

DYNATRON

Number 52

February 1973

Now hold on a minute, you are saying, Number 52? you are asking. Indeed, yes. Number 52. But, you are buting, what became on number 51? Ah, yes. So you're wondering, too? Wonder no more (which is different from no more wonder which we have lots of) for I will explain. Yes. Number 51 did appear and on schedule in November, 1972. It was six pages of FAPA mailing comments and was distributed only to FAPA. Sorry about that.

Be that as it May--and that is when the next issue is scheduled to appear--this is the 52d issue of DYNATRON which is, as you well know, Ish, a science-fantasy fanzine, produced by Roy Tackett at 915 Green Valley Road NW, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87107 and these days I manage to get out four issues a year. Time was when there was more time and I did this more often--those were the days, my friend. DYNATRON is available mostly at the editor's whim although you can have a look at a sample copy for 25¢. Be aware, however, that there is no such thing as a subscription to DYNATRON.

Inside this issue you will find an assortment of letters, an article by Pat McCraw, and the usual pages of little import by the editor--whatever he may be. DYNATRON 52 is, as always, a Marinated Publication. X

The February 1973 issue of ANALOG contains a guest editorial by R. G. Cleveland titled Beyond the Citizen. Mr. Cleveland takes as his base an editorial by John W. Campbell (May 1961) in which the stages of cultural evolution were defined as Tribesman, Barbarian, Citizen. He quotes the last part of Campbell's editorial: "...At each stage of cultural evolution, the preceding stage appears loathsome--and the succeeding stage appears to partake of those same loathsome characteristics...It's highly probable that the next stage of cultural evolution will appear, to us, to be barbarism...and be a...loathsome system indeed."

Mr. Cleveland describes the next stage as "Parabarb" and says it is here.

He describes the Tribesman as a creature of the state with little sense of separate. One who is guided by pure ritual and taboo and is not happy with anything else. The Barbarian is at the other end of the scale: individualistic and lawless.

The Citizen is the one with social responsibility. The Citizen, besides being an individual, acknowledges his higher loyalty to a larger group of which he is a member. The citizen does such things as obey the law because it is his civic duty and what keeps civilization going, you know. However, says Mr

Cleveland, because of his acceptance of higher loyalty to the group the citizen easily succumbs to totalitarianism--because it is good for the state/society.

To the Parabarb, however, culture is a social machine to be used like any other machine. And if the machine doesn't

The Parabarb philosophy is pure Heinlein: the state exists to serve the individual not the other way around. When the state/culture demands that he serve it, the Parabarb considers that the state/culture has violated its reason for being. And when this occurs the culture, or at least that part of it, must be smashed and rebuilt.

Mr Cleveland says that while the true Barbarian smashes a culture because he has no use for it the Parabarb tries to alter its form--within the system, if possible--outside the system, if necessary.

The Parabarbs are with us, he says, in the form of campus radicals, hippies, the underground. In short the so-called "counterculture" and in this is the salvation of our society.

Uh-huh.

I won't argue with those basic assumptions. Indeed, I endorse them.

But if the Parabarbs are with us they are a small minority of that small minority, the counterculture. Using Mr Cleveland's system I classify most of that group as Tribesmen. The majority of those I have met are collectivists and there is no individuality among them. And, even so, it appears that the Great American Apathy has overtaken the counterculture and it is slowly fading away.

And me? You know me, Al. I'm pure barbarian.

If these first two pages don't seem to fit--sort of grafted on, as it were, they have been. I generally start Dynatron with page 3 with the intent that page 1 will be the cover and page 2 will be the masthead/contents page. Sometimes, as this time, I end up without either a cover or a contents page and have to do something with these two pages so they get filled with miscellaneous ramblings.

Ed Cagle called me the other night. From Leon, Ks. I don't know why. Perhaps just to assure me that Leon, Ks, does exist. I don't believe it. There is no such place as Ks. I will accept Kansas or Kan or Kans but Ks? Never.

Cagle puts out a fanzine called KWALHIOQUA. That's a ridiculous title. But the fmz is a good one. Ed Cagle, Rt #1, Leon, Kansas, 67074.

Write out Kansas. It'll confuse hell out of the PO's machines.

I learn from KWALHIOQUA that San Francisco has withdrawn its bid for the 1975 worldcon and that Australia is now unopposed. But I'll bet it doesn't remain that way.

Go on to page three. The rest of this space is for Ed Cox to doodle in.

WRITINGS IN THE SAND

Inasmuch as DYNATRON is a non-political fanzine (who's that sniggering over there?) and since you won't be reading this until February, I won't comment on the national elections other than to say that when something goes wrong during the next four years, as it inevitably will, don't complain to me about it; I didn't vote for him.

There are some things about the past election that bear mentioning, though. In perspective, Nixon's "landslide" really wasn't so much. Many more voters in the country did not vote for him than did. Likewise, McGovern's rejection is even bigger than it first appears.

Unofficial figures gave Nixon approximately 45.7 million votes, McGovern approximately 28.3 million votes, and Schmitz and other minor candidates around one million votes. Which totals out to about 75,000,000 votes.

The Census Bureau estimated there were 140,000,000 people in the country eligible to vote. That means that 65 megavotes (roughly 45% of the total) did not even bother to go to the polls.

And that, old chums, is something to ponder on. Why? Apathy? Disgust? Discussion is invited.

A neighbor who knows that I am a stf addict and occasionally reads the stuff herself asked me if I had read CLARION II. I told her I had read CLARION I and wasn't about to waste my money on the second volume. She loaned me her copy which I have sampled at random.

On the bcover Harlan Ellison is quoted: "Read this book...and then you may understand, at least intellectually, why it is that the Clarion/Tulane kids are considered...a very special, very loving, and very talented group of writers."

Yeah.

It's too bad they never learned to communicate.

Another quote, from CRAWDADDY, says "This, friends, is the SF of the future..." That being the case, I'll stick with the SF of the past.

The stories in CLARION II, and other books of that ilk, are hailed as new and exciting and as startling innovations. They are none of that. They are the sort of thing that most young would-be writers turn out under the impression that they are doing something new and different. I recall all sorts of young would-be writers pounding out the same sort of stories for the little magazines in the San Francisco area 25 years ago. Not much ever came of either the stories or the young would-be writers. Yeah, yhos was one of them.

CLARION II, edited by Robin Scott Wilson, Signet, 95¢. Fanzine fiction, for the most part. And not very good fanzine fiction at that.

I've got a whole stack of paperbacks here I should comment on so I'll get through them with a few brief words.

SOMEONE LIKE YOU by Roald Dahl (Pocket Books, #77485, 95¢)

KISS KISS by Roald Dahl (Pocket Books, #77559, 95¢)

These are two collections of very good shuddery tales by a very good author. Not all fantasy but all delightful and guaranteed to surprise. Highly recommend the both of them.

THE DEVIL CHILD by Parley J. Cooper (Pocket Books #77531, 95¢)

One more gothic. I gave it to René who is the gothics reader in this household. She says it is typical so if you are a fan of gothics I presume you'll enjoy it.

THE PASSIONATE WITCH by Thorne Smith (Pocket Books #77493, 95¢)

I'm prejudiced, of course. I've been laughing at Thorne Smith's books for years. Some are a bit dated but still have the power to set me off guffawing. This was Smith's last novel, unfinished at his death, and was completed by Norman Matson. Get it. Get all Thorne Smith's books. Write to Pocket Books and tell them to republish all of them. You'll be better for it.

THE STARS, LIKE DUST by Isaac Asimov (Fawcett Crest #T1713, 75¢)

Another in the seemingly unending reprints of Asimov's earlier novels. It's 20 years old, chums, but still better than most of the stuff being printed today.

THE NAKED SUN by Isaac Asimov (Fawcett Crest, #M1759, 95¢)

See above. There is a reason for all this reprinting, you know. The ranks of Asimov fans continues to grow. A mundane reviewer for the Albuquerque JOURNAL recently went into raves over one of Asimov's books. This one is part of the Elijah Baley robot novels. Good, of course.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE? edited by Isaac Asimov "Master of Science Fiction" (Fawcett Crest P1749, \$1.25)

I wonder if that is a new-type college degree that's been appended to Dr Asimov? 17 classics ranging from Weinbaum's A Martian Odyssey to Niven's Neutron Star. The "Clarion kids" should all get a copy of this one to see what it is all about. 384 pages dripping with the old Sense of Wonder. Highly recommended.

WINTER BLOOD by John Roc (Pocket books #78248, \$1.25)

A sickie about degenerate and decaying people in a degenerate and decaying building in a degenerate and decaying city. Semi-related to the field if you include witchcraft and alchemy. Two landlords, one black and one white, attempt to evict the tenants from a Harlem tenement. The tenants are the usual group of weirdos (lesbians, junkies, etc.) that one has come to expect in these contemporary novels. For all of that I found the story rather pedestrian and overly wordy.

GRAY MATTERS by William Hjortsberg (Pocket Books #78242, \$1.25)

"In the manner of THE ANDROMEDA STRAIN and 2001" it says on the cover. Nah. Another sickie about "living brains" detached from their bodies and involved in assorted mental fantasies. Come back Simon Wright, all is forgiven.

Still on books: I recently read Michael Crichton's The Terminal Man (A.A. Knopf, 1972, \$6.95). Crichton shows a lot of potential but his stories are still predictable. He telegraphs his climaxes. Ah, but his book is full of background. The story tells one all sorts of things about computers and medical science and, well, all sorts of things. For instance, he mentions a number of times in The Terminal Man that the warning symbol denoting radioactivity is colored orange. Now, chums, I've been involved with radioactivity, one way or another, for 10, these many years and I tell you true that the warning symbol denoting radioactivity is colored magenta. So, I presume that the rest of the background in The Terminal Man is comparably accurate.

OK, sure, I'm nit-picking, but it is this sort of straying from accuracy on the part of a writer that jars my fillings. Crichton is not a writer to be taken seriously.

X

Here's a mid-November (that's when this is being written) item from the Associated Press. Blame it all on AP not on me. I've never found AP to be particularly accurate in stories of this type.

It seems that the National Space Agency and the Astronomy Department of the University of Boston co-sponsored a symposium on the social and philosophical implications of contacting other beings from space. (Now if I was an analyst searching for deep meanings as is done by the "experts" on China and DRV and the USSR, etc., I would seize upon that word "other" and do three pages about it.) Prof. Carl E. Sagan, who is Director of Conrell's Laboratory for Planetary Studies declared that man's technology has reached the stage where man could detect another civilization as advanced as his own. ((Remember what happened to the Aztecs when their civilization was detected?))

Ashley Montague suggested that we take a hard look at ourselves before we contact another civilization. "Some other forms of life are probably more intelligent than we," he said. "They may regard us as we would some forms of rabies or cholera." ((Does that mean the ectee's will have to get shots?))

Ah, but Dr Kirster Stendahl, dean of the Harvard Divinity School said that "Theologians have been the ones who have been preparing themselves for life beyond the earth, as with the angels, archangels and such." ((That is sort of a mind-blower--just a bit, mind you.))

Dr George Wald of Harvard said he is convinced there is life elsewhere in the universe but doubts that man will ever contact it. He finds the thought of such contact "terrifying".

Prof Philip Morrison of MIT predicted that any messages would be very technical, scientifically coded, and come in bits.

((What? No "take me to your leader"?))

No. I'm not going to comment. This was, after all a serious and...well, serious discussion by a lot of serious, high-level men.

What does it all mean?

X

And Richard Leakey discovers the bones of a member of genus Homo which are dated at 2.5 megayears B.P. That pretty well confirms his father's "Homo Habilis" and shoots hell out of the whole generally accepted sequence of the development of man. But it explains Steinheim and Swanscombe, ne?

I must admit that the evidence for tracing man from Australopithecus Africanus to Homo Saps is convincing but I hope that in my various essays on the subject I've hedged enough to be able to go in other directions.

What we apparently have are at least two different sets of humanoids. One line goes from Australopithecus to the Neanderthals. The other line is Homo all the way. We can assume that the two were hostile to each other but that early populations were scarce enough that contact was minimal. Homo Saps, doing the thing he does best: breeding, eventually wiped out the other line.

Or we can assume something completely different.

What do you assume, Roytac?

I assume nothing. I go only on what is known or can be deduced.

Obviously things have changed. The change in type indicates a break of approximately two months and it is now mid-January. The change of type was necessitated by the electric going into the shop for service. And because Hugo Schulte wanted some price lists mimeographed and elite type was required. So I broke out this old Royal portable which still cuts a fair stencil. I tested it on Hugo's price lists.

Fanac came to a complete halt early in December. My mother suffered a stroke. She lingered a couple of weeks and died on December 23rd. We have been quite busy around here getting her affairs squared away and things fanish have accumulated in one huge pile.

We will attempt to reduce the pile by getting the letters of comment out of the way starting with this eastern tenderfoot.

NORMAN HOCHBERG, 89-07 209 ST. QUEEN'S VILLAGE, N.Y. 11427:

I've just gotten through stuffing my ego with a pile of locs to crudzines--BLECH 2, BOYBOY 1, THE MONSTER 2, and COMIX ON PARADE--YAH YAH 3. It was a simple job. Now how do I talk to you, Roy, a fanziner with 50 issues of Dy behind you and god-knows how many years as well? ((Respectfully. RT))

fmz..."

No, that's silly. I'll be tough. "Dy50 wasn't as good as Dy49." But I didn't see Dy49. Oh well.

Maybe I should just write and see what happens?

For some odd reason I found Dy50 a very strange pill indeed. The first dozen pages had me actively reading the zine. Then--pow! Glycer and Gilliland put me right to sleep. I guess I wasn't in a sercon mood, eh? ((Neither were they.))

Len's speech is marvelous. I'm glad he and June won TAFF. He'll be captivating, I'm sure.

And a Vardebob piece of faan fiction. Boy! You've been holding out on us. You are faanish!! ((I deny everything.))

The whole Campbell thing is a bit played by now, eh? Campbell did get the stories he and his readership wanted. Bova, too. Just 'cause I don't like Bova's selection (though I think it's better than Campbell's) is no reason to continue the debate. It's all like vs. dislike by now.

I seem to be missing page 34. ((So is everyone else--but me. I still have the stencil. Page 34 was deemed excess and non-essential. I may run it in another issue sometime.))

BETTY KUJAWA, 2819 Caroline St., South Bend, Indiana, 46614:

Have a good Thanksgiving? We et out...and in Gene's 1st Martini was a little green plastic mermaid...first Mermaid we've ever seen swimming around in a Very Dry Martini. {{Are you sure it was the first martini?}}

I thank you for sending me DYNATRON #50, congrats on attaining your 50th issue, and twas nice of you to remember Ol' Betsy, I enjoyed it very much. The only fanzine I get nowadays is still YANDRO in which I see you snapping and snarling from time to time. {{Got to maintain my reputation.}}

Hey Roy-Baby...last Tuesday night the CBS movie was "Gargoyles", I didn't catch the name of its author, but it was filmed in the New Mexico Territory. 'Course it was a bit of a come down to read in TV GUIDE that "the head gargoyle" was played by Bernie Casey, let's face it, that name doth not lend itself to a horror-role.

Gene snorted and had a Few Pithy Words about the wing-span of the Head Gargoyle...especially when he flew off loaded down with his wounded mate...like wings that size couldn't carry him, let alone the both of 'em...not to mention the fact that he flew that s-l-o-w.

My comment was, after the twosome got away, I hoped Roy and cohorts met them and immediately signed them up as members of New Mexico fandom. No doubt in like Montgomery's next letter will be news of same? {{Is that what those are? I thought they were hot air balloonists practicing for the upcoming (or, more likely, past) world championship.}}

Enjoyed Len Hoffatt's speech-article. Am always curious and interested in how fans found stf and then found fandom. We all have our little sagas to tell about that. I didn't really find stf (in pulp form) till "late" in life...age about 24, and then when attending the Chicon in '52 at age 29 I happened to pass the NBF table where some feller asked me if I'd like to join...knowing Nothing about the deal, I joined...and THAT'S how it all began, sigh.

In a few months Lynn Hickman dropped by our then-home in Kalamazoo, unfortunately I was out but I found his note...I went for quite a few years before meeting a real life fan...now I honestly cant recall if it was Hickman or the Coulsons & DeWeeses.

My biggest thrill in mine early days was the time Wrai and Bill Ballard came to call. Wrai and I had been corresponding via weekly tapes for years. Whatta blast that was!

I for one would certainly like to read Len's Fannish Memoirs if and when they come out. I wonder if he'll include the air-line stewardess with the Jammed zipper in his re-counting? Have him tell you about that sometime, Roy.

Speaking, as Len is here, of mystery fandom, I wonder if there is a Gideon of Scotland Yard fandom? I am a devout follower of Gideon.

Jeeze...so Im a whole year older than Len Hoffatt! Sometimes I feel NOBODY is older than I am...then I remember Buz Busby who I know is actually older'n'I am...well somebody had to be. Now that I think about it this is my 20th year as a fan...a mite gaffated, true, but in my heart of hearts a fan still.

Was pleased to notice mention of the novel LIGHTER THAN A FEATHER in Dan Goodman's loc. I read it last summer and found it excellent. As so often happens I lucked in finding this hardback via Harboros and then never found another soul who had even heard of the book...always consoling to learn I Am Not Alone.

{{You are not alone. No

fan is ever alone. Thank you Asher Sutton.}}

DARRELL SCHWEITZER, 113 Deepdale Road, Strafford, Pa., 19087:

I suppose the most comment-worthy material this time is the two articles on E. E. Smith. I was somewhat disappointed by the Glycer piece because it promised more than it delivered. I was hoping he'd go tearing into Smith the same way Train did to Cooper. It would actually be quite easy to do such a thing, since Smith and Cooper were very similar writers in many ways. Both were almost completely illiterate and lacking in basic storytelling ability, not to mention poor observers of people and events. (I can dig out several Smithian equivalents of Cooper's rolling cannonballs, footprints in the bottoms of streams, etc.) I first encountered Smith in the 8th grade, when I was about 13 or so. Even then his work struck me as crude and somewhat unsophisticated. I was reading adult science fiction at the time, but the writing level of Smith reminded me more of the Hardy Boys books I'd given up a couple years earlier. I suppose Smith's major problem was his sheer inability to write. He did not possess sufficient command of the language to produce functional prose. Furthermore, he had no sense of story structure, and couldn't bring about enough conflict to get his plots moving. His idea of a climax is having his hero put on bullet-proof armor and shoot up the bad guys, as we see in GALACTIC PATROL. (I managed to read the entire Skylark series and move on to the Lensmen, but didn't make it thru them. GP is where I stopped.) Of course there is no characterisation, but Smith's inane dialogue prevented his cardboard figures from being minimally inobtrusive blanks of the type that would stand aside and let the story progress. He couldn't even handle a one dimensional character with the skill of an Edmond Hamilton or an Edgar Rice Burroughs. I should hope he didn't think people really talked like that. Most likely he simply did not have an ear for sounds. ((I agree in part and disagree in part and think I'll let someone else do the rebutting. I will point out, however, that no PhD can be considered illiterate and that whatever Smith's literary faults he did possess a soaring imagination and could evoke the old Sense of Wonder. Most of today's acclaimed SF writers may be more literary but they are dull as hell.))

The "love interest" is merely a pulp convention, showing perhaps that Smith had no literary education beyond the pages of ARGOSY, and certainly isn't to be taken seriously. It is plugged in because the formula says it's supposed to be. Likewise, the philosophical and sociological ideas of the stories shouldn't be taken seriously either. Smith was an extremely sloppy thinker, and probably wasn't at all aware of the implications of what he was saying. ((I think I would like for you to expand on these last two sentences.))

You might conclude from all this that I'm ignorant of and/or prejudiced against the older SF, but this is simply not so. I have read a great deal of it, not only in reprints, but in the original magazines, so I know in what context Smith's stories appeared. I've found that as an idea man Smith was ahead of his contemporaries, but as a writer, he was bad even for his times. Only the very very worst fell below him, and there were few of those. While the 1920's and 30's weren't an exactly glorious period in the history of the field, mostly due to the enormous lowering of previous standards due to Gernsback's influence, there were quite a few writers who could handle style and content better than Smith. To name a few, Hamilton, Burroughs, David H. Keller (in his novels), Clark Ashton Smith ("City of the Singing Flame"), Lovecraft, Jack Williamson, Hils Breuer, John Russell Fearn, "Don A. Stuart", Warner Van Lorne, Stanley Weinbaum, etc., etc. The list is quite long. This does not count, of course, the material any of these people did for Ray Palmer's magazines. Few of these writers were really outstanding, but nearly all of them were competent to some degree or other.

((Darrell ascribes Smith's initial popularity to the fact that at a time when sf was "dramatised essays. Smith rediscovered the plot." He says that Smith declined in appeal to both editors and readers as better writers came along and concludes:))

The conclusion is that Smith isn't exactly a giant of the field. He's something any respectable fan should want to sweep under the rug. Like 1950's monster movies...

JACKIE FRANK, Box 51A, RR2, Beecher, Illinois, 60401:

Enjoyed the transcript of Moffatt's talk. Len is another fan I've heard of often, but never have had the opportunity of meeting or even reading. Sounds like quite a fellow...~~They don't come any better.~~

The FanAnnish Carol was hilarious--the ending especially...is this an anomaly for you to publish something on this order? Not really familiar with DYN yet, so I'm not certain. ~~I've published that sort of thing before. Not too often, though.~~

The two associated articles were interesting to me. My Dad, who introduced me to SF in the first place, always listed the Lensman series as his favorites, but I never read any of the books. Our tastes took divergent paths. (Of course he died before the great shakeup in SF with its new emphasis on style--always wondered what he'd think of Ballard, Disch, Ellison, et al.. though I have a pretty good idea.) There were many contact points, but Smith wasn't one of them. ~~The thought of Ballard, et al, induces in me a desire to vomit.~~

Glyer's article, though more serious in tone than Gilliland's for some reason gives me less "feel" of the series than Alexis', but both cover their subject well enough to make me at least want to read the books--where before it was always thought of as a chore to do One of these Days as a more-or-less salute to the departed.

But

I'm still not exactly rushing out to dig up copies.

Something's wrong. I don't have adventures in elevators like other fans. Somehow, though, after reading Aljo's experiences, don't think I'm missing anything.

What started this bumrapping of New Mexico anyway? Montgomery's letter--an article practically--was funny and hit many a sore spot but I really don't understand its antecedents. What started it--asides from merely living in the state, of course? ~~There are an assortment of official organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce, the Department of Development, etc., as well as 297 separate land ~~developers~~ developers who are all busy trying to sell the Land of Enchantment to unsuspecting dwellers in megalopolis. Some of us feel that some counter-propaganda is called for. We're not bumrapping--just telling it like it is.~~

Have you read A. C. Clarke's article in PLAYBOY? It's about time we have some protests about the cut-back in the Space Program in general circulation magazines. Hope to see more in the future.

I would reject that interbreeding test for humanness utterly. All that that would prove is species integrity--not intelligence, mind or creativity. A dog and a cat are roughly equal in man's eyes in regard to worth and intellect, but they certainly can't interbreed. Does that make one ipso-facto inferior? ~~Trojan feels that all cats and most other dogs are inferior--witness the trail of bones.~~ The point about the relative nature of chimps (or dolphins or whales or whathaveyou) is not whether they ARE men, but if they are as "good" as men. Are they genuinely inferiors or should they be our equals? ~~You want to give them the vote?~~ All sorts of definitions have been trotted out to set man apart and above, but the more we find out of these animals, the less valid are our definitions. Chimp and man are separate species--there is no doubt of that--but like canines and felines are they more alike than we would care to admit?

The greatest difficulty in establishing the intellect of a beast is its inability to communicate. To make contact with another species and actually communicate would be an end in itself.

But I imagine the Homo Sap as King of the Universe notion will be around for quite a while yet. ~~Yep. Put it this way, Jackie, if they weren't inferior they'd be king of the hill instead of us.~~

DAVID SHANK, 30 East Laurel St., Lawrence, Mass. 01843:

Is it safe to assume that Vardebob put you pu to sending me this falling-apart desertzine? If so--congratulate that rascal and get better staples. ((In these parts, podnuh, it is safe to assume nothing.))

All I can say about the cover on #50 is that it's Dynamic--it reminds me of those covers on ANALOG--why, I don't know. I say it certainly looks like a strange way to dry one's hair.

I can comment on Len Boffatt in only a limited way: I am a trufan in the sense of Warner's definition that I don't read that Buck Rogers junk--just the good stuff--faanzines. It's more exciting than those mindtrips to Outer Prxclyt. But, friends, what IS a trufan? Can a young guy like myself be a trufan with only 1½ years in the business of fanac? I think that if a sf enthusiast truly believes in his hobby and loves the social interaction fandom gives, he certainly IS a trufan. And a trufan is not a trufan until he's skinnydipped in the hotel pool after drinking beer. ((Since you say you don't read that crazy Buck Rogers stuff then, obviously, you are not a Fan at all.))

Ah, well, I tell you, chums, I grow a bit weary of typing letters and, since it is my fanzines (?)--WE ALSO HEARD FROM:

Chris Walker, Donn Brazier, Ed Connor, Mike Glycer, Gary Mattingly, Buck Coulson, Sheryl Birkhead, Mike Shoemaker, Larry Nielson, Bob Stahl (you didn't really expect me to read that micro-elite missive, did you?), Harry Warner, Ed Cagle, Jeff Ray, Rose Hogue, DOOBROTH, and the United States Post Office, Tallahassee, Florida, which, for reasons known only to the Postmaster, whoever he may be, sent me back the address label from Joe Siolari's copy of Dynatron 50. That's all. No explanation--just the address label.

DEPARTMENT OF FAVORITE STF ARTISTS:

A couple of issues back I asked readers to send me a list of their 10 favorite stf artists. Professional, that is. Response was something less than overwhelming and the results were fairly scattered. Herewith the results.

Virgil Finlay - 10	Jack Gaughan - 2	Van Dongen - 1
Frank Freas - 10	V. di Fate - 2	Schneeman - 1
Hannes Bok - 5	Wesso - 1	Sidney Simes - 1
Chesley Bonestell - 5	Dold - 1	Howard Pyle - 1
John Schoenherr - 4	Howard Brorne - 1	Frank Pape - 1
Ed Emshwiller - 4	W. Wood - 1	IC Escher - 1
Edd Cartier - 4	Powers - 1	Artzybasheff - 1
Hubert Rogers - 3	Ebel - 1	Frazetta - 1
Frank R. Paul - 3	Eberle - 1	Tim Kirk - 1
J. A. St John - 3	Eddie Jones - 1	Leydenfrost - 1
Earle Bergey - 2	Gerard Quinn - 1	Frank Tinsley - 1
Mel Hunter - 2	Laurence - 1	

Finlay and Freas, obviously, head almost everyone's list. Somewhat surprising in this year of 1973 are the mentions of artists who haven't done any work in the field in years such as Cartier, Rogers, Paul, St John, Bergey, etc. Consider that Bergey, who is mainly remembered for his babe-bem-bum covers on STARTLING and TWS, gathered the same number of mentions as Jack Gaughan who is one of the more popular of the current artists.

I'm not sure what this proves, if anything, but it was interesting.

This is supposed to be a science fiction/fantasy fanzine so I suppose I should make some mention of it in here someplace. Particularly since I have so many pages to fill and an elite typer to do it with. Let's get along here. Where did I put those notes. Red ink on yellow paper? Ghod!

SC MONITOR

THE GREEN FLASH

A while back I picked up a copy of THE GREEN FLASH by Joan Aiken (Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1971) and I cannot recommend too highly this collection of 14 delightful tales of "horror, suspense, and fantasy." Miss Aiken is English and writes in the finest tradition of good English writers. She is a shining talent whose storytelling ability is so far above that of the run-of-the-mill sf writer that there really is no comparison. New writers would be much better off reading the works of Joan Aiken than in searching their souls in Clarion-type workshops. Enough said. Get this one.

And speaking of Clarion, a friend loaned me a copy of CLARION II, edited by R. S. Wilson and published by somebody who should have known better. Prep school writing exercises for the most part. No good. Forget it.

Ira Levin seems to have discovered a successful formula in writing fantasy and science fiction for mainstream readers. His first novel, in 1953, was A KISS BEFORE DYING, about which I know nothing. In 1967 he hit the best seller list with ROSEMARY'S BABY, a "shocker" concerning a lot of superstitious nonsense that most mundanes take seriously. In 1970 he gave us THIS PERFECT DAY, a sfnal projection that really was not too far fetched.

Mr. Levin's newest book, a rather short and quickly read item, THE STEPFORD WIVES (Random House, \$4.95), is semi-sfnal and rather shudderingly possible. I give away nothing that Levin doesn't telegraph early in the book when I tell you that the ladies of the suburban community of Stepford work like robots because they are robots. The town of Stepford sits in the middle of a sophisticated electro-chemical engineering industrial complex and what with the quickly progressing developments in computers and plastics the premise of life-like robots is possible.

The horror here is in the concept of a whole town full of men who coldbloodedly kill their wives and replace them with robot duplicates. The femlibbers should have a ball with this one.

THE STEPFORD WIVES may be old hat to the sfan but the mundanes will find it exciting. And it'll help you pass a hour or so if you have nothing else to do.

A REPORT FROM GROUP 17 by Robert C. O'Brien (Atheneum, 1972) is ostensibly a suspense cum spy novel that is actually a pretty good SF story. It involves Russians and Nazis (who else?) and efforts at biological warfare. The gimmick is polywater and the idea is interesting although a regular sf author would have developed it further. Readable.

SPACE PUZZLES by Martin Gardner (Pocket Books, Archway #29549, 75¢) is an assortment of known facts about the Solar System dressed up with questions to test the reader's knowledge. Not really a whole lot here but it's a good book for the kiddies --or the dummy who lives next door.

FROM EARTH TO HEAVEN by Isaac Asimov (Discus/Avon/W338, \$1.25) This is a collection of 17 of Asimov's essays from F&SF and there's a lot more in it than there is in the Gardner book mentioned above. Of course the Gardner is meant for the kiddies so that makes a difference. This is a good one for the kids, too, but not for the dummy next door. It's too much for him.

TOKYO FILE

by

TAKUMI SHIBANO

(Reprinted from UCHUJIN, Nos. 167, 168 & 169)

The 11th Japanese SF Convention (MEICON-2) was held on August 19 & 20 in Nagoya promoted by Mutant's Club and some 250 fans gathered.

A different opening of the con on the first day, modeling on a traditional Japanese show, was much welcomed by the audience. Many kinds of souvenirs prepared by the committee also characterized the con.

Jun'ya Yokota of Tokyo and Shin Watanabe of Hiroshima gave lectures on "SF Classics of Japan" and "Fancy Macrobiotics" respectively. Miss Judith Merrill, escorted by Yu Mori, the editor of SF MAGAZINE, attended and gave an address.

Lectures on the second day were "SF and Ancient History of Japan" by Aritsune Toyota and "History of American SF Comics" by Mikikazu Mori of Osaka.

The con ended with a big lottery and a small costume show.

Many old SF films were shown on both days. Seiun-Awards were not given this year to rearrange the voting system.

At the general meeting of The Federation of SF Fan Groups of Japan held the evening of the 19th, SF-Kurabu left the Federation while Iskatel' Club of Hokkaido and Aurora Club of Tokyo joined.

The 12th Japanese SF convention will be held in Hokkaido in August of 1973.

Tadashi Fukami, a noted translator of Russian SF, made a business trip to the Soviet Union this past summer and met many SF authors in Moscow, Leningrad, and Kiev.

Koji Tanaka made his first professional appearance in SF MAGAZINE with his novelette, Horizon of Illusion, which was first published in UCHUJIN #162.

NEW BOOKS: WHAT DO YOU MEAN, SCIENCE FICTION? by Judith Merrill (translated by Hisashi Asakura, published by Shobunsha), collection of essays.

A CHRONICLE OF LOST CITIES by Ryu Mitsuse (published by Hayakawa Shobo), novel. AN INCOHERENT SET by Shin'ichi Hoshi (published by Kadokawa-shoten) collection. TIME BATTLE AGAINST MONGOL by Aritsune Toyota (published by Hawakawa-shobo) novel.

EARTHMAN'S BURDEN by Poul Anderson and Gordon Dickson (translated by N. Itoh and A. Inaba, published by Hayakawa-shobo). PLANET OF THE DOUBLE SUN by Neil R. Jones (translated by Masahiro Noda, published by Hayakawa-shobo).

STRANGE ANCESTORS by Shin'ichi Hoshi (published by Kodan-sha) collection. WHEN THE SHOGUN AWOKE by Yasutaka Tsutsui (published by Kawade-shobo) collection. THE GALAXY THAT BURNT UP by Taku Mayumura (published by Hayakawa-shobo) novel. THINKING OF OUR PLANET, Sakyo Komatsu, editor (published by Shincho-sha), collection of interviews with 12 scientists.

TAKUMI SHIBANO

Roytac winds it all up for this:

I tried. Honestly, I did. I got a copy of The Muller-Fokker Effect by John Sladek (Pocket Books #77622, 95¢) which is blurbed as "an outrageously comic novel" "Like A CLOCK-WORK ORANGE and SLAUGHTERHOUSE FIVE". (Making reference to those two is not going to sell me any book--I didn't think much of them either.)

OK, you know my tastes in SF (or you should by now). I'm not enthused by John Sladek. I have read some of his stories before. I really can't recall what they were which is probably just as well as I'm feeling pretty good now and recalling Sladek's stories would just upset me.

The cover blurb asks: "Can a human being be reconstituted like orange juice? To find out, the Army backs a futuristic project that transfers a man's personality onto computer tapes. Guinea pig for the experiment is technical writer and dreamer Bob Shairp. But the project barely gets off the ground when a computer accident wipes out Shairp's mortal body and only his tapes remain. Is Shairp doomed to this encoded state forever? Or can the bizarre process be reversed?"

Well, to tell the truth, I never found out. I couldn't finish the book. The basic idea isn't particularly original--Budrys' Rogue Moon comes to mind as one of the better treatments of the theme.

Mainly, though, this seems to be a vehicle for Sladek to, ummmm, satirize, shall we say?, various aspects of American life. Trouble is that Sladek is beating the same old dead horses that satirists have been over-working for years. Pick one--it's there.

(Got to admit, though, that I appreciated the bit on the evangelist. A couple of weeks after my mother died there came one of those form letters from Oral Roberts, complete with the printed "personalized handwriting" addressed to her. "Dear Paftner. This is going to be your year for a miracle." Yeah.)

Let's face it, Sladek is one of those who is supposed to be writing science fiction but it is not the sort of science fiction in which I am interested. It bores the hell out of me. The humor--I can recognize all the lines--falls flat.

Still there was one scene where the characters at a party were discussing the works of Thomas Disch. I thought that was outrageously comic.

✕
Digging through some old correspondence I came across a letter from James Russell Gray of Hartshorne, Oklahoma dated 4 November 1943. I just read it for the first time (in November, 1943, I was tromping around the jungles of New Guinea). Gray and Art Sehnert were trying to get fandom to organize.

Any fannish historians know anything about this particular program?

Gray concluded his letter: "Anyway, I'll be waiting to hear from you." I wonder if he still is?

Also discovered was SHANGRI-L'AFFAIRES #8, January 1943. Joquel was the editor. Summaries of the various Lasfs meetings. Members in attendance were mostly, Joquel, Ackerman & Morojo, Sid Dean, Mel Brown, Yerke, Milty Rothman, Walt Daugherty, Helen Finn and Paul Freehafer.

Those were the days, ah, yes, those were the days.

Mostly those were the days because the postage for a fanzine was only 1½¢.

One item bears reprinting: Jan 1, 1943: Pvt Russ Hodgkins today lost to Lt Fred Shroyer, according to the terms of a bet made long ago as civilians (circa 1938), his original copy of the bound Munsey serial "After a Million Years" by Garret Smith. Had Shroyer lost he would have sacrificed his entire fabulous book collection. And what was the winner so confident of? That we would not see the Coming of Technocracy in '42.

Wings over the world and all that, I guess. Pour the wine.

And this has been an abbreviated DYNATRON #52. Next issue in May, mayhap.

Or sooner. Or later.

Later.

Roytac.

Genuine Advertisement:

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Ed.Note. I've seen it, read it, liked it. Roytac.

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