

IONISPHERE 30



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*Cover by Bac Berrendos
"Riding High"*

EDITORIAL



COME, RIDLEY, LET'S FLABBERGAST THE NATION WITH A GOOD ISSUE

I say this without much enthusiasm, because I haven't gotten a whole lot to present this issue. However, instead of the usual contents I'd like to introduce a few transformations in our policy. We have been in the process of building a bureau here, and I think we have gotten it well-nigh put together right and are ready to proceed with the activities we have founded here. I'm going to outline our policies in this editorial.

As you may recall, I mentioned that Irwin Koch, whose idea this bureau was, had found little interactivity existing between fans and professionals in the science fiction field, and thought there should be a bureau aiming at improvement in these matters. I had already been attempting to contact the professionals and discuss science fiction with them, and he invited me to try doing this with a bureau to aid in doing it. Ideally there would have been writers and readers communicating in our publication, and there would have been questions and answers and general discussion here. Unfortunately everyone seemed to be concerned with other matters in which they were involved. Many of them were concerned with the progress of science fiction and had been working to publicize it in the media, and they were having success with it, with science fiction books appearing on the best seller lists and an increase in science fiction productions in the movies and on television. STAR TREK was a signal triumph for them, and you can't criticize the show by calling it inferior to standard science fiction. Writers were going out to Hollywood to put science fiction into the public visualization. In doing

this their attention to fandom diminished, and fans were joining in this rush anyway and making science fiction movies getting made their primary concern, with everything else subsidiary to this. I was out in California myself, visiting Colin Cameron and Vowen Clarke, and they were both following the progress of science fiction in the movies and giving a lot of energy to correspondence about it with people in the Hollywood range. (They were living in San Diego.) Colin quoted a piece of script from a Hollywood movie magazine which Bradbury was doing as a script writer for Moby Dick. "The only sound is the moonlight on the water" is what was in his script. Both of them were dismayed that he was doing this instead of making a science fiction movie. Richard Geis was living closer to Hollywood than they were and they were getting grapevine information via him and other people. Geis himself, who was writing for a men's magazine called ADAM, was also into the discussion of writing for Hollywood and he did a plot for 77 SUNSET STRIP, but he wasn't into writing SF—that would come later. He knew people in Hollywood who read SF, and were even fans of it, and they were busy about promoting science fiction, but were proceeding via fantasy, which had more success in Hollywood than science fiction had achieved, especially with Walt Disney, a great appreciator of fantasy, and he had been heeding some of their suggestions to the extent of doing a film about going into outer space, which had been promoted by hearing about Sputnik, and Tomorrowland eventually became part of his visualizations along with Adventureland, Fantasyland and all the other realms he was working with. This was success but it was not getting science fiction stories in there as material for movies. But one success was THE PUPPET MASTERS, and again there was 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY. The trend had gotten started, and more were to follow, finally leading to Edgar Rice Burroughs' Martian books getting on the big screen. Data about all this was coming from a movie column in **Imagination**; Hamling himself was way into promotion in this venture into filmland. In other promotion, Hamling was getting science fiction and its writers into the slick magazines; Arthur Clarke had a story in Playboy and so did Ray Bradbury, and Hamling also had a slick magazine called **Rogue** in which Alfred Bester put in an appearance. New York City fans were also on the move, attempting to get science fiction onto television.

Of course, fandom nationwide got interested in these doings and there was a lot of attention being concentrated on Hollywood, resulting in networks of fans trading off information and suggesting things that should be done to promote science fiction in Hollywood. It was drawing fans away from their regular interests and into new interests

that were not relevant to fandom in general.

Those getting involved in this who were working close to or in Hollywood found that regardless of the success they achieved, they had to stay around to support what they were venturing, and they became more and more involved in Hollywood doings rather than science fiction. Hollywood didn't have quite the same reaction to literature that the writers of science fiction had, and the new insights the sf writers acquired didn't have very good effects on their science fiction writing. Science fiction plots originating in Hollywood came into being, like *STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND*. Kind of like "Take my hand, I'm a stranger in Paradise," right? Hollywood was thematically dominant, stylistically imperfect.

And so a whole lot of fandom had something else in mind—movies and their production and the kind of work that goes into making movies, how directors feel about things and so forth. This left a lot of the fan culture rather desolate. Looking at *A Space Odyssey* reminds me of how fandom looked to me—I felt like I was on an *Odyssey* trip trying to deal in fandom when so much attention was focused elsewhere. As you may recall, *Odysseus* lost all of his crew and returned to Ithaca a loner...finding his estate in outrageous disorder. Such might be the feelings of men going through fandom's deserted former paths after a voyage of discovery as were those of *Odysseus* with things going on in other places and normal life being forgotten about.

There is also the matter of NASA and the space program. (I've often thought that the term "The Space Program" might refer to *Captain Video*, where spaceships were introduced to a lot of people. Here again the films, television.) The space "frontier" was also something that took up all of the time of persons involved with it, and it was one of the things that became a concern of a lot of science fiction fans. No more talking about it all, there was *DOING* it ahead. The talk in science fiction and its fandom is still big about how "science fiction predicted all this" and it is a strong point in fandom to maintain this. There was NASA, and there were all those technological matters coming into realization. I think science took a lot of fans away from science fiction, and writers as well.

It is very difficult to communicate with people whose major interest has become something else. And so what might be done to maintain fandom is to discuss what they have gone away from and how it might be a superior activity to what they are now doing, which is kicked back into fandom by people who are mostly arrayed elsewhere. When you lose track of your origins, you are losing track of something that has been a

part of your lives.

My aim here is to stir up interest in what fandom has been and what it still is if it becomes repopulated by those who have been interested in it. I think we should reclaim some of what has been taken out of science fiction fandom by the movies and by scientific interests. What, in fact, of all this is OURS? What has been our claim on being readers of science fiction? I am wondering if our activities can bring people back into the fold, and return to fandom its entityship, placing vitality back into its progress. So here I am getting closer into talking with the members of the NFFF about the things that are of importance to fandom. I am especially hoping to lure them back away from conflicts, with the possibility of matters that are more conducive to living.



Puppet Masters



Nineteen Eighty Four



Close Encounters of the Third Kind



2001: A Space Odyssey



War of the Worlds



Battlestar Galactica (television series)

Motion Pictures and TV Boosted by Science Fiction Fan Activity



BOOTS ON THE MOON by Cardinal Cox

Feel of grit compacting thick sole
And the only sound is spacesuit's slow creak
Breathing hollow as when down a deep hole
Though silence is what the traveler seeks

Twenty voices of control back on Earth
Fellow crew members you don't interrupt
The team knows what Helium-3 is worth

The noting of your silence is abrupt

"Yes," you confirm, "everything is just fine"

"No," you answer you don't need to return

You know you have to keep company's line

Each of you up here has a wage to earn

Prospectors for an elemental next

Here you are just a temporary guest



Children in Science Fiction *by Jeffrey Redmond*

Here's something more in tune with the American family. Does SF need improvement to have a good following? Is the scarcity of children an important lack?

Children in science fiction, or rather the lack of children, should be an important topic. It is usually very hard to find children in science fiction books, and they are usually treated as furniture with diapers. By the age forty, ninety percent of American women will have had a child. Statistics in other countries are probably not that much different. And yet, to read science fiction, you get the impression that the entire race is not reproducing itself.

Everything interesting that is being done in science fiction and fantasy is inevitably being done by people who are unencumbered by children. And as all of you who are parents know, having a child is an inconvenient thing. Just as you are about to track the villain the child wakes up and you have to nurse it.

You can't leave town because...Even with fantasy, the same thing comes up in real life. Here you are, you are off and you are slaying barbarians or dragons or whatever and the truth is that you have to stay home and do your farming because your daughter is going to need a dowry next month, or she will never be able to marry anybody decent, and she will have to be a serf for the rest of her life. And when you look at science fiction and fantasy you would think that the race is not reproducing itself.

Look at some of the important books of the last, say, ten or twenty years. Consider for instance NEUROMANCER by William Gibson, a remarkably influential science fiction book that pretty much launched the whole cyberpunk movement. Not only has it no children to speak of, you can't even imagine children in this world. The world is an underworld, it is a down and dirty underworld.

It has got a lot of criminal activity, people are moving very fast, they are busy laundering money through several capitols of the world, they are busy stealing software from each other and plugging things in and out of their brains. There is a lot of activity and nobody wants to interrupt it because the baby has got diarrhea. An objection to this could be that real life includes children and real life is more complicated than science fiction makes it in terms of family structures and finding places to put...When was the last time you saw a starship with a day care center?

And yet you can't really assume that all these people, going around space, on a five year mission, where no man has ever gone before, are going to be completely child free for the whole time. An objection to this and the reason for the objection has to do with an assumption about what science fiction should be doing. The assumption being made about science fiction is that it should be a real literature and what a real literature does, whether it is set in the past, the future, an alternate reality, a fantasy reality, or whatever, is show us ourselves, all of our total irrationality at some times and incompetent rationality at others.

It shows us ourselves and it gives us models to live by. I don't necessarily mean utopian models. *Neuromancer* is a good book, yet nobody wants to go slipping away becoming Case, the hero of that book. But it shows us a world that is at least as complex, at least as real, at least as contradictory as our own, and that means it should include the complexity and the contradictions, and the mixed emotions, and the accommodations that people's lives have to make for the presence of children.

In his essay "The Embarrassments of Science Fiction" (in *SCIENCE FICTION AT LARGE*, edited by Peter Nicholls) Thomas M. Disch asserts, tongue only partly in cheek, that sf is a branch of children's literature—because most lovers of the genre begin reading it in their early teens, and because many sf stories are about children. Whether or not sf is essentially juvenile in its appeal, there is no doubt that many of its writers are fascinated by childhood and its thematic corollaries: innocence and potentiality.

There are many types of sf stories about children, but four particularly popular variants are of special interest. The first is the story of children with benign Psi powers. Examples are A.E. van Vogt's *SLAN* (September-December 1940 **Astounding**, 1946), about a nascent community of telepathic supermen; Theodore Sturgeon's *THE DREAMING JEWELS* (February 1950 **Fantastic Adventures**) about a strange boy adopted by a carnival, and *MORE THAN HUMAN* (1953), about a gestalt consciousness composed of children; Wilmar Shiras' *CHILDREN OF THE ATOM* (stories November

1948-March 1950 **Astounding**), John Wyndham's THE CHRYSALIDS (1955), about telepathic mutant children after an atomic war, and such later works in a similar vein as Richard Cowper's KULDESAK (1972) and "Piper at the Gates of Dawn" (March 1976 F&SF).

The abilities of these children seem benign because the stories are usually narrated from the child's point of view. The societies depicted in these tales may persecute the children, but the latter generally win through and constitute their own "higher" societies, with the reader's approval. A variation on the theme features in Jack Vance's CADWAL II: ECCE AND OLD EARTH (1991), where hapless children are dosed with an alien drug to stimulate exploitable ESP talents.

The second type is the reverse of the first: the story of monstrous children, frequently with malign psychic powers. Examples are Ray Bradbury's "The Small Assassin" (November 1946 Dime Mystery), about a baby who though possessing no special powers nevertheless murders its parents; Richard Matheson's "Born of Man and Woman" (Summer 1950 F&SF), about a hideously mutated boy, and Jerome Bixby's "It's a *Good Life*" (In STAR SCIENCE FICTION STORIES 2, 1953, edited by Frederik Pohl), about an infant who terrorizes a whole community with his awesome paranormal abilities; Alfred Bester's "The Devil's Invention" (August 1950 Astounding) is in a somewhat similar vein.

J.D. Beresford's THE HAMPDENSHIRE WONDER (1911) is an early example of this sort of story, in that the child prodigy is seen entirely from the outside and thus takes on a frightening aspect. In tales of this type, society is usually threatened by the child and the reader is encouraged to take society's side. BRAIN CHILD (1991) by George Turner is difficult to characterize, as its super-children, created by an intelligence-enhancing experiment in biological and psychological engineering, appear as both appalling and attractive. The purely monstrous child became a cliché of horror fiction, especially in the 1980s, a decade when, perhaps for some as-yet-undiagnosed sociological reason, sf itself showed a distinct falling off in the number of stories devoted to super-children.

The third type, which overlaps the first two, concerns children in league with aliens or with humans so very different that they might as well be alien, to good or ill effect. Examples include Henry Kuttner's "Mimsy Were the Borogroves" (February 1943 Astounding), in which Far Future educational toys provide two children with an escape route from their parents; Ray Bradbury's "Zero Hour" (Fall 1947 Planet Stories), in which children side with alien invaders; Arthur C. Clarke's "Childhood's End" (April 1950

Famous Fantastic Mysteries as “Guardian Angel”) in which the alien “Overlords” supervise the growth of a new generation, whose capacities are unknowable by ordinary humans and may be exercised among the stars.

There’s also Edgar Pangborn’s *A MIRROR FOR OBSERVERS* (1954), in which Martians compete for control of a child’s mind; and John Wyndham’s *THE MIDWICH CUCKOOS* (1957) about the alien impregnation of Earth women and the terrifying Psi powers of the amoral children they bear, and his later story “Chocky” (March 1963 *Amazing*), about a boy with an alien “brother” living in his head.

Zenna Henderson’s stories about the People, most of which are collected in *PILGRIMAGE* (1961) and *THE PEOPLE: NO DIFFERENT FLESH* (1966), belong here since they are largely concerned with sympathetic aliens who appear to be normal human children (their alien parents usually make only fleeting appearances). Jack Williamson’s *THE MOON CHILDREN* (1972) and Gardner Dozois’ “Chains of the Sea” (in *CHAINS OF THE SEA* anthology, 1973, edited by Robert Silverberg) also belong in this category. Greg Bear’s *ANVIL OF THE STARS* (1992) features a community of adolescent children—but no adults—on a starship, undergoing tuition by aliens for making war against genocidal super beings. The novel is interesting in its creation of an all-adolescent culture.

A subset of this third form of story deals with children whose strangeness and varying degrees of distancing from humanity result from their being brought up by animals: Rudyard Kipling’s wolf-raised Mowgli is a notable early example, from which Edgar Rice Burroughs’ ape-raised Tarzan may (as Kipling himself suspected) be derived. Further instances include the eponym of the television series *LUCAN* (1977-1978), a child who like Mowgli was brought up by wolves.

The fourth type of story is concerned not so much with a conflict between the child and adult society as with the child’s attempts to prove himself worthy of joining that society. Much of Robert A. Heinlein’s relevant work falls into this “initiation” category—*e.g.*, his early story “Misfit” (November 1939 *Astounding*), about a boy whose prodigious mathematical ability enables him to save the asteroid-turned-space station in which he is a very junior crew member. Most of Heinlein’s teenage novels, from *ROCKET SHIP GALILEO* (1947) to *HAVE SPACESUIT—WILL TRAVEL* (1958), fit this pattern, as does the later *PODKAYNE OF MARS* (1963).

Precocious children, adults before their time, also feature in James H. Schmitz’s Telzey Amberdon stories, such as “Novice” (June 1962 *Analog*), in Alexi Panshin’s (July

1963 as *DOWN TO THE WORLDS OF MEN*), and in much of Samuel R. Delany's work. Delany's novels—*e.g.*, *NOVA* (1968)—are characteristically, in Algis Budry's words, about "the progress of the Magic Kid...the divine innocent whose naïve grace and intuitive deftness attract the close attention of all".

The "Magic Kid", who gains the acceptance of adult society through sheer charm (rather than discipline in the manner of Heinlein), has appeared in the work of other writers, as in John Varley's "In the Bowl" (December 1975 *F&SF*). More in the Heinlein tradition are a number of 1980s novels by Orson Scott Card, whose stories regularly feature the transition from a troubled adolescence to a maturity forced by circumstance, most famously in "Ender's Game" (August 1977 *Analog*) and again in *THE MEMORY OF EARTH* (1992).

However, many of the books listed above in this category feature post-pubertal teenagers rather than children proper. Such protagonists are so common in sf, their rite of passage being one of sf's basic themes, that there is little point in prolonging the list, although it is worth mentioning Doris Piserchia, who in books like *EARTHCHILD* (1977) seems to use the sf imagery precisely because it provides objective correlatives for pubertal anguish.

As in literature generally, the child's point of view has frequently been used by sf writers because it is a convenient angle from which to see the world anew. Thus, Kingsley Amis makes good use of his choirboy hero in the alternate history novel *THE ALTERATION* (1976). Ray Bradbury transmutes his own childhood experience into the nostalgic and horrific fantasy of *THE MARTIAN CHRONICLES* (1950) and *SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES* (1962).

Gene Wolfe repeatedly uses a child's-eye view to haunting effect in such tales as "The Island of Dr. Death" (in *ORBIT 7*, an anthology edited by Damon Knight, 1970), "The Fifth Head of Cerberus" (in *Orbit 10*, 1972), and "The Death of Dr. Island" (in *UNIVERSE 3*, an anthology edited by Terry Carr, 1973), and childhood memories haunt and shape the memoir structure of several of his novels such as *PEACE* (1975) and *THE BOOK OF THE NEW SUN* (1980-1983, 4 volumes). Harlan Ellison's fantasy "Jeffty is Five" (July 1977 *F&SF*), about a boy who is perpetually five years old, uses the child's viewpoint to make a statement about the apparent decline in quality of US popular culture.

William Gibson's *MONA LISA OVERDRIVE* (1988) is at its most successful and moving when filtering the bewildering events of its voodoo-in-Cyberspace story through the consciousness of the one of its four protagonists who is an actual child, the Japanese

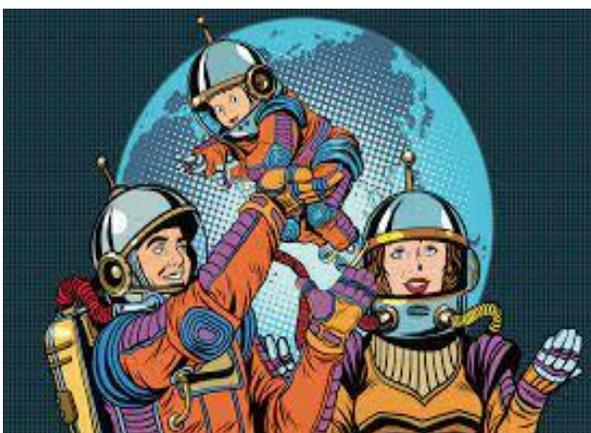
girl Kumiko. There are numerous other examples.

An interesting subgenre is the story that opposes a world of childhood and a world of adulthood as if they were, anthropologically, two different cultures whose clash is bound to cause pain. This is the fundamental strategy of much of Stephen King's horror fiction and also his sf. It forms a particularly grim element in James Patrick Kelly's "Home Front" (June 1988 **Asimov's**), in which kids interact, eat hamburgers, and get drafted for an endless, meaningless war occurring offstage.

Although sf about children was not especially common in the late Twentieth Century in book form, it was popular in the cinema. Obviously relevant films include E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial (1982), EXPLORERS (1985), D.A.R.Y.L. (1985), FLIGHT OF THE NAVIGATOR (1986), and a variety of "teen" movies.

Anthologies devoted entirely to stories about children include OUTSIDERS: CHILDREN OF WONDER (1954, edited by William Tenn), TOMORROW'S CHILDREN, 1966, edited by Isaac Asimov), DEMON KIND (1973) and CHILDREN OF INFINITY (1973, anthologies edited by Roger Elwood), CHILDREN OF THE FUTURE (1982, Analog anthology edited by Stanley Schmidt), and CHILDREN OF THE FUTURE (1984) edited by Asimov, Martin Harry Greenberg and Charles G. Waugh.

Science fiction is about the future, and has to have a future. Thus babies and children are necessary to grow up and continue the processes. Women need to give birth to enable humans to survive.



Commentary On This Article by John Thiel

This commentary signifies a change in Ionisphere toward greater interrelations among staff members of the bureau. It's more like working as team members to comment on others' writings, and more profitable to readers to be reading something other than lone viewpoints. It makes the workings of the bureau more up front. I'm starting off the change by commenting on the articles by the other staff members which I print.

The above article is on a topic of great interest to the fan-pro coordinating activity. One of the problems in having an active fandom is that there are not as many younger people becoming science fiction fans and entering into fanzine activity as there have been in the past. The magazines do not have fanzine reviews any more or discuss fandom the way they used to, and they lack letter columns where a lot of fanzine activity has originated; therefore much of fandom is people who have been in fandom for a long while, perhaps since the last fanzine column (in Amazing) disappeared along with the magazine. People have started complaining about the lack of youth in science fiction fandom. We must consider a way of advertising science fiction fandom, and science fiction as well, in the right places. Of course the movies are attracting the young, but they are drawing young people toward the movies and not necessarily toward science fiction fandom. One thing fandom needs to do is exist more than it has been doing; more activity would make fandom more apparent to people who have been missing it, and some activity does appear to be happening during the present time. Writers might try doing articles on fandom in the general magazines and newspapers when we get things going.

Science fiction with children in it might provide something of greater interest to the young, stories they would not want to miss. Unfortunately many of the stories of science fiction in which children have appeared have treated the children rather harshly, though this was not the case in Heinlein juveniles which had children in them, such as STARMAN JONES, THE STAR BEAST, THE ROLLING STONES, CITIZEN OF THE GALAXY, and other novels and short stories. Heinlein did not neglect children or families in what he wrote. Families in current science fiction are usually having trouble surviving and are leading dissolute lives. We should ask for science fiction with better than that. It may be that science fiction is aimed at mature interests, but that maturity should take human situations into better account, with the way people are living being more of a topic.

AWARD-WINNING NOVELIST BILL CRIDER AND I

by Jon D. Swartz, N₃F Historian



A meeting of reader and writer

Allen Billy (Bill) Crider, born July 28, 1941 in Mexin, Texas, was an author of crime, mystery, spy, western, science fiction (SF), fantasy (F), and horror (H) novels. He was also a poet and critic. Moreover, he was an avid collector of paperback books, especially the *noir* novels of the 1940s-1950s. In the 1970s-1980s, he wrote about these writers and their books for the magazine **Paperback Quarterly**, for which he was also Contributing Editor.

Paperback Quarterly

In his Paperback Quarterly (PQ) columns, "Paperback Writers" and "Paperback Originals", Bill discussed the lives and works of authors whose books were published in paperback form, including SF/F/H authors; and he also contributed such articles to the magazine as "Ace Science Fiction Special Series", "Ace Science Fiction Doubles", "SF Writers in Other Fields", and "Skeleton Covers".

In addition to his columns and occasional articles, Bill also did book reviews for PQ, some of which were on SF/F/H volumes. For example, in the Winter, 1979, issue he reviewed R. Reginald's SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY LITERATURE: A CHECKLIST, 1970-1974, with "Contemporary Science Fiction Authors II" (Gale Research, 1979).

Special issues of Paperback Quarterly were devoted to such SF/F/H personalities as Donald A. Wollheim, Kelly Freas, and the de Camps. These issues also included interviews of those featured. The very first issue of the magazine, dated Spring, 1978,

featured L. Sprague and Catherine de Camp on the cover and included the article, "A Conversation with the de Camps". Other genre writers/editors written about during the first three years of the magazine included Poul Anderson, Ray Bradbury, Philip K. Dick, Alfred Hitchcock, Robert E. Howard, J.R.R. Tolkien, and Jack Vance. So, from the very beginning of the publication, SF/F/H topics were featured; and Bill and his wife Judy (as a copy editor) were associated with the magazine from its very beginning.

Bill later published his "Paperback Writers" column and other standalone articles in **Paperback Parade**, a magazine published in Brooklyn, New York, to which I've contributed many articles on SF and other topics over the years.

Brief Crider Bio

Bill did his undergraduate work at the University of Texas, then received a master's degree from the University of North Texas. He then taught English at Howard Payne University for twelve years, before earning a Ph. D. at The University of Texas at Austin, where he wrote his dissertation on the hardboiled detective novel. He then moved with his family to Alvin, Texas, where he taught and was Chair of the Division of English and Fine Arts at Alvin Community College. He retired from teaching in August, 2002, to become a full-time writer.

Bill was the author of the Professor Sally Good and the Professor Carl Burns mysteries, the Sheriff Dan Rhodes series, the Truman Smith P.I. series, and he wrote three books in the Stone: M.I.A. Hunter series under his Jack Buchanan pseudonym. Over his career he used other pseudonyms, including Cliff Banks, Jack McLane, and K.C. McKenna.

Bill also co-authored a couple of books (the Stanley Waters Mysteries) with the famous NBC weatherman, Willard Scott.

Bill won two Anthony Awards for his mystery writing. The Anthony Awards are named for Anthony Boucher (William Anthony Parker White), who wrote SF/F/H as well as mysteries. The Bouchercons are also named for him.

Genre Writing

Bill's fantasy/horror writing, all written under his Jack McLane pseudonym, included KEEPERS OF THE BEAST (1988), GOODNIGHT, MOOM (1989), BLOOD DREAMS (1989), REST IN PEACE (1990), and JUST BEFORE DARK (1990), all published by Zebra Publishers.

His SF books were mostly for young readers, and included A VAMPIRE NAMED FRED

(Temple Books, 1990), MUTTKETEER: A WISHBONE BOOK (Big Red Chair Books, 1997), MIKE GONZO AND THE SEWER MONSTER (Minstrel, 1996), MIKE GONZO AND THE ALMOST INVISIBLE MAN (Minstrel, 1996), and MIKE GONZO AND THE UFO TERROR (Minstrel, 1997), the last named winner of the 1997 Golden Duck Award for Best Juvenile SF Novel.

One of Bill's last books was EIGHT ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES (2017), a collection of his stories that combined the mystery and SF/F/H genres. In these eight stories, Holmes and Watson "investigated vampires, ghouls, ghosts, and other mysterious creatures."

Bill and I

I read and collected his books, especially his mystery series. I have read some of these books several times, and enjoyed them every time I did so, especially the ones featuring college professors Good and Burns. I was a college professor myself for 20+ years.

I met Bill (and his wife Judy) at a local science fiction convention. He was on a panel that I attended, and we were able to speak for a time afterward. He and I had a good friend in common, an English professor that I grew up with, Charlie Ferguson, who taught for years with Bill at Alvin Community College. As teenagers, Charlie and I read and collected SF, listened to DIMENSION X on the radio, and even worked together on a SF fanzine. In a fashion, Charlie served to introduce me to Bill and his wife.

Autographed Copies of Bill's Books

Bill later sent me several autographed copies of his books, one in which he included Charlie as a fictional character. This book, DEAD ON THE ISLAND, reads: "The man sitting at the desk stood up. He was at least six inches taller than I, maybe six six or seven, and around fifty-five years old. He was thin, like an aging basketball player. He wore glasses, and his hair was completely white, what there was of it. He was fairly thick on the sides and back, but there were only a few strands combed across the top. He had a white beard as well." Bill even named this fictional character of his Chuck Ferguson. In the book's inscription to me, Bill wrote: "To Jon Swartz—recognize the guy on page 63? Bill Crider".

Bill didn't consider himself much of a SF/F/H author, even though he published the

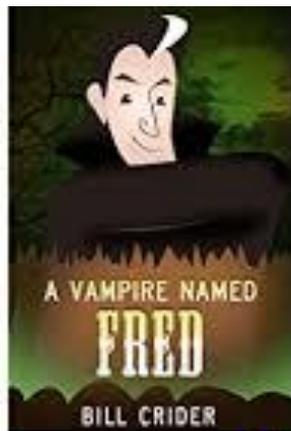
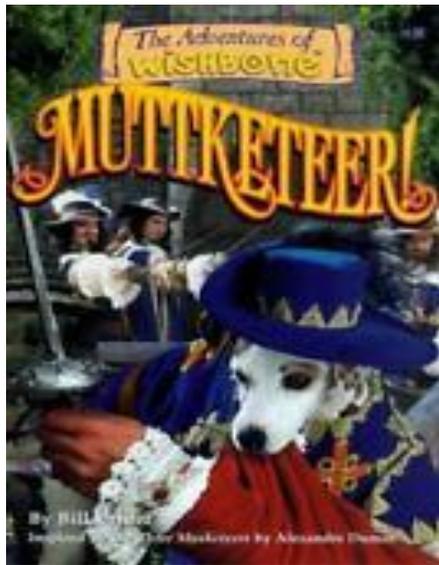
genre articles and book series described above, and was asked to participate in panels at several SF cons.

Some Conclusions

Bill died of cancer on February 12, 2018, at his home in Alvin, Texas. His wife had died three years earlier. He and Judy had a daughter, Angela, and a son, Allen.

A tribute to Bill, *BULLETS AND OTHER HURTING THINGS*, edited by novelist Rick Ollerman and with an introduction by Bill's daughter, was published earlier this year.

Bill is greatly missed. All of my associations with him were pleasant ones. It is a comfort to me that his fans still have his many books to enjoy, especially his mystery and SF/F/H novels.



People Interviewed in Ionisphere

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These writers, artists, editors and fans are all available for correspondence at the email addresses listed, and may be found at the author sites listed or at Facebook. The five names at the end of the list are names for which we don't presently have addresses, though we may be able to gain access to these addresses at a later time.

The interviews are all available at the N3F site, <http://n3f.com> . They are under the publications listing and are found in the back issues of Ionisphere.



ON VIEW



Two photos of Jeffrey Redmond at an abandoned factory complex

Get to know your bureau personnel a little better. Here we have two almost candid photographs of Jeffrey Redmond. When we get chances to do so we'll show and tell about our bureau members in a way that you will know at least something about them and your appraisal of us will not be an abstract one without details. This bureau will favor the membership of the N3F getting better acquainted with one another as a part of our general project of getting fans and writers to know one another better.

Photos of fans and pros at conventions will be welcomed if anyone who has such photos sends them in here. Anyone's reports on fandom interactivity are welcomed here and will be printed if you send them. Sidelights on noted fans are of interest here. You don't have to be a bureau member to send them here for public exhibition.

IONISPHERE will be changing over into a more intimate and folksy publication at a controlled rate of speed. It is the wish here not to be a dormant display but rather an active bureau, acting and not merely expressing our policy. We like fans to have the fun of doing things and enjoying the significance of what is done.

SCISSORS by Gerald Heyder

Snip, snip, snip, we cut this off, we cut that off, so many things
in life we eliminate and we do not hesitate in doing so.

We are human scissors when we decide to dispose
of this or that and we often do it
at the drop of a hat.

A scissors' steel can cut paper of fabric
but we cut intangibles like a knife slicing vegetables for supper.

Sometimes we are in lower case,
quite often the case is upper.

Like a typewriter we pop up and down
and often we are bound
to cut off more than we should.

Yes, we are scissors hacking away things that should stay.
I guess I'll get my scissors and see if I can cut my bills in half.

Wish me luck for a bucket of bucks to save!

TIME AT EASE by Will Mayo



Coming to terms
with the man I've been,
the man I am now,
the man I've yet to be.
Riding that wind
down the lonesome highway
of my remaining years.
Feeling the breeze.
Learning to let go.
Learning to just be.
Living as life would have it.
It's just me now.
Little else remains.
Be and let be.

THE FINDING by John Polselli



*By way of introducing our staff members better, here is a creative work by John Polselli.
Get to know the man, if you would.*

The sunlight that had filled the wood has fled.
Now evening inches toward the dead of night.

The waxing crescent sinks upon her bed.
The long-eared owl sweeps the shaw in fright
And embers raging in a furnace bright
With beaming stomas make the lochan leap
With lucent light and nebulae that creep.

Forestalled are dreams congenial and mild
That thresh within the bliss of slumber's flume.
And mortals' dreams set loose are roaming wild
Below the gleaming baldachin of gloom.

I watch the stunted scorpion consume
The prowling spider underneath a sky
Revolving like a schizophrenic's eye.

The cylinders of nightfall activate,
Forshadowing the advent of the stars
While sneaking shaitans loom and desecrate
The transcendental regions of the gods.
The throaty charms of the Pickering frogs
Are beckoning the coming of the wolf
Who is the simulacra of myself.

These clouds are tethered to the troposphere.
They quaver like an organ not unheard
While shadows from the dead of night appear,
And all my senses and my suss are blurred.
Unfeasible to fathom what occurred
While opening, with dread, my bedroom door.
I found my lifeless body on the floor.

Editor's comment: This goes to show what happens to dreamers. You want to watch that you don't dream too hard. These visions take a lot out of a man.

Mr. Polselli has not been contributing reports to this bureau because something is standing in the way of his doing so. Perhaps not everybody he knows approves of his joining the N3F. In earlier issues he does a notification of himself. He is supposed to be keeping track of paper fandom but I can't achieve communication with him on this matter, although in other matters we are still in contact. I am looking to find out what these problems are, and if there is any way to do anything about them. In the meantime, here's a little insight for readers into the action involved. Polselli is an enthusiastic correspondent by regular mail with many fans, but he seldom reports back to me about these correspondences, though he does show a desire to expand fandom. A little profile of him here so you can get to know of him better.





Weather in Ionosphere, Cornell University Research