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DYNATRON

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In between sips of Constant Comment I must tell you that this is just what it says there--the 56th (more or less) issue of the old greenzine. DYNATRON, the fanzine of serious fannishness (or, perhaps, it is fannish seriousness (or, perhaps, it isn't)) is edited, published and mostly written by Roy Tackett, 915 Green Valley Road NW, Albuquerque, N.M. 87107, USA. Available mostly for a show of interest, for trade or otherwise. 25¢ for a sample copy. I would tell you the publication schedule but I don't understand it myself. MIKE KRING has an article in this issue.

As usual: A Marinated Publication X

I was going to submit a motion to the readership but, after due consideration, I really don't think it is necessary. We are all in agreement that Denny Lien is crazy, right? There's no need to take a vote on that. What other conclusion can be drawn when one receives from the said Denny Lien fifteen (count 'em) issues of ELECTRIC BUMBLE-BEE SANDWICHES all at once by FIRST CLASS MAIL! Either Denny is filthy rich or he has blown his wig, right? Right. I know he isn't filthy rich. He's a nut. Thanx, Denny. Appreciated. But you still a nut.

X

The Albuquerque Science Fiction Club, feeling flushed with fifty dollars in the treasury, held its October meeting in the basement of a bank on East Central. Actually it was Mike Kring's idea. That's where he keeps the treasury and he doesn't want to get too far away from it. The bank is more trustworthy than I. I wouldn't have that mob in my basement even if I had a basement which I don't. I have a crawlspace under the house and I wouldn't have them there either. That's where I keep my wine.

I was late for the meeting as I spent several minutes trying to find my way into the parking lot. The bank management presumably figures that if you can't solve the maze you are not smart enough to have any money anyway. I finally solved it the way I solve most maze puzzles--by going at it from the reverse direction. I drove in the drive-up banking exit. It was just as well that it was Sunday as that maneuver would surely have given some overstuffed capitalist a case of apoplexy.

Eventually, however, I found my way into the dim recesses of the bank basement and found the old stalwarts of the ASFC gathered around a table presumably engaged in a meeting, his worship Jack Speer presiding. I dumped a stack of Dynatrons on the table and observed that our annual gaggle of new members had faded away even more rapidly than usual. Some of the regulars seem to have faded away, too.

I was pleasantly surprised to see Carmie Toulouse (who, you may remember, had a paper on how to construct an archaeological site in these pages a

while back). This was the first time Carmie had shown up at a meeting in two or three years but it turned out, alas, that she was just passing through Albuquerque from somewhere to elsewhere.

Pat McCraw, the greatest ~~swordman swordwoman~~ swordsperson in All Albuquerque stopped by to say that she couldn't attend the meeting because she had to go to the Tribune office to count football ballots. Tribune reporters are assigned to all sorts of tasks. Almost anything but reporting the news.

Mike Kring approached me with the Woody Wolfe Memorial Pig into which I dutifully fed my dues.

Juffus finally got the meeting into some semblance of order and decreed--these judges are always coming up with a decree of some sort--that we would get on with the program which consisted of the assembled members reporting on new books.

Vardeman led off with a report on the first volume of the adventures of Cap Kennedy, a new series character ~~xxxxxx xxxx~~ modeled on a whole herd of old series characters. (Considering the decision of the Board of Geographical Names by the time you read this Cap Kennedy may well be known as Cap Caneveral.)

Harry Morris said the latest book he'd read had been written in 1928 which puts him several years behind Speer but, then, Jack's been at it longer by about 30 years. You might not believe this but Juffus is up to 1949 now.

Speer did reveal, however, that, in order to keep with the spirit of the program he had bought a new book--the latest Larry Niven collection--and was favorably impressed. It is a good thing he bought the Niven. It would have been pretty much of a shock to him if he had gotten hold of something by Effinger or Malzberg, just to name a couple.

I forget what it was I reported on. Something quite ridiculous, I'm sure.

But what isn't?

The Bubonicon Committee reported that he had nothing to report.

We all agreed to have another go at it next month.

Speaking of Malzberg, Pocket Books sent me a copy of his latest thing which is called PHASE IV. It says on the cover "A race of super ants delivers an ultimatum to mankind - Adapt or die!" I learned long ago to ignore cover blurbs but Malzberg lost me on the second page when he described Old Sol as "a small Class B star." I can ignore cover blurbs but I can also ignore authors who are too lazy to do a little basic research. Goodbye, Barry.

ED COX. DOODLE IN THIS SPACE:

{{Mike Kring is a Texifan who wanted out of the Lone Star State so bad that he went so far as to join the U.S. Air Force which shipped him to New Mexico. Sometimes you just can't win.}}

WATCH OUT WORLD, WE'RE UNDER ATTACK!

by

MIKE KRING

The other day, while browsing through the newsstand, I stumbled across an obscure journal which should be on everyone's must read list. It is called THE PSYCHIC OBSERVER and I picked up Vol. XXIV, No. 5, just to see (I thought at the time) what the "nut" fringe was up to.

Can you imagine my shock and horror as I read an interview with Dr George King, founder of the Aetherius Society (now, friends, if you can't trust a Doctor, who can you trust?). It seems that the Earth is under constant attack from evil beings from outer space! (I mean, friends, from beyond this solar system!) To give an example of how these vicious attacks can take place, I quote Dr King:

"Not very long ago there was a concentrated attack on earth by evil intelligences; very luckily they didn't come into the 'physical' realms. Just luckily for mankind that they came into what we call the 'hells' or the lower astral realms, (I shall put it that way.). There was an android which had been there several thousand years which was suddenly awakened because of the changing vibratory patterns of the earth, and that almost took control of the earth. The idea was to completely mentally enslave all men on earth and they almost did it. It was a miracle it didn't succeed..."

Well, friends, when I read that I sat in my chair dumbfounded! Why wasn't there any mention of this terrible threat in the papers or on television? I then realized if John Q. Public had read such dire warnings in the papers, or had heard Walter Cronkite tell of it, they would have panicked. I then realized THE PSYCHIC OBSERVER was obscure on purpose, just to let a select few in on the secret. It made me shudder with the realization of my new responsibilities.

I read on and found out: "...Mars is inhabited by physical beings who live under the surface, and are undoubtedly more highly advanced than we are..." and "...there is a small solar system, something like this, in which we live. And, that's toward the center of the galaxy, and is known as (or at least, we call it) 'Gotha.' The people from that system are very intelligent, very highly evolved people..."

I was fascinated, and more than a little afraid, friends, for it seems we humans are responsible for the destruction of the planet which now makes the asteroids. It is a terrible, cosmic crime and we can only get help from the other good planets under special conditions (like when the android was attempting to enslave us all).

Well, let me tell you, it makes me a little more secure to know men such as Dr George King are helping mankind to withstand these terrible attacks from outer space.

I can sleep again at nights knowing, somewhere, Dr George King is talking to a Gotham about our planet's future, and always on the alert for attacks by androids or any other evil intelligences.

MIKE KRING

XXXXXX

This Dr George King whom Mike mentions is based in London and has been a long-time fixture on the psychic-occult-scene. He is the author of any number of books and pamphlets.

DYNATRON readers, who obviously belong to a nut cult themselves since they are science fiction fans, might be interested in investigating some of the real nut cults--those which involve the mystic-psychic-occult scene. Pick up a copy of something like THE PSYCHIC OBSERVER and enter the world of flying saucers, great teachers from Venus, "ancient" religions (all of which are tied one way or another to Christianity) and all the rest. It is, as they say, far out. Brrrr. You'll find, too, that most of those deeply involved in the occult are also firm believers in the Great Conspiracies that are out to take over the world, the national government and/or your local voting precinct. There is, of course, the Great International Communist Conspiracy which is controlled by the Great International Bankers Conspiracy which is tied up with the Great International Jewish Conspiracy which is controlled, probably, by something that goes all the way back to Sumer--except none of them have ever heard of Sumer. Frightening in a way.

They all have documents--published by the nut in the next town--to back up their statements.

Weird, I tell you.

Ah, well, it all comes to what each of us believes. Consider one Professor Charles Hapgood, for example. I have no idea what or where Professor Hapgood professes but his theory is that Earth's crust is floating loose on the mantle. Whenever the polar ice reaches a certain mass then, due to centrifugal force and the like, the crust moves with, of course, disastrous results. Hapgood has written a number of books on the subject and has an article in the Nov73 ARGOSY warning that the time is near. Hapgood says the last such shift was about 15 thousand years ago. One bit of evidence he cites is the frozen mammoths which, he says, were not arctic animals at all. Which will be a surprise to the paleo hunters who followed them across the Bering Bridge. There, you see, I am letting my own beliefs sneak in here.

Hapgood says that the crustal shift moved Hudson Bay from the pole to its present more southerly position and cites the fact that geological evidence indicates that the Hudson Bay area is where one of the great glaciers was centered.

But geological evidence also tells us that the poles are not necessarily glacier centers--mountains are the main requirement. And who knows, really? If I wake up some morning and find Albuquerque situated on the equator I'll score one for Hapgood.

If you are a SF completist--an absolute completist--you may want to pick up a copy of The Eternal Man by Louis Pauwels and Jacques Bergier (Avon, \$1.50). This isn't a sf book but there are references to Lovecraft, Heinlein, Clarke, de Camp and others. Jack Williamson's The Reign of Wizardry appears in the bibliography.

For all of that The Eternal Man is not science fiction. What Pauwels and Bergier seem to be doing is pushing the theory that our civilization is only the latest of a series of civilizations that mankind has developed over several millions of years. These other civilizations were destroyed by various catastrophes which the authors speculate on but make no definite statements about. In the introduction the authors say, "This book lays absolutely no claim to scientific value nor is it intended to be a doctrine of wisdom." No where do they definitely say that there was a pre-iceage civilization nor do they offer any direct evidence. They draw on myth and legend and say that it is fun to speculate.

If you take this book seriously you'll no doubt find your blood pressure rising but if you take it in the way it was written you'll enjoy it. I did. There are 12 pages of photographs that have absolutely nothing to do with the text. It takes, I tell you, a talent to produce a 240 page book that sounds serious but really says nothing. Such a book could only have been written by a couple of Frenchmen. (Review by R. Tacquette.)

✕

Many years ago Nancy Freedman and her husband Benedict wrote a book called Mrs Mike. It was a best seller and a book club selection and I think I still have a copy of it knocking about somewhere because I once belonged to the Book-of-the-Month Club. I don't have the faintest idea what Mrs Mike was about; that was 30 years ago and I have difficulty remembering even what I was about that long ago. (Well, not really, but you wouldn't be interested in a bunch of whoary old war stories.) In the intervening years the Freedmans have written six other books, the listing says, none of which mean anything to me.

As many mainstream writers do, Nancy Freedman has now turned to science fiction with a new novel titled Joshua Son of None written, says the blurb, in the belief that man's reach must exceed his grasp.

That's another of those well-worn phrases I've never fully understood. What does it all mean?

If I am going to discuss this book--and I am, at length--then best you know a bit of what it is about.

Dallas, Texas. 22 November 1963. Thor Bitterbaum, an M.D., is completing his residency at the hospital to which the dying John Fitzgerald Kennedy is brought. (Thor Bitterbaum. The symbolism in that name. Throughout the book Mrs Freedman beats the reader with the significance of a Jewish doctor named after a Norse god.) Bitterbaum is a Kennedy-worshiper and refuses, almost, to accept the president's death. That JFK, the hope of the world, should be taken from the world is unthinkable. As a progressive scientist Bitterbaum is aware of the work that has been done in cloning and sees in this the possibility of returning Kennedy to the world that needs him. Bitterbaum takes some cells from the neck wound, stores them in liquid nitrogen and flies to California. There he contacts Gerald Kellogg who is rich and ambitious, and sells him on the proposed program. With Kellogg's money as a lever Bitterbaum obtains the services of a cloning expert and a host mother and some nine months later Joshua Francis Kellogg is born.

Bitterbaum and Kellogg set about to recreate for Josh the circumstances which made John Kennedy the man he was. Kellogg is more fanatical about it than Bitterbaum and uses his money effectively to reproduce for his "son" the life of Kennedy...the large family, the education, the sports. Some things are difficult. How does one recreate, for example,

the wartime incidents? Joshua joins the space force and a suitable emergency is arranged by Kellogg.

Throughout it all is Joshua's growing awareness of some sort of relationship between himself and Kennedy. It is difficult to disguise; whenever he looks at a picture of Kennedy he sees his own face. Josh concludes that he is Kennedy's bastard son adopted by the Kelloggs. He tells his conclusions to Bitterbaum who reveals to him that he is not Kennedy's son but Kennedy's clone.

That sort of revaluation is enough to shock anyone. Josh retreats to a hide-away in the Colorado mountains and gradually comes to an acceptance of what he is. He writes a book about it in which he reveals all. To see if a clone will be accepted by "normal" people, Josh goes into politics, is elected to Congress, the Senate, to the Presidency and moves on to his inevitable destiny.

I said that Nancy Freedman had, as many mainstream writers do, turned to science fiction. This is not, of course, anything new. Most successful writers eventually find that they have a story to tell which can be told only as fantasy. Some of them are successful at it, some are not although there is no question that mainstream writers are more successful at writing fantasy (or science fiction, if you prefer) than sf writers are at writing mainstream. A good writer can write anything. (And it has long been my contention that most "science fiction" writers are not good writers.)

Mrs Freedman has done a creditable job. Her data on cloning comes directly from one of the best available sources--the Biology department of Caltech. She is well aware that the answer to the old argument of what shapes the individual, heredity or environment, is "both." Her projections of the world of the near future (late 1980s) would seem to me to be much closer to reality than those of most professional sf writers (who are tied too tightly, perhaps, to the mythos, method and formula of genre science fiction). Mrs Freedman postulates, for instance, some success in the battle against pollution but little in the problem of overpopulation (there is a growing neo-isolationist trend in the U.S. aimed at locking out the teeming billions of the rest of the world). There is a small Space Corps centered mostly around Skylab type projects although there is a recognition that rapidly diminishing natural resources make planetary exploration a must. Videophones are commonplace...and no pressing the point. Such things are part of the background as they are in a good Heinlein novel. Mrs Freedman mentions the picture fading as one hangs up the phone. Good touch.

Thor Bitterbaum is a Kennedy-worshiper and maybe Nancy Freedman also fits into that category. She mentions the Kennedy cult and the belief that JFK was the one who could lead the world out of darkness. There is no question, of course, that Kennedy was a messiah-figure to many people. (Jesus? Moses leading the people to the Promised Land? Joshua led them after they attained the Promised Land. Have we reached it?) Joshua Francis Kellogg, clone, receives almost universal acceptance because he is John Fitzgerald Kennedy returned to lead his people in their time of need. (Almost universal acceptance. To some Josh is a freak. At his wedding a tomato is thrown at the bride with the remark that she might as well marry that as it had been grown the same way as Josh. The ignorant are always with us.)

Mrs Freedman skates lightly over the philosophical questions involved. When Kellogg is first approached with the program he protests that it is inhuman. If humans do

it, Bitterbaum informs him, it is not inhuman.

Joshua's "brother", Jer, has this to say: "Well, it's immoral. Who gave...Uncle Thor the right to tamper with human reproduction. You were conceived from your dead self. Was that God's will? It was Uncle Thor's will, but was it God's? We've got to ask that." Nancy Freedman doesn't give an answer although it is obvious: If God is what the religionists claim he is then whatever occurs is his will.

What of the soul? Mrs Freedman gets around that neatly.

"The priest turned to the young widow. He had prayed, 'Si capax.' If possible, for he had jurisdiction only before death. 'I am convinced the soul has not left his body. This is a valid sacrament. I have given much thought to the problem and I have worked out a formula. I believe there is a direct relationship between the stamina of the body and the endurance of the soul to remain. If a person succumbs after a long illness the soul leaves the body within twenty minutes after the pronouncement of death. But in the case of your husband, a man in the flush of health, I am convinced the soul lingers as long as three hours.'"

The soul, or part of it anyway, would still be present in the living cells taken for cloning, would it not? If, of course, you are bothered by those sort of questions.

And most science fictionneers are not. There have been a number of clone yarns in the past few years by professional stf writers and none have given any thought to the philosophical questions involved. A couple have passed lightly over the moral question of a sexual relationship between clones but none have touched on the philosophical questions involved. But they are questions that will have to be faced and such things as God's will and the soul are going to have a lot of people screaming at each other.

Did you see that terrible motion picture called The Clones? In the introduction to it Senator Tunney of California is quoted as saying, in effect, "This must not go on!" Do you recall the Italian doctor who grew a human foetus in vitro? The Roman Catholic Church stepped hard on him.

I feel, myself, that such philosophical questions are, like the philosophical questions we argued in college, so much hot air, but violence has been done over the questions of how many angels can dance on the point of a pin. Cloning is going to cause some tremendous arguments.

This is a good book, though. As I mentioned above, mainstream writers are often successful when they try their hands at fantasy. Nancy Freedman was quite successful and produced a thought-provoking book. What more do you want?

JOSHUA SON OF NONE by Nancy Freedman. Delacorte Press, N.Y., \$7.95

And once more, it seems, I have arrived at the last page. There was a question of whether I wanted to make this issue larger and send it 3rd class or keep it to 8 pages and send it 1st class. 8 pages and 1st class won. Mostly because I don't think I could write 12 more pages of this nonsense at this time and I don't have anything else to fill them. And if I keep to eight pages I can get it run off in time to take to the next meeting of the Albuquerque SF and whatsit society and blow Vardeman's mind.

Of course I could always do 12 pages on the political scene and the trials and tribulations of Richard Whatzisname and his phoney military alerts and the like but I keep telling you that DYNATRON is a non-political fanzine. Sure it is.

I could fill up 12 pages with fanzine reviews but why waste any more paper than I'm already doing?

Fanzines come in two types these days. There are the prestige zines all full of fancy layout and offset printing and articles of everlasting triviality. And then there are zines like DYNATRON all full of sloppy editing, mimeography, and everlasting triviality.

Some are more trivial than others. Consider Arnie's WOODEN NICKLE which he sends me faithfully--or did up until he reads this probably--2 pages of absolutely nothing that comes out almost every week.

I received something called PERCEPTIONS #2 from Warren Johnson. I know it was from Warren Johnson. He put his name on every page. I can't imagine why. But, then, if I had put out PERCEPTIONS #2 I'd have put his name on every page, too. I sure wouldn't have put my name on it. Don't give up, Warren Johnson. I've seen worse fanzines. I'm sure.

And Ed Cagle sends KWALIHOQUA or somesuch which is a pretty good zine and manages to provoke a chuckle or two except that Cagle has this problem, you see, he seems overly concerned with excrement.

Don Miller keeps sending me copies of SON OF THE WSFA JOURNAL with notations that I have received my last issue unless I do something. What is it you want me to do, Don?

Bill Bowers sends OUTWORLDS which is a good zine with columns by Poul Anderson and Doc Lowndes and all sorts of other good stuff. You don't have to read Bowers's stuff.

Then there is MAYBE from Irvin Koch. See, Johnson, I told you I'd seen worse fanzines than PERCEPTION. This is one of them.

Some people over in Tucson are putting on a film convention--fantasy films, that is--in February. If you are interested in such write to DesertCon II, SUPO Box 10,000, University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona 85720.

/Hey, I want to say some nice words about Texaco, Inc. Coming back from Toronto I got some bad gas at a Texaco station in Missouri and had to stop in Springfield to have the Toyota worked on as a result of that. As soon as I got back to Albuquerque I fired off a complaint to the Texaco Corp. Nice chaps. They investigated, said I had, indeed, gotten water in my gas, they were sorry but such things do happen once in a while, and reimbursed me for the tank of gas and the cost of the car repairs. It's good to find somebody that does look into customer complaints and act on them. Have a drink to Texaco. Have one for the road.