are being required, (as the shopkeeper, needing to keep his shelves filled whether they are emptied honestly or dishonestly, orders more,) and so produces more.

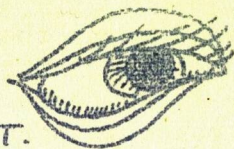
Standards of living are closely related to the National Income, which is a direct function of the amount produced by the country during the year. So the manufacturer's increased production level is in fact a contribution towards higher living standards, brought about by the shoplifter's theft. True, the shopkeeper loses, but his loss can now be seen as a donation to the welfare of the country as a whole.

But there is more. In a lot of manufacturing industries, increased expansion lowers production costs; so that as the producer who finds the shopkeepers demanding more of his goods, through people stealing them, expands, he can sell his product more and more cheaply to the shopkeeper. This way, the shopkeeper makes a bigger profit margin on the goods he sells, probably enough to completely offset the apparent loss produced by



# THE EVIL EYE

BOOK REVIEW DEPT.



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OUT OF BOUNDS by Judith Merrill. Containing: "That only a Mother" :: "Peeping Tom" :: "The Lady was a Tramp" :: "Whoever You Are" :: "Connexion Completed" :: "Dead Centre" :: "Death Cannot Winher". PYRAMID BOOKS; 2/6d

Bearing in mind that sf writing is mainly a male domain, I started to read Judith Merrill's book (with an introduction by Theodore Sturgeon) with much interest. To write sf, and be w a woman, must be difficult, it seems. Very few lady writers have made the grade, but those that have consistently prove themselves to be well up to the highest standards set by men.

Judith Merrill is no exception. Of the seven stories comprising this book, not one is badly written, albeit her style is, on occasion, rather cumbersome.

As far as I am concerned the best story in the book is "Whoever You Are"; this is a story of the invasion of the Solar System by an alien agency. A captured Terran starship enters the System, is detected to have aliens on board, and is ensnared in an energy/mass/gravitation defence web. The decisions then begin, and build up to a climax that although unforeseeable, is certainly a plausible one, even though the reader knows something else. An unmitigated tear jerker -- but a good one.

"Connexion Completed" is a variation on an old theme, telepathy. A young man is in mental communication with a girl he has never met, and travels till he finds her. Even then, neither are sure, and set each other a series of tests, until.....

The rest of the stories are not outstanding, but compare favourably with current trends in short story sf. All are variations on previous sf themes, but all demonstrate an uncanny knack of drawing real, and occasionally rather spicy characters, and plausible situations. Perhaps the only failure is "Dead Centre" -- a long story hardly qualifying as sf, about the first man on the moon. I found this uninteresting, concerned as it was with what happened to his wife and child back home, as they wait.

But don't let me deter you from buying this book; it's

well worth the half-a-crown, if only for the introduction by Theodore Sturgeon.

No sense of wonder, marvellous gadgets or magnificent concepts here, just believable people in unusual predicaments. This, after all, is the essence of modern science fiction, and in this, the book succeeds.

--CHRISTOPHER PRIEST.

## CURRENT ECONOMIC PROBLEMS: CONTINUED FROM PAGE "28.

shoplifting activities. This means that, in practice, no one makes a loss; overall standards of living rise, industry is more healthy, and everyone is better off.

If my system of permitted shoplifting were adopted, not only would it mean happier lives for many frustrated shoplifters, and of course a reduction in the prison populations, but within a very short period of time the economic benefits would be felt by the country as a whole.

Outdated and unrealistic laws must be changed without delay, opinions must be adapted, shoplifting MUST be legalised, if the economic state of this country is to improve, and we are to hope that one day Britain will regain her position of world supremacy.

# Zenith

is a magazine in some ways very similar to this one. But don't let that put you off. Write to

Peter Weston,  
9 Porlock Crescent,  
Birmingham 31.

Then you too will gain all the stimulating benefits of higher grade reading matter -- when you read Peter Weston's letter in reply, saying how about some money (that word again) before he sends you Zenith. Still, it's well worth a few pence. So why not write now?

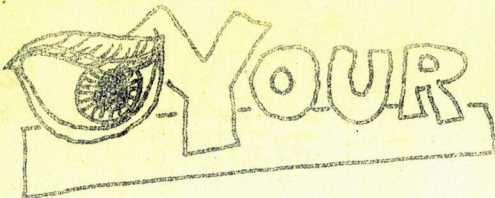
# ZENITH



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The Editor.

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# YOUR Point of View

correspondence received.

FROM ARCHIE MERCER, BRISTOL:

"Point of View" I find to be thoroughly worthy from the points of view (sorry) of production and literacy. It's neat, there are few spelling mistakes, grammatical errors and the like. The contents are not, so far, up to the production standard. Concentration on fiction is, to me, a stroke against it for a start, but it's still worth a read. The "16-in-a-row-forsooth" article was the most interesting content, I thought, and the "Hesperus" thing also has its points..... It is to be hoped that the neatness and accuracy of the product tempt the material to gather in sufficient quantity and quality for your future needs.

\*This raises the question -- should we concentrate on fact or fiction? Or both? And, bearing in mind that this magazine has at present a 50% non-fan readership, what subjects should the articles be on? Ideas, anyone? --CP

FROM JIM CAWTHORNE, DURHAM:

"Point of View" is quite a presentable fanzine, though with too much fiction in it for my liking; fan fiction is rarely worth publishing. Most of this is, admittedly, quite well put over, but the ideas are rather weak. And in a field which is essentially amateur and relaxed, any attempt to 'sell' or 'push' the product automatically makes me resentful. Self-advertisement we get in plenty from the pro. mags; but they also, for the most part, offer entertainment of a professional standard.

I like the 'pocket sized' format, the general clarity of print and illos, and (in spite of what I have said above) the magazine as a whole. The price is not the least of its attractions.

\*The point with regard to self-advertisement has, please note, been duly registered and appreciated. Not so the point about fan fiction being useless; a lot of people seem to find at least one of the stories in PoV number one worth reading. Jim. --CP



FROM TERRY JEEVES, SHEFFIELD:

Normally, fan fiction leaves me cold, but I must confess to enjoying almost every item in your first issue. The "Chess piece" went well, although the ending was a trifle weak. (Only a trifle). "Death Wish" was just the right length -- another good mark. As for "Xordvitch Lear-old Number One", I hope it is not only the first, but the last of this series. The "Fantasy and Science Fiction" series was bad enough, but when you (and "Vector") join the bandwagon, it is too much of a bad thing. (( Then you'll be pleased to see what's on page 35, Terry! --CP))

"Psi'd Show" I enjoyed, particularly since the author did not fall into the trap of being dogmatic about any results. "Nightmare Child" had me waiting eagerly to find out what happens next -- I hate serials for this reason. Poetry is one of my pet hates and "Hesperus" did nothing to change my impression. Of Grammar School level, I'm afraid. The "Juvenile Dept.", however, had great possibilities -- especially for a twelve year old. The humour could easily be polished to adult level -- hang on to Fred. Oh yes, and I liked the book review. The Crossword: I can do the Guardian but I only got half way on this. Final note on your Points of Difference:

1. Yes, PoV opens flat but this isn't a great advantage.
2. The spirit process brings multicolour, but also near illegible print. And you need good artwork for colour.

But I still like it, so please accept my comments as friendly and not hostile.

\*It seems different people have different sorts of eyes; half the letters that have been received have complained about the bad duplicating, the other half have said how nice it is to be able to read every word without difficulty. Since the quality of the duplicating varies little from copy to copy, it must be a matter of insight, or something. --CP

FROM BRIAN ZUGORSKI, SOUTH MIMMS:

'.....I won't comment on the literary quality of your fiction, only that it compares well with other amateur fiction, because I don't think I'm in a position to. BUT NO MORE JUVENILE RUBBISH!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!'

\*Sorry, Brian -- which part did you mean was juvenile??? --CP.

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FROM PHIL HARBOTTLE, WALLSEND - ON - TYNE.

I liked the perspective embodied on the cover, but an otherwise fine drawing was marred by the squiggly daub of an ear and weak hand. I also think the "only 6d for 28 pages" sort of thing is amateurish in the extreme. I know it's good value, but the mag is distributed by post, so inducements on the mag -- as apart from outside adverts -- are totally unnecessary and detract from the atmosphere of the thing.

I admire your clear statement of policy and agree with it up to a point. But I think you are wrong to enforce your compromise policy on all the contents. Anything that has to be written to requirements of any kind has a restrictive effect on the quality as well as the scope. The answer is surprisingly simple -- include broad elements of heavy sf fan appeal and articles of a general nature side by side. A mixture of half and half, but with no compromise per se. This way everyone will find something they like in the magazine. Try and merge them together and you'll please nobody.

The fiction was all most readable, but I was worried by the similarity of "Death Wish" to Pohl's "Drunkard's Walk". (("Death Wish" was written more than a year before "Drunkard's walk". --CP)) However I very much liked the way a scientific explanation was hinted at, and it was well written. I loved the ingenuity of "Learoyd" but the joke was rock bottom and obvious early on. Pity; the writing style was very lively. I expect to see Zugorski improve on this.

All in all, I liked "Point of View" very much, and hope to see it grow from strength, as it deserves. I think the page numbering should be unobtrusive, but perhaps there is some editorial reason for the sprawly figures.

\* Editorial reason was I thought they looked nice. But still. All letters of comment published do, of course, provide their writers with a free copy of Point of View; in the case of subscribers, an extra issue is sent after the sub. would normally have ended. So let's hear from you!

--CP.



Thru Time and Space  
with Xordvitch Learoyd, Jr.

number two

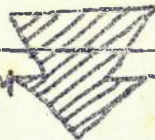
"I'm dying!" the clip-eating babbon from Sirius IV said, as he flopped on to the couch with a prolonged gasp. "My hair is falling out, I've lost 14 of my fingernails, and I can no longer blow down houses!" Xordvitch Learoyd conducted his diagnosis, and shook his head sadly.

"What is it, Doc?" the clip-eater asked anxiously.

"It's not rust, is it?" He shuddered convulsively.

"No, my freind," Learoyd consoled gently, "it's just that you're not getting enough iron in your Staple diet."

IF YOU DON'T FEEL YOU WANT TO WRITE ANY FORM OF CONTRIBUTION, AND HAVE NO MAGAZINE OF YOUR OWN TO TRADE, IT SEEMS THE ONLY WAY YOU CAN GET HOLD OF "POINT OF VIEW," THESE DAYS, IS....PAY FOR IT! (WE APOLOGISE FOR THIS PART OF OUR EDITORIAL POLICY.)



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-CP

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