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DYNATRON

'71. 1971 that is. That was the year, according to the historians who keep track of such things that all of the "activists" of the 1960s looked around and discovered that nobody was interested any more. It had all gone away.

This is DYNATRON #71 and whether anyone is interested or not it shows no signs of going away. It sometimes fades from the scene for a few months longer than it should but (sigh) always manages to return.

DYNATRON, as you well know, Ish, is a fanzine in which Horrible Old Roy Tackett discusses science fiction, fantasy, sciencefictioneers (as JWCjr used to call them), Futurians, fans, or whatever else comes to mind. Sometimes we have other people appearing in these pages. You'll just have to look to see.

when I first started publishing this thing it went for 10¢. Postage for it was 3¢. The postage has since gone up to 20¢ (a 6 2/3 fold increase) whereas the cost of DYNATRON is now 50¢ (a mere five fold increase) or your fanzine in trade.

No, I don't give copies for letters of comment regardless of what you read elsewhere or what the prevailing custom is. Either buy it or send a trade. (Or send along an article for me to print.)

"Editor" and publisher, in case you didn't know, is Roy Tackett at 915 Green Valley Road NW, Albuquerque, N.M. 87107, USA.

Yngvi is a louse and this is

A Marinated Publication X

My Rexall calendar tells me this is 26 June and Albuquerque's temperature hit 100° for the first time this year. The seasons seem to have slipped about three weeks this year. It is probably just as well.

Back in April I turned on the pump for the first time this year. It had been a rather wet spring and I hadn't really needed to do any irrigation until then. The well seemed somewhat reluctant to be aroused after being out of use all winter and after a half-hour of priming spewed forth a trickle of water. Hmmm, I hummed, somethin' ain't right here. We live in the valley, only a few blocks from the river. The water table in my back yard is normally around 13 feet down. My pump usually puts out a pretty good stream of water. I broke out a measuring stick and measured; the water level was 24 feet down. Oh, oh. We got troubles.

Albuquerque, as I'm sure you know, is in the desert. The annual precipitation is just over seven inches which is barely enough to keep a cactus alive. Boosters, babbits, and other chamber of commerce types like to point out that we have enough water underground in the Rio Grande aquifer to last indefinitely. Or there was up until recently. The great influx of population, mostly people running away from winter in the eastern part of the country, has put a strain on the city's water supply; the pumps go constantly. The city is reluctant to admit

there is a problem but in an effort to cut down water consumption has raised water rates by more than 50% and is urging odd-even watering of yards.

So there was Tack's Seitch with water problems and when one has water problems in New Mexico they take priority over everything else. I called the area's leading well company. They offered to put me in a new well for only \$2200. Really, chaps, I said, I don't want to buy the entire Rio Grande. The Neveready pump people came highly recommended but they didn't come at all. I was beginning to get a bit disgusted and desperate. One of my neighbors suggested I call Charlie Duran. I talked to Charlie. He listened to my tale of woe and told me I was going to have to lower my pump. Almost everybody out here is having to lower their pump, he said. Ugh, I said.

You've got to picture Roytac who is a poor old fatman digging a 6'x6'x6' hole in the ground. Going down the first three feet was easy. It was pure sand. And the next shovelfull came up reluctantly. I had hit caliche. That is an adobe clay that is heavy, sticky and just plain hard to do anything with. It took almost three times as long to get through the final three feet as it had the first three feet. I was thoroughly worn out. Chrystal helped. She dug. She suggested we fill buckets with the stuff and haul it out rather than trying to throw it out with the shovel. Finally we reached depth.

I called Charlie Duran. He sent over his son Leonard and a chap named Pancho. I think Leonard came mostly to translate for Pancho who spoke no English but was the expert on wells and pumps. They dropped a dynamite cap into the well and fired it off. That was to break loose any sediment which might be clogging things up. They reattached the pump and the new pipe system required by the new level of the pump and started it up.

I have more water than I know what to do with, enough to take care of both places easily. I have a new pumphouse which can double as a place for the storage of vegetables. I have a fine case of bursitis brought on by shoveling caliche.

The joys of homeowning.

Boy, didn't you find the foregoing interesting? Six reviewers will now call Dynatron a personal zine.

If this is a personalzine should I bare my soul in the fashion of Don Thompson or Gil Gaier? Nah. It's not my style. I doubt that I have a soul to bare anyway. What makes you think you have? In Hot Sleep: The Worthing Chronicle Orson Scott Card declares the existence of the soul was proven by a scientific experiment involving Somec. Or something. The book starts off fairly interesting but veers off into religion. This must be the year for religion-based science fiction. It is, perhaps, the Elwood influence surfacing after an incubation period of a few years. The gimmick in Hot Sleep is "somec" which enables the user to go into suspended animation for long periods of time. Most of society's upper crust use the drug; it enables them to live vast numbers of years although they are awake for only short periods. Somec has a disadvantage in that it also wipes the memory out so users must have their memories recorded and then reimpresed upon the brain upon awakening. Doesn't really seem like an attractive proposition. What good in living a thousand years if one is only awake the normal three score and ten? Less than that if you count normal sleep.

Hot Sleep: left me somewhat less than enthused.

"Do you know what an Estonian twick is?" asks the cover blurb. Sure, I said. That's what is turned by an Eastern European prostitute who lisps.

At the moment I should be next door tarring the roof (the joys of being a landlord) but a thunderstorm has blown in sending me inside. I will have to wait an hour or so for it to pass through. I have to admit this is more pleasant than doing the stoop labor of applying tar to a roof when the temperature is 100°+ but doing that is a lot more pleasant than buying a new roof. Indeed.

The Albuquerque SF Club met again last month. It seems to be a habit. Vardeman declared that he objected to the proposition to label SF fen as "Futurians" since he didn't believe there was going to be much of a future anyway.

We discussed the tv production of Les Miserables which was shown not long ago. Marilyn Kring said she enjoyed it but couldn't figure out which one of the characters was Les.

Say, Robert...

Yes?

Two persons went out for a night on the town. They bought a bottle of Beam and ended up at the ball game. What inning was it and how many men were on base?

I don't know.

Last of the fifth and the bags were loaded.

Vic Milan was working on his new book when his doorbell rang. It was a young lady who announced she represented the CARE crusade. "You are just in time," said Vic. "I'm starving."

just write them down.

Don't look that way. I

Siva! by Walt and Leigh Richmond is a curious book. (It was originally published in 1967 as THE LOST MILLENNIUM.) Along with Velikovsky and von Daniken (and hosts of others no doubt) the Richmonds hold that world history, as we know it, is wrong. There was, say the Richmonds, a great civilization in the past which was able to draw electrical power from the ionosphere by means of a "solar tap". The power was then broadcast much as radio is and those who needed power simply tuned it in much as one tunes in a radio receiver. The main solar tap was the Great Pyramid of Cheops with satellite pyramids scattered around the world.

Sure.

The reason for stone buildings in those days was because broadcast power would resonate steel.

The Great Pyramid was the main tap with subsidiary taps at Angkor Wat "in the Burmese jungle"; and in Mexico on the Yucatan peninsula. "they were all at, or near, the 30° parallels of the planet." Gizeh is close to 30° but Angkor is located at 13°, 52' (in Cambodia, not Burma) and the Mexican ruins are a lot closer to 20° than they are to 30°. Oh, well, let's not bother with minor details.

Walt Richmond had worked out the solar tap but his work was classified secret by the federal government. Leigh Richmond worked out the rest of this theory when Walt's design turned out to be identi-

cal with the Great Pyramid.

Around 1450 BC one of the taps ran wild resulting in the world-wide disaster which Velikovsky, wrongly, attributed to the planet Venus.

Siva! is the story of what happened in those days dressed up as science fiction.

The problem with any theory such as this is that there is no historical proof to back it up. Historical. The periods in question were historical periods. People wrote things down. Kings recorded their exploits. Scribes wrote poetry and stories. Engineers wrote down how they built their buildings. The archives at Alakh, at Nineveh, at Babylon, at numerous other sites throughout the Middle East contain thousands and thousands of records of the times. Nobody wrote down anything about a high-technological civilization. Nobody wrote down anything about a world-wide disaster. Was there a major disaster about 1450 BC? Certainly. The volcanic island of Thera in the Aegean exploded in an eruption that made even Krakatoa look small. It wiped out the Minoan civilization and undoubtedly accounts for the rains of stone and ash and mud that Velikovsky uses in his Venus theory.

Velikovsky's whole theory, by the way, has to stand or fall by the planet Venus which, he says, came spewing out of Jupiter around 1500 BC and some 50 years later caused world-wide disaster as it approached Earth. But the Babylonian archives reveal that astronomers there had been keeping records of observations of Venus for several hundred years before that and there goes Velikovsky's theory. (At ASFS it was suggested that we need to have a strong believer in Velikovsky as head of the Department of Energy. Since, according to Velikovsky, all Earth's oil came from Venus at the time of the near collision then, obviously, there must be more oil remaining on Venus than we can properly envision. A good way to get the space program back on track.)

Another problem with theories such as this one presented by the Richmonds is that they demand entirely upon the ignorance of the reader. It may go over with the general public but don't try it on SF fan. Leigh Richmond cites Angkor Wat, as I mentioned above, as a subsidiary power station but that temple was built in the 12th Century AD.

I cannot, as I have pointed out in previous discussions of books of this sort, accept any vast technological civilizations in the ancient past. One reason being that there is no archaeological evidence. The other is that there is no historical evidence. The Richmonds, Velikovsky, von Danniken are all one and the same as Chruchward and Donnelly. Or even John Ballou Newbrough who produced that extraordinary book called OAHSPÉ.

Fantasies and pipe dreams.

(Now if someone would only explain to me what it was that Babylonian sonofabitch was doing with a storage battery three thousand years ago...)

((Those of you who received DYNATRON 69 will recall that it contained "A complete, total, and accurate index by author and title plus story listing and checklist of every issue of UNCANNY STORIES compiled by Dennis Lien.

Jack Speer, originator of the fantasy fiction decimal classification system, was good enough to take the time and do the research in order to properly classify the contents of UNCANNY STORIES. Serious students of the field will, of course, want to file the following along with Denny's great work.))

Decimal classification of every issue of UNCANNY STORIES

compiled by

JACK SPEER

- 11.92 Werobeasts
Speed will be my bride (Keller) Uca Apr41
- 16.4 Ghosts in this world
Meet my brother Mr Ghost (Wayne Overholser) Uca Apr41
- 34.3 Psi powers superadded
44.4-34.41-: Beyond Hell (Dewitt Miller) Uca Apr41
- 34.41 Supermen
44.4-34.3-: Beyond Hell (Dewitt Miller) Uca Apr41
- 35.4 Superbugs
44.39-: The Earth Stealers (Kummer) Uca Apr41
- 35.7 Unicell animals
44.7-: Coming of the giant germs (Cummings) Uca Apr41
- 44.39 Invasion
35.4-: The Earth Stealers (Kummer) Uca Apr41
- 44.4 Mars and its moons
34.41-34.3: Beyond Hell (Dewitt Miller) Uca Apr41
- 44.7 Asteroids and comets
35.7-: Coming of the giant germs (Cummings) Uca Apr41
- 63. Other travel or precognizing in presumably one dimensional time
Man from the wrong time track (Dennis Plimmer) Uca Apr41

JACK SPEER

X

((It is scholarly research such as that performed by Speer and Lien which puts the lie to canards to the effect that fandom is nothing more than one big party. When one thinks of the tens of minutes that these fans put into researching such an obscure magazine as UNCANNY STORIES...well, it makes one proud to be associated with scholars such as these. I tell you the SF RESEARCH ASSOCIATION has nothing on DYNATRON's small circle of readers.))

A Letter of Comment from

JACK SPEER

((with footnotes by Roytac))

While I wait for the mailing to arrive with more Tackett trash,¹
I'll begin commenting with the Feb 79 Dynatron.

You forgot to close a parenthesis in the heading.²

"and said, what the hell, over?"³

Maybe there were more natural resources a half million years ago,
so much that those we found on discovering America would have seemed
too lean to mine. It'll be harder to rebuild if technology collapses,
but it could be done. With plastics and alcohol from wood and weeds,
and the metals one can always extract expensively from lowgrade ores,
seawater and garbage dumps.⁴ "Some people have said the twocolumn
format wastes less space than the onecolumn format, probably because
blanks at the end of a paragraph are shorter. And while one can follow
a line of print all the way across the page, it's supposed to be a
slower and more errorprone process.⁵

If you're skeptical about immutable laws of science (or as Evans
would say, constants of the universe), what would be an example of
what you mean?⁶ Thrilling Wonder had an absurd example in Zones of
Space, where pi changed from its present value to nearly⁷. Can you
think of anything similar that would be more believable?⁸ "The solar
wind may drive something as flimsy as a comet's tail. But I don't see
it doing that to the "heated gasses" that might be freed on the surface
of a Venus-sized rogue from the outer reaches. Hardly anything but
hydrogen would be able to get far enough from its surface to be visibly
separated from it, and I thought hydrogen was invisible. "I didn't
know Venus presents the same face to Earth at every inferior conjunction.
One might dismiss that as coincidence, but two coincidences in the same
solar system are hard to accept; the other being the same apparent dia-
meter of Luna and Sol, noticeable at eclipse time, which someone on
channel 5 suggested was arranged by ancient astronauts as a "Kilroy
was here" signal. "Does Velikovsky have a simplifying explanation
for either of these phenomena?⁹

How do Byelorussians feel toward Great Russians?¹⁰

What is referred to in the statement at the bottom of p6?¹¹

I didn't know Turnabout was devoted to feminism. I thought it was
for old people. Is that the one that Hugh Downs moderates, or am I
thinking of something else? Yeah, I was thinking of Over Easy.¹²

I believe you or Cox misspelled furschlugginer. Though if the
word is Slavian, the Mad spelling is probably transliterated. "Omar"
doesn't sound very Chineese to me.¹³ "I don't know, but Webster says
the manufacture of absinthe was prohibited because it's more intoxicat-
ing than other liquors, and produces nervous derangement.¹⁴

As long as physicians are in such short supply that all can keep
as busy as they wish, they can follow their human bias in favor of
preventive medicine, without cutting into their bread and butter.¹⁵

I'm also puzzled by "Hadn't realized snowbirds got as far south
as Georgia." "Any given paragraph in it refers to nothing whatsoever."¹⁶

What a gassy style Craig Hill has. "What ship was the Isabella?"¹⁷

The Alpher-Bethe-Gamow gag goes back to the 1950s or before.¹⁸ I believe it's mentioned in connection with The Birth and Death of the Sun, which Gamow declared obsolete when he wrote A Star Called the Sun.¹⁹ Nope, I didn't find it in that book anyway.

I wonder if there isn't another reason we see little Japanese sf. I've never watched a Japanese movie, straight through partly because I can't identify with the characters.²⁰ I don't believe I even identify with German characters, and I've certainly never gone far in Perry Rhodan. On the other hand, I identify up to the hilt with Mika Waltari's protagonists, be they Finnish or Egyptian. "The title Japan Sinks would seem to give away the secret that the characters spend a long time groping toward, so they must strike us as inexcusably dense."²¹

Your report on Zandra led to the thought that as readers become increasingly sophisticated, it will be more and more necessary to postulate cross-time travel to have a world inhabited by people for fantastic adventures.

JACK SPEER

1. You know it's trash and I know it's trash but let's not disillusion the youngfen.
2. Only one?)
3. That's old communicator lingo used by an old communicator.
4. Would not extraction from lowgrade ore and seawater call for more technology than would be available after a technological collapse?
5. Only for comix fen and television newsreaders.
6. A stellar object the spectrum of which indicates it is moving in two directions at one time. Extragalactic objects moving faster than light. Bad guys wearing white hats.
7. No.
8. June Moffatt asked how we knew Venus presented the same face to Earth at every inferior conjunction if that planet is fully covered with clouds. Observations by radar which penetrates the clouds. For more information see the section on Venus in the September 1975 issue of SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN. I don't know if Velikovsky had an explanation. The discovery was made after he published. See comments on Velikovsky on page 4 of thish.
9. How do Mississippians feel about damnyankees?
10. Precisely what it says.
11. I tend to connect Turnabout with the book by Thorne Smith which, you will recall, was brought to the boob tube in a much inferior version some months ago. It was bad.
12. Actually Omar Sung Loo was an Irishman named Lewis O'Mar who tried to rise above his natural place in life by pretending to be Chinese.
13. I believe it was the wormwood oil, presumably harmful to the brain and nervous system, which caused absinthe to be outlawed. There was a novel titled Wormwood published in the late 1800s which pointed out the terrible effects, they say, of this liquor. It is a licorice tasting drink much on the order of anisette.
14. Which is not very.
15. You neglect greed. Cures are more expensive than preventions. Reminds me of an old joke:
Intern: What did you operate on that patient for?
Surgeon: For two hundred dollars.
Intern: I meant what did he have?
Surgeon: Two hundred dollars.

16. The first reference was to a Georgian cocaine connection cited in the book. I'm also puzzled about the second one; did I print that?
17. The Isabella was Colombo's fourth ship which sailed off the edge of the Earth.
18. Which goes to prove you can't keep a good story down. It was in a 1979 issue of SCIENCE NEWS.
19. Does Gamow write textbooks? Have you ever read Shulman's Bare-foot Boy with Check? Or maybe I'm thinking of Sleep Till Noon.
20. I have no problem identifying with Asian protagonists. Must be because I've spent a lot of time there.
21. Nonsense! They simply hadn't read the book.

ROYTAC

 I was going to submit a story to UNIVERSE about a famous science fiction editor who strained his back cutting firewood with a dull hatchet but I don't think anyone could suspend disbelief on that one.

I really don't know why I do it but I keep plowing through these volumes of crap the publishers are putting out as "science fiction". I suppose I keep on hoping that I'll find something worth reading. Now and again I do but not very often. I keep trying but more often than not I give it up after a couple of chapters. Take, for example, something called Nightmare Express by Isidore Haiblum. I managed to get through about one third of that one before I went back to the Cambridge Ancient. I think (mind you I'm not certain) that Nightmare Express is supposed to be a story about an attempted invasion of Earth by extra-terrestrials during the 1930s and the efforts of a "scientist" to repel them. Apparently his experiments disrupt the space-time fabric (whatever that is) and send a variety of beings from past, future, and alternate worlds off into a series of confusing adventures.

But no more confusing than the book itself. Haiblum's "style" of writing is to present the reader with a series of seemingly unrelated episodes, none of which make any sense at all. He may have tied it all together in the later parts of the book but he lost me long before that. The book is written in a variety of styles one of which is imitation Raymond Chandler. Bad imitation Raymond Chandler.

Nightmare Express was published by Fawcett (which seems to have been absorbed by Popular Library which is owned by CBS which may explain everything) and I have no idea of who Fawcett's editor is but he must be related to Haiblum. Why else would he accept a turkey like this one for publication?

Would you believe I read Stephen King's The Stand? All 823 pages of it? To tell the truth I skimmed a lot of it. King is a pretty good writer who turns out utterly ridiculous books. The Stand starts off quite good and the first part of the book which tells about the escape from a government laboratory of a new type influenza virus which wipes out 99% of the population (along with horses and dogs) is interesting. After that, though, it is all downhill. King's story soon degenerates into a mish-mash of mythology and demonology straight out of the Dark Ages. Ecch!