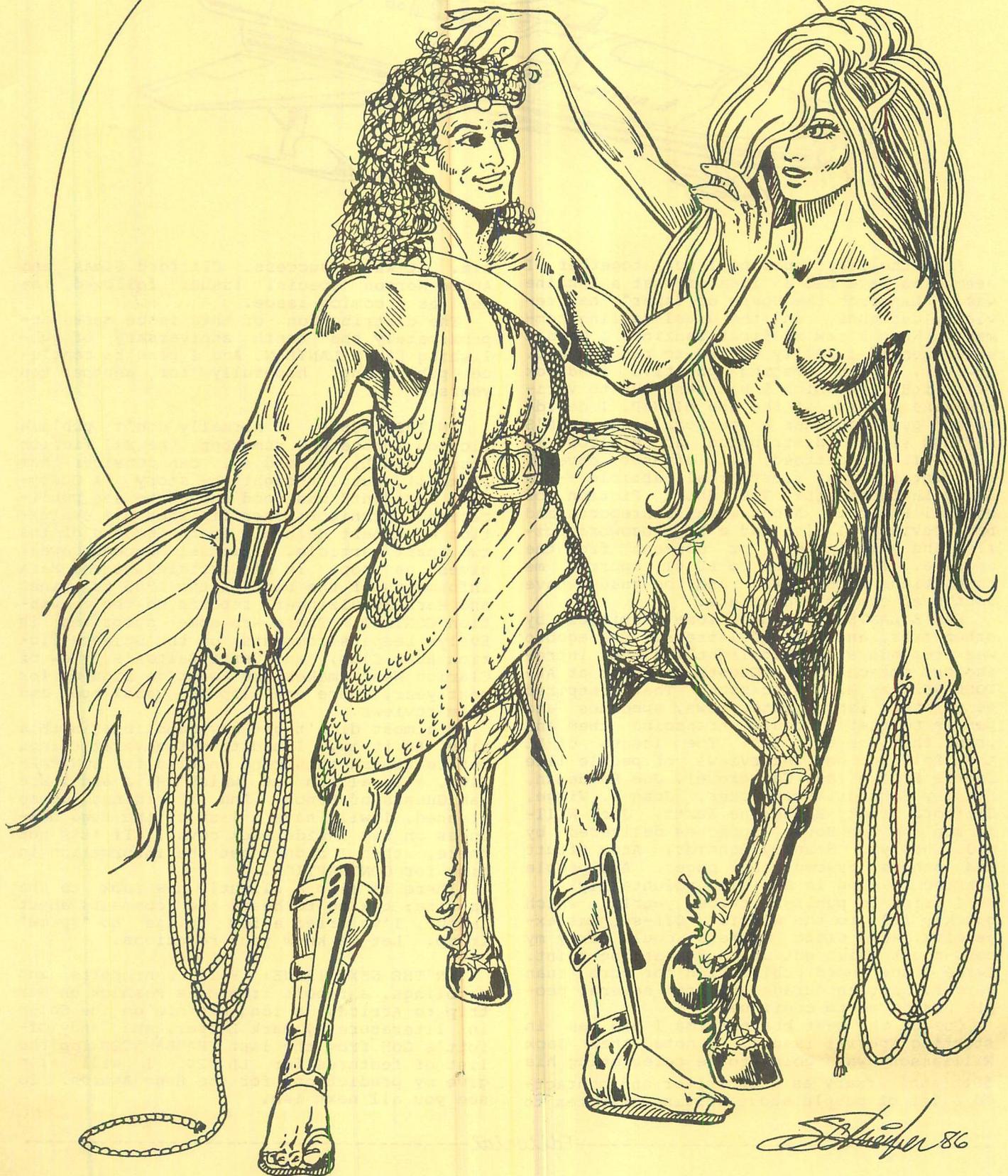
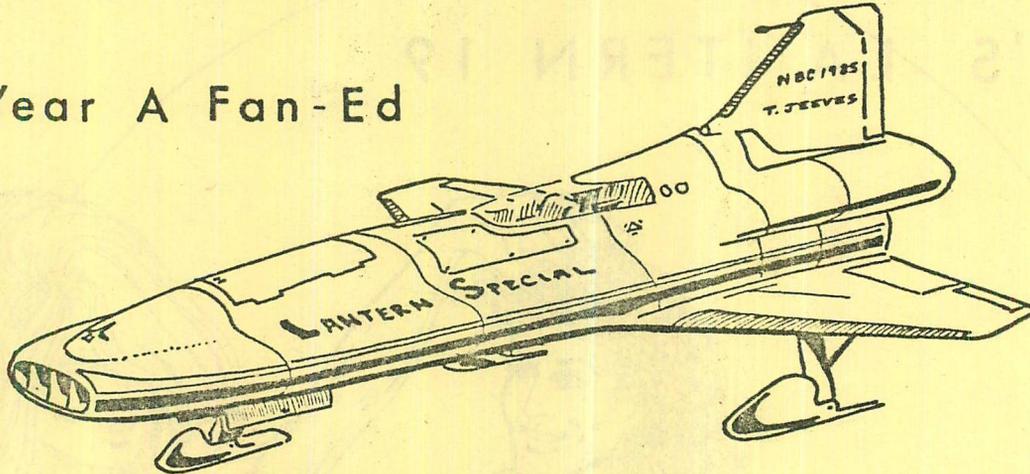


LAN'S LANTERN 19



FROM THE EDITOR:

Ten Year A Fan-Ed



From the first apazine I put together I seemed to have had an idea of what a fanzine was. "Lan from the House of Isher" had reviews, cartoons, and the usual mailing comments. When I saw my first fanzine, I wasn't sure then if I really wanted to put one out. However, after getting positive feedback from LftHoI #4 which I had sent out to various fans outside of the apa MISHAP, I decided to put together a personalzine. LAN'S LANTERN #1 was distributed at MINICON in 1976. It was dittoed, with off-set covers, and contained my first real article -- "A Study in Contrasts: The Short Fiction of Michael Bishop." Along with conreports and book reviews, I also had a SF crossword puzzle, and some letters of comment from the apazine. The reaction to LL #1 spurred me to continue with LL #2, and the issues have continued coming ever since.

LAN'S LANTERN #2 had some articles by other fans, and lots of letters. The egoboo was tremendous. A highlight was the introductory speech to the Guests of Honor at AU-TOCLAVE I by Mike Glicksohn. That inspired me to start taping interviews, speeches and panels so that I could transcribe them and print them as articles. The issues of LL that followed had interviews of people like Jackie Franke (now Causgrove), Joe Haldeman, Stanley Schmidt, Bob Tucker, Joan D. Vinge, Clifford Simak, Katherine Kurtz, Jack Williamson and Ben Bova. Speeches delivered by C.J. Cherryh, Stanley Schmidt, Andy Offutt and others graced the pages. And people started to send in articles voluntarily.

I tried to publish twice yearly, which quickly fell to the wayside. Off-set was expensive, and ditto masters could carry my copy-count which got up to 800 at one point. Twice I suspended publication for more than a year, but encouragement from several people pushed me to continue.

One of the best brainstorms I had was in starting special issues. I noted that Jack Williamson was going to be celebrating his 50th anniversary as a SF writer and contacted a lot of people about writing tributes to

him. It was a success. Clifford Simak and Andre Norton special issues followed, as well as a comics issue.

The distribution of this issue marks approximately the tenth anniversary of publishing LAN'S LANTERN. And I plan to continue publishing, hopefully for another ten years.

IN THIS ISSUE: I normally don't publish fiction (those who remember the all fiction issues of LL, #3 and #5, can consider them flukes!), but I thought the story "A Custodial Incident" was good enough to see publication. Dennis Fischer finishes his evaluation of Robert Heinlein in the second of the two part article. Michael Kube-McDowell gives us hope in his article/speech; Maia informs us of the best of the 1985 magazines and Mark Schulzinger reports on the convention CONTACT. There are some surprises in Evelyn Leepers comments on the Science Fiction Book Club, and Gerri Balter's view of Clarion West makes me want to sign up for next year. There are also the usual book and film reviews.

I almost didn't get any ramblings in this time. As it is, I had to cut several things out to finish this zine in time for CONTRAPTION, a local con at which Maia and I are fan Guests of Honor. And if things go as planned, I will have a list of the Hugo nominees on the inside back cover. If it's not there, then I didn't get the information in time for CONTRAPTION.

There is also a slightly new look to the fanzine; taking to heart the comments about layout, I've tried a few things to "spice" it up. Let me know your reactions.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE: Full conreports and ramblings, a report from Mike Resnick on his trip to Africa, a long article on the Golem in literature by Mark Leeper, and Andy Offutt's GoH from the last CHAMBANACON top the list of features for LL #20. I will also give my predictions for the Hugo Awards. So see you all next ish.

LAN'S LANTERN #19

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LAN'S LANTERN #19 is published and edited by George "Lan" Laskowski who lives at 55 Valley Way, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48013 USA. LAN'S LANTERN is available for articles, letters of comment, artwork, even money -- \$2.00 postpaid -- and whim of the editor. The opinions expressed within are those of the writers, and may not necessarily reflect those of the editor. Then again they may. This is Lantern Publication #4. Lantern Publications is a division of LanShack Press Unlimited. LAN'S LANTERN #19 is copyright (c) April, 1986, by George J Laskowski Jr. All rights return to the contributors upon publication.

DEDICATION

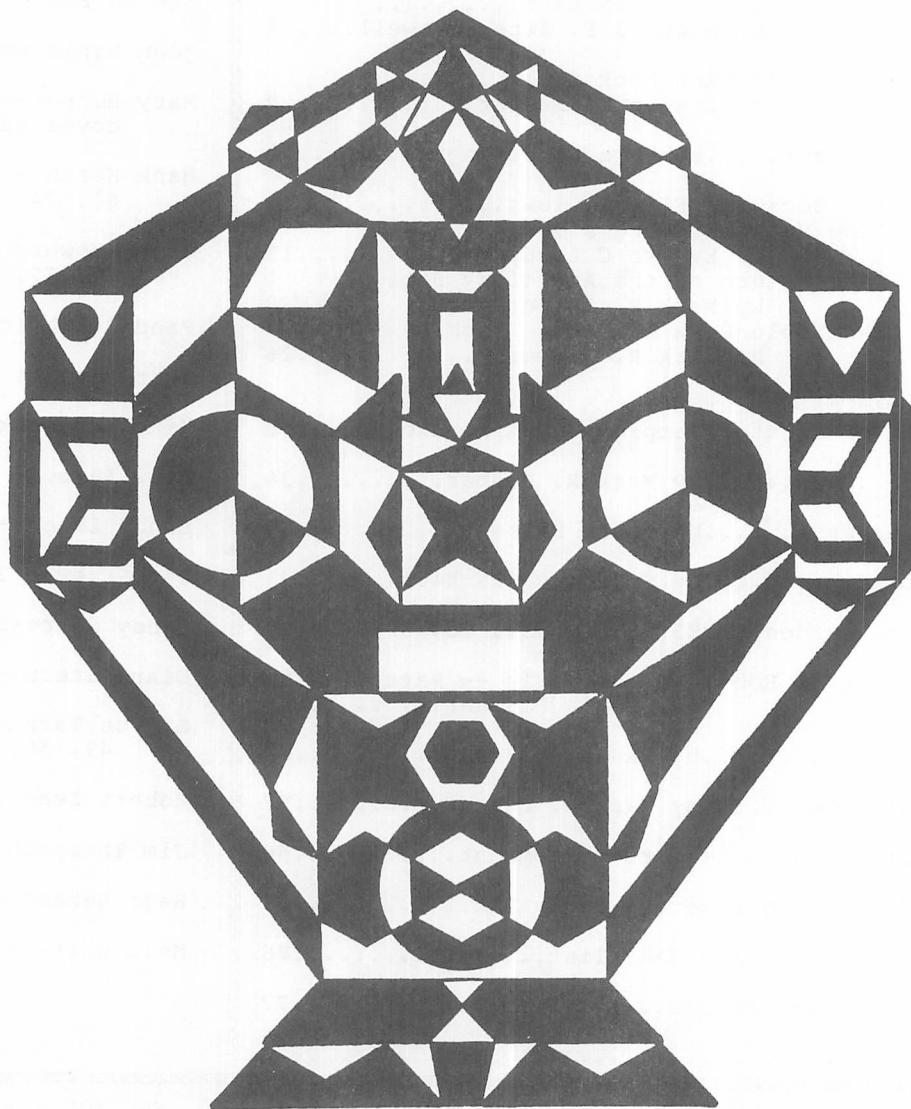
To Maia, of course;

To Tim and Anna Zahn, co-GoHs with us at CONTRAPTION,
and to the ConCommittee of CONTRAPTION.

WHY YOU ARE RECEIVING THIS

- Contribution of art or article.
- Comments received and/or printed.
- We are in an apa together.
- You wanted a copy.
- A copy wanted you.
- I would like you to contribute an article, art, or a loc.
- This is your last copy unless you do something.

SEARCHING FOR HOPE:



Notes from the Slow Lane

by Michael P. Kube-McDowell

A.O.T.
11:30 P.M.
12-30-77

One of the things I recall from my seven years as a middle school science teacher is how surprised my students were if they ran into me in a grocery store or a shopping mall. It was as though their mental image of what a teacher was didn't include any of the mundanities of life. To a certain extent, writers suffer from the same gap between perception and reality. There's a difference between being a writer and actually writing.

Being a writer -- the part that creates the perception -- can be a lot of fun. I love walking into a bookstore and finding myself wedged between Damon Knight and Katherine Kurtz. I finally have the kind of office I always wanted -- with three walls filled with books and the fourth covered with NASA photos and SF art. I have considerable freedom, both to follow my own instincts and to set my own schedule.

But writing -- the reality -- is mostly work, and it comes with its very own set of indignities and irritants just like any other job.

Writing means drinking beer from a Smurf glass because everything else is dirty and you only meant to leave the keyboard for five minutes, not the twenty it would take to load the dishwasher.

Writing means my family has to adapt to my completely alien sense of time. I use a calendar about as much as the average person uses a sundial. The passage of time is measured by the thickness of the manuscript in my printout binder.

Writing means the arrival of the mail is one of the high points of the day, because the mail represents potential novelty in a life where one day is pretty much like any other day. I can well understand how David Brin came to make a folk hero out of a postman.

At this point in my career, writing means watching the savings account balance slide downward toward zero when the time between significant checks balloons to three months, or four, or five.

But mostly, writing means spending one-third of your life sitting alone at a keyboard, with nothing but your own thoughts for company.

Luckily, I'm not condemned to spend my entire life staring at green phosphor. Periodically throughout the year, I get a weekend pass to one of those lovely sabbaticals known as a science fiction conventions.

I have to confess up front that my credentials as an SF fan are suspect. SF has made up the majority of my fiction reading since the Tom Swift, Jr. books began appearing in the early 60's. But science fiction was never anything I shared with anyone beyond occasionally swapping a book with a friend. The whole world of SF clubs and fanzines and writer's groups was one that I just never came in contact with. I didn't even know it existed.

Luckily, I got in the back way -- as a writer. What I found was a community made up of warm, intelligent, and tolerant people. Good people. Interesting people. In just three years, I've formed a lot of friend-

ships which I fully expect will continue well into my senescence.

A good convention is like a highlights film of the best parts of college -- good food, good music, stimulating conversation, a melting pot of personalities, and as much serious partying as you can cope with. I now go to five or six cons a year, and I don't get cheated. I gape, admire, and ogle at the masquerade. I stay up late listening to the filksinging. I wake up in the morning bleary-eyed from getting four hours of sleep.

But you do have to pay your dues -- which for the writers means taking part in panels.

I enjoy doing panels, even though it's something of a curiosity to me how telling lies for profit should give your opinions any more authority. I've been asked to talk about alien sex, nuclear winter, the psychology of horror, NASA's space station, future education, female heroes, creationism, electronic surveillance -- I wish I were as knowledgeable as that list suggests I must be. As you probably know, a teacher of general science is equipped to make about two remarks on any subject. Then he has to go look it up like anyone else. Of course, two bright comments is usually enough to get me through a typical panel.

Every now and then, though, you get thrown a curve. At this year's NASFiC in Austin, I was assigned to a panel titled "Today's New Writers -- the Next New Wave?" -- an appellation which made me more than vaguely uncomfortable. But we were doing fine until someone in the audience broke the most fundamental rule of panels -- she asked a tough question. "If you're the next new wave," she asked, "then what do you represent? What is it you stand for?"

Naturally, I ducked the question. But I did manage to say that if there was going to be another new wave, I hoped that it would bring some open-eyed optimism back to a field that over the last few years has been more cynical and pessimistic than I care for. I was both surprised and pleased when the audience applauded that.

The fact is, it's far too early for me or anyone else to be talking about the meaning of my work. I'm not analytical about what I do -- I find that a hindrance to actually doing it. However --

I do know one particular attitude which underlies most everything I write, and if I'd been a little braver with that Austin audience, I would have 'fessed up to it. What I described to them in wishful terms was the kind of stories I hoped I was writing.

I view this kind of open-eyed optimism as one of the foundation stones of science fiction. In fact, the most perfect explication of it that I know was written at the turn of the century by none other than Herbert George Wells. I've carried this particular quotation in my wallet ever since I first encountered it, because it expresses far better than I can what draws me to SF both as a reader and writer. Wells wrote:

"It is possible to believe that all the past is but the beginning of a beginning, and that all that is and has been is but the twilight of the dawn. It is possible to believe that all the human mind has ever accomplished is but the dream before the awakening. We cannot see, there is no need for us to see, what this world will be like when the day has fully come. We are creatures of the twilight. But it is out of our race and lineage that minds will spring, that will reach back to us in our littleness to know us better than we know ourselves, and that will reach forward fearlessly to comprehend this future that defeats our eyes. All this world is heavy with the promise of greater things, and a day will come, one day in the unending succession of days, when beings, beings which are now latent in our thoughts and hidden in our loins, shall stand upon this earth as one stands upon a footstool, and shall laugh and reach out their hands amidst the stars."

Notice the words Wells chose -- it is possible to believe in a bright future. It is also possible to believe that the world is going to hell in a hand basket. And if you're going to go out proselytizing for one view or the other, you'll do yourself a favor if you join the doom-sayers -- it's always been easier to marshal evidence to support that view.

But there's no profit in pessimism. All it does is give you permission for despair, and for the kind of indifference to consequences that we humans show at our worst. And it makes us vulnerable to a bad case of self-fulfilling prophecy.

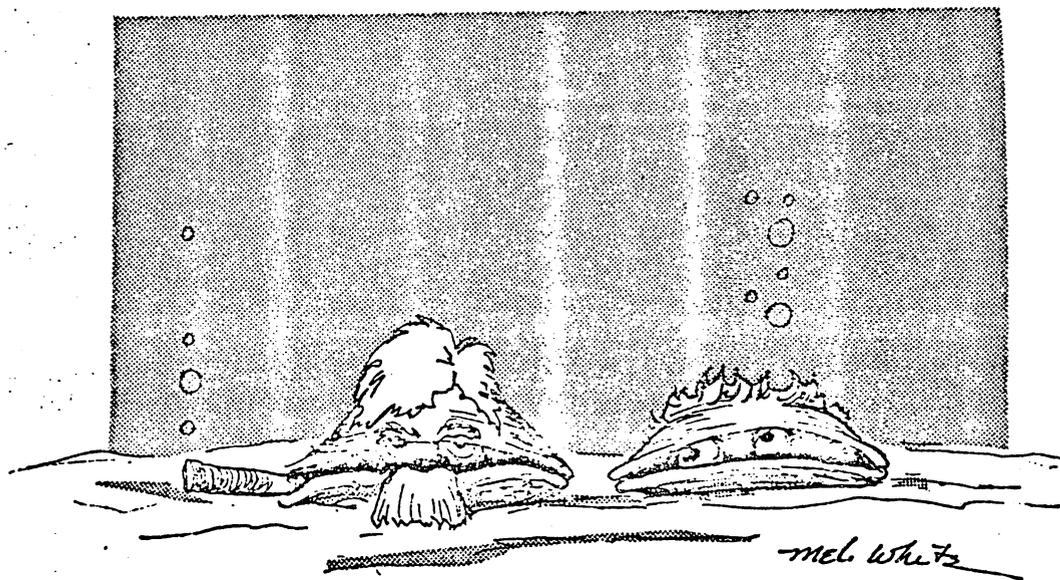
It's easy to laugh at an optimist, to call him a pollyanna and sneeringly invite him to come live in the real world. But what Wells was describing, and what I hope my writing portrays, is not optimism, but meliorism -- the belief that through human effort, the world can be made better. It's a belief that I think is essential to our long-term survival.

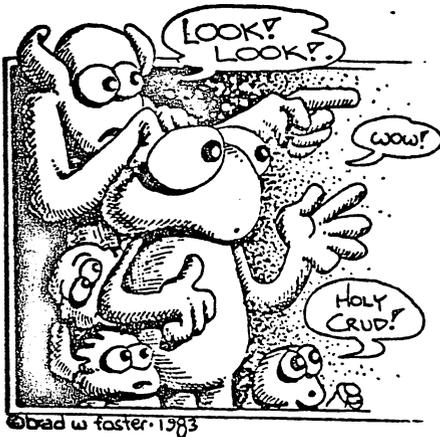
Recently I came across a greeting card which showed a young boy, standing naked in a doorway, looking out at the seemingly infinite universe lying just beyond. The caption inside reads, "Hello out there."

I think it's wonderfully symbolic of where we are as a species. We're no longer a helpless infant, tied to the security of our cradle, the Earth. We've learned how to stand up and few other parlor tricks. We're learning not to make messes where we live. Perhaps the most important thing that we've learned is that we can learn. We're growing. And we're looking out from where we stand with curiosity and wonder.

Recent criticism to the contrary, I believe that the human prospect is still very bright and the future still very much in our control. As long as I can sustain that belief, I'll be writing stories about challenges and possibilities: those contained within ourselves, and those allowed by a Universe the parameters of which we have only begun to explore. I can only hope, for all our sakes, that there will always be an audience for the hopeful view of life.

[Condensed from a speech presented November 2, 1985 before the Universal Fantasy Organization of Fort Wayne, Indiana.]





Comments on

The Science Fiction Book Club

An Article by Evelyn C. Leeper

Last summer, Ellen Asher of the Doubleday Science Fiction Book Club (SFBC) came to speak at the New Jersey Science Fiction Society. Some of her comments were fairly interesting, so I will relay them as I remember them.

The SFBC is one of seven Doubleday book clubs (Asher said she likes to think of it as one sucker on the book club tentacle of the Doubleday octopus). It is the largest of their specialty clubs (they also have a military history club and a Mystery Guild, for example). I don't recall if it's larger than their Literary Guild. The seven clubs have a membership totaling over one million, and since the mailing list that the SFBC sells (which includes expired members) is about 250,000, one can conclude that the SFBC itself has about 200,000 members. (The actual figures are secret, apparently.)

There was a lot of discussion about the books that are selected. There are several considerations. The books are printed "letter-press" rather than offset, so that books relying on strange typographies or complicated interior illustrations have little chance of being chosen (alternate selections can be printed offset in special cases, but the main selections cannot be). Most are issued as hardcovers, though they occasionally issue a trade paperback. (There is a new LeGuin, *Always Coming Home*, that is a trade paperback, slip-cased with cassette.) Because of the "negative option" method used (see below), and because so many of the members are minors, the main selections usually do not include "adult" (sexual) material. Doubleday has no desire to get hauled into court for sending unsolicited sexual material to minors.

Several of us (including me) decried the swing from science fiction to fantasy that we see the SFBC taking. There appear to be several reasons for this. One, fantasy sells (according to Asher, and she should know). Two, there is a lot more fantasy available than there used to be. Look in your local Waldenbooks or B. Dalton if you don't believe this. Three (and this is my observation based on an extended conversation), Asher likes fantasy better than science fiction, and Arthurian/high fantasy better than dark fantasy (including horror, but also works by such authors as Glen Cook and Stephen Brust). While she buys the obliga-

tory science fiction (no one would dream of NOT offering the latest Asimov or Niven), she tends to go for the new fantasy authors more than the new science fiction authors. This is, of course, somewhat self-fulfilling. As more fantasy is offered, people who prefer fantasy join the SFBC because they can get more of what they want, while people who prefer science fiction leave (or are dropped) because they can't find what they want. (If a member hasn't bought a book in a year, they are sent a letter asking them to return an enclosed card if they wish to remain a member. This way the SFBC doesn't keep spending postage on people who never buy anything.)

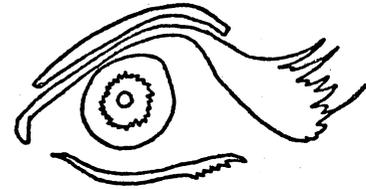
Someone asked about how well the book club editions hold up over time. Asher replied that they are printed on acid-free paper, so should last reasonably well. This provoked a stir of surprise, since Gregg Press and Bluejay Books have been promoting their books as superior to most because of the acid-free paper. Why doesn't the SFBC mention this in their advertising? Asher said that every time this was suggested, the powers that be at Doubleday insisted that no one would understand what that meant, so it didn't pay to advertise it. If enough people wrote the SFBC and asked them to switch to acid-free paper, they might realize that we do know what the stuff is!

There has been some discussion about the "negative option" method that the SFBC uses (if you don't reply otherwise, you automatically get the main selections). People have claimed that there is some way to get on a "positive option" list, where you don't have to reply each month. When I asked about this, the response was that there was such a list, but it is reserved for people who have some good reason to be on it. Most of the people on the list, for example, are overseas, where the cost of postage and handling is high enough that the SFBC felt that the default sending of the selections wouldn't be fair (not to mention the problems of getting the cards back to the SFBC in time to have them not send the selections if the negative option were in effect). I suspect that people who travel a good deal (the military, etc.) could also be put on the list.

No one talked about the cost of postage and handling. Everyone knows it's high; everyone knows there's not much that can be done about it.

Evelyn C. Leeper

The Year We Made CONTACT!



HANK HEATH 85

A conreport by Mark Schulzinger

The story begins in Indianapolis, but what the heck....

Rusty Hevelin was at the desk of the Evansville (Indiana) Sheratin when I walked in to register Thursday evening. Rembert Parker, in suit and tie, goggled at us. "But, but, we didn't expect anybody until Friday."

Rusty grumbled something; I grumbled something. The weather was foul--rain, cold, flying state troopers.

"Party at seven," Rembert said, undaunted.

The Sheratin, ever attentive to the comfort of its guests, had forgotten that I had ordered adjoining rooms in October for the Beams and ourselves. They forgot that we liked to have coat hangers in our rooms. They forgot that Rusty likes to bathe regularly. About the only thing they didn't forget was to try and charge us full price.

Tucker had arrived while I was trying to get coat hangers and, as time went on, the Zahns, Jack Chalker, Dell Harris and a host of others made their appearances. I ran into Pete Fergusson, dripping wet from the pool, and invited him up for a small libation. He discovered that my bar stock included some of Mr. Jameson's special export stock and we settled down for a chat. During a conversation concerning the breeding of tropical fish I got up enough courage to ask Pete to look at a rejection slip Stan Schmidt had sent me.

"Mark," he said, "this is great! Stan's asking for a rewrite."

"Uh," I said brightly. "All I can see is three lines that say 'it doesn't quite gel'."

"Nope." Pete was emphatic. "He wants a rewrite."

I admitted that I was only a clinical psychologist and Pete was kind enough to introduce me to elementary Schmidteese. By the end of the lesson we were tearing stories apart. Hooray for translators!

The party was at the Heileman brewery where the RCSFS, not anticipating an early influx of fen, struggled mightily to keep us fed. We went at it like a herd of brothers-in-law while Pete and Jack Chalker traded unkind words about their respective word processing programs. Pete's had managed to freeze his hard disk and eradicate itself from its master floppy in the process.

Tucker and my wife were deeply engrossed in private conversation. Bhub, ever atten-

tive to attractive women, had rightly seen that Sally was the fairest in the room. She, equally perceptive, returned the interest. I wound up trying to explain fandom to the bartender.

Back at the Sheratin we discovered that the Beams had arrived from Kokomo. We wandered down to Tucker's room where Rusty Hevelin, Bhub, and Jeff Lockridge (the very personable official CONTACT photographer), were already engaged in conversation and sipping of the smooth. Sally, as usual, took her place at Tucker's right hand.

The con registration opened officially at 7 AM Friday and I found thrust into my hot hands a thoroughly professional program booklet--slick covers and all. Checking the program I discovered I had been scheduled to appear on two panels, both on Sunday. This was impossible since we had to head back to Springfield (Missouri) Sunday morning. Rembert told me to attend any panel I wished and tore off to take care of the manifold duties that had already turned half his hair white.

I had picked out a likely sounding panel at 7:30 PM: "Science, we don't need no stinking science." Pete Fergusson, Tucker, and Arlan Andrews had already been empaneled for it but I figured they wouldn't mind a fourth--we could always play poker if no one showed up.

As it was, I was the one who almost didn't show up. It's a long story but we went out for supper on a riverboat. It started to rain again and we were forced to bail. Unfortunately, we couldn't make bail and....

I slid into my chair 30 seconds late.

The con opened officially at 8:30 with Bhub's pithy remarks. Tim Zahn then put us into convulsions with the "Star Trek Suggestion Box". I found out that they were going to show Mike Kube-McDowell's "Lifebomb" at 10:30 and made a mental note to go and watch it. Unfortunately I misplaced my mind shortly thereafter and only found it again about 11 when Mike told us all how he started writing television scripts.

The con suite was awash with soda pop, and Tim Zahn was telling me about Back to the Future. Mike and Karla Kube-McDowell showed up and we all tried to help a fan with a movie trivia quiz. We all decided we don't watch enough movies.

The rain stopped on Saturday and we began to lose the webbing between our toes. I

helped out on a panel on SF Mystery. Then disaster struck---my mother-in-law appeared. I enlisted the Beams' help and we all had lunch together. It was not pleasant; she has no tolerance for "damyankees".

Fortunately, the "Analog Mafia" panel intervened in this traumatic meeting and I tried to appear reluctant as I took my leave. I admit I am not part of the Analog Mafia. Pete and Tim, though, insist that I will be soon so I decided to take the bit in my teeth and participate. Who knows, I might just learn something.

Among Pete Fergusson, Tim Zahn, Mike Kube-McDowell, and Arlan Andrews, over 50% of the authorship of Analog was at the con. Admittedly Tim is now writing novels, but that hardly disqualifies him. I managed to get a few more insights into Schmidteese and found out that even the old-timers have to call him up now and then for clarification. I also found out he's in the office on Tuesdays. Hooray! Now I can call him, too.

Ray Beam and I retired for martinis and a bit of skulduggery while Sally and Mary Ann conferred on their own. The Beams had decided to defer supper until after the masquerade but Sally and I opted for food at the usual time. My mouth cooperated wholeheartedly with the decision-- an inlay popped out with the first mouthful.

At the masquerade Ray presented Tucker with his half of the First Fandom Hall of Fame award--he and Bob Bloch were co-recipients this year. I then announced that Bbob is so old ("How old is he?" from the audience) that he and Daniel DeFoe had stories published simultaneously in the same magazine. Check it out: F&SF, vol. 2, no.1. I turned the issue over to Rusty for auction with the promise that Bbob would autograph both stories to the purchaser. After all, everyone knows that "Daniel Defoe" is one of his earlier pseudonyms. The issue sold for \$27 and the gentleman who purchased it re-

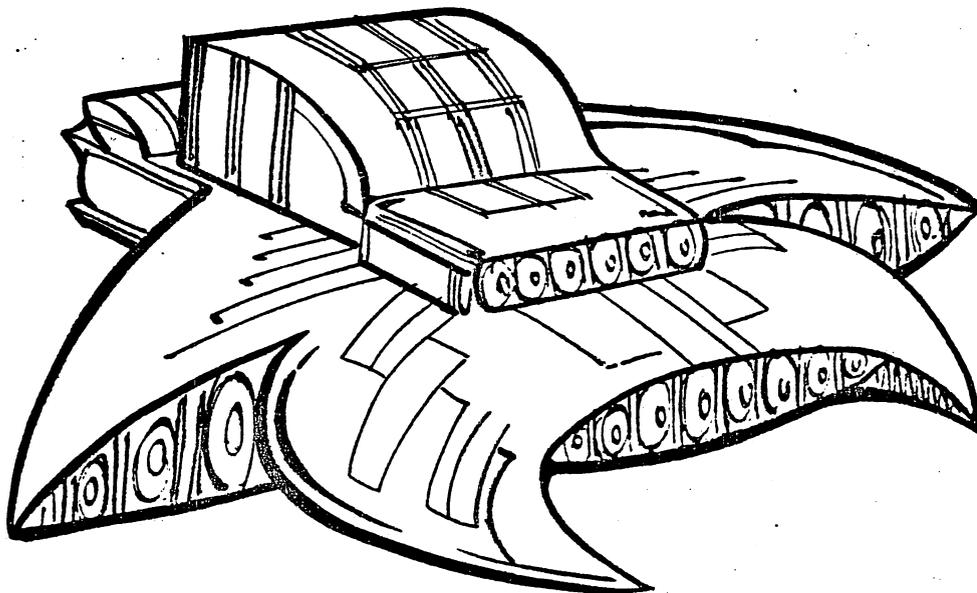
ceived his two autographs and a generous slug of Beam's Choice. Bbob, who also writes submarine stories under the pen name of Jules Verne, was as pleased to give as the fan was to receive.

While the auction was underway Pete Fergusson's youngsters attracted my attention. I guess the professional in me took over and I fell oblivious to what was going on around me while I explored their unique world views. The next thing I knew, the auction was over, the hall was clear, and Pat Fergusson was explaining why they had three computers, five monitors, and numerous other gadgets. Pete showed up with a bottle of Mr. Daniels' Black Label and offered me a drink.

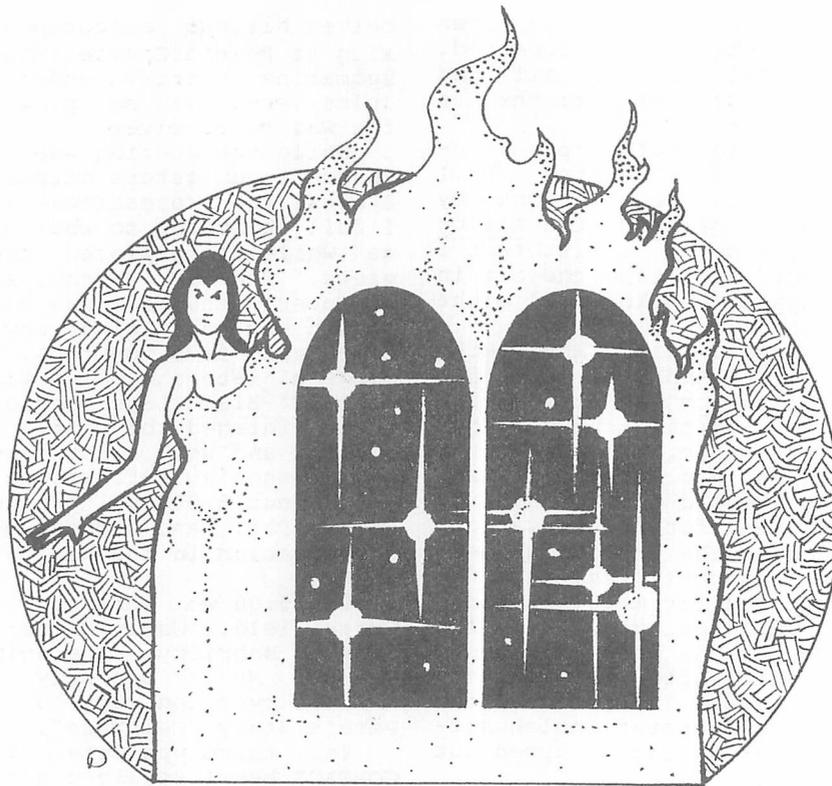
We finished the bottle at 4:30 the next morning and went to my room for some more of Mr. Jameson's best. About 5:00 Pat joined us. About 5:00:30 I crawled into bed while Pete, Pat, and someone else continued the conversation in the hall. They never did get to bed.

By 10:00 we were on our way back to Springfield. Sally drove; I fought my way back to sobriety. The animals were glad to see us. My cat promptly relieved his bladder all over the copy of Analog containing Pete's story "Gertrude".

Yes, there was lots of witty repartee at CONTACT but I really can't recall any of it. Yes, Mike Kube-McDowell brought his Compaq, Rusty Hevelin his Kaypro, someone else his Commodore 64 and I watched the former and the latter communicate with one another through a database in another state just so they could chat from the first to the second floor of the hotel. Yes, I drank more in a weekend than I manage to do in a month. It wasn't an old-fashioned con with lots and lots of fanac, it was a new-fashioned one with gamers and costumes and media fen. Thanks to the RCSFS and all their efforts. It was lots of fun.



PULP &



CELLULOID

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FRIGHT NIGHT

A film review by Mark R. Leeper

CAPSULE REVIEW: When a handsome young vampire moves in next door to a teenager, the horror begins. This just-slightly tongue-in-cheek horror film does deliver what you pay for if you give it time. This is the first true vampire film released to theatres in quite a while and it is worth seeing.

Film reviewers have been talking about the return of the Western last summer and have almost completely overlooked Fright Night, the first real vampire film in a good long time. Usually when a film is written and directed by the same person and you have never heard of him, you should not expect too much from the film. Weird Science was directed by its relatively unknown screenwriter and he deserves to remain relatively unknown. Tom Holland, who wore both hats for Fright Night, is neither as polished a writer or director as this film needed, but he managed to put enough pleasure in this film that some of its rougher edges can be overlooked.

The story, which could as easily come from a low-budget 50's film, is about Charley Brewster, a teenager who discovers his new neighbor is a vampire. Once the vampire (played by Chris Sarandon) knows he has been discovered, it becomes a duel between the two. Charley enlists the aid of TV horror show host and horror actor Peter Vincent (a cross between Peter Cushing and Vincent Price?), played a little too broadly by Roddy McDowell.

Holland, who previously scripted Psycho II, seems as willing to plant tongue in cheek as his vampire plants teeth in neck. At times, the humor gets away from him and threatens to destroy the horror, but luckily there is enough horror in the film so that it is not overpowered by the humor. Richard Edlund (who was one of the more familiar names of the army who did the special effects for Star Wars) has created a number of interesting effects for Fright Night, not all of which are completely believable.

Don't be fooled by the title into thinking that this is a quick, slapped-together horror film. Fright Night delivers a few chuckles and several gasps and in general makes it all work. Rate it +1 on the -4 to +4 scale.

PRIVATEERS

by Ben Bova
Tor, 1985, \$15.95

A book review by Lan

The time is the future. Except for some third-world countries who have orbiting factories, the Soviet Union dominates the world

and space. It is the Soviets who mine the Moon with their political prisoners. The Soviets supply raw materials to ALL the orbiting factories. And it is the Soviets who are hated and feared. Especially hated by Dan Randolph.

Randolph was an astronaut, an engineer, a businessman. When the U.S. knuckled under to the Soviets and were told to disarm their weapons and disband their space program, Randolph fled to Venezuela where he continued to build his business empire, and secretly plot to break the strangle-hold that Russia had placed around the world. However, the Soviets wouldn't just let this happen. Employing sabotage and murder, the KGB attempted to foil Randolph and his plans, only to create a worse situation from which there could only be one victor. And depending on who won, Earth might not survive in one piece.

There are a few authors I read who will hook me at the beginning of a story and keep me enthralled throughout. Mike Resnick, David Brin, and Timothy Zahn are three. Ben Bova is another. On the dustjacket, Spider Robinson is quoted: "Do not start this book if you anticipate any pressing obligations -- a need to sleep, say...." He's right. Although I did manage to tear myself away to sleep, go to the bathroom, and to teach classes, I went right back to the book when I had a free moment. Bova has always had a good story-telling sense and style, and this novel does him in good stead.

Privateers is a fun, exciting, thrilling adventure novel. It does not fit in with the previous series of books involving Kinsman -- Kinsman, Millenium, The Weathermakers, etc. But it still has that expansive feeling that those novels do. Whether or not he will continue any book with Randolph or this particular "universe", I don't know. As long as he keeps writing and telling top-notch stories, he can write whatever he wants.

SILVER BULLET

A film review by Mark R. Leeper

CAPSULE REVIEW: A generally well-made horror film that does not quite satisfy the way some of its recent competition -- notably Fright Night -- does. Plastic effects and a werewolf that would have been pretty scary in 1980.

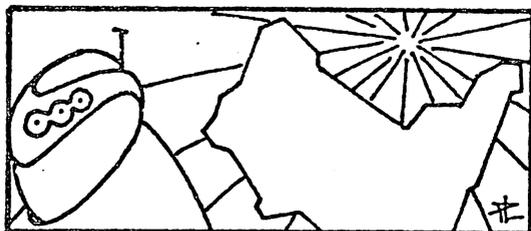
Dino Di Laurentiis-produced films have had a bad name since King Kong. Dune and Red Sonja have not helped that reputation. A few of his films have been well-done in spite of the much-feared name. Conan the Barbarian was a good film and certainly Ragtime was. And I think Stephen King has no reason to complain about either The Dead Zone or Firestarter, two very nicely mounted productions of Kings' novels. Di Laurentiis has returned to his formerly profitable fields, producing Silver Bullet, an adaptation of King's recent book Cycle of the Werewolf.

Silver Bullet is at once the worst of Di Laurentiis' three King films and a better adaptation than King deserved. One reason that it was better is that King wrote the script himself and was able to add enough to make a story worthy of a film. The book was a paperback costing nearly \$9, yet the story was too short to make a film by itself. It is little more than twelve vignettes that form a story of a werewolf who attacks once a month for a year. As a sort of odd reversal, the film gives King a chance to flesh out some characters who were not very well developed in the book.

Silver Bullet deals with a series of werewolf attacks in a small town. The main character is a boy in a wheelchair--not the most likely werewolf-hunter, but that is part of what makes the story. Unfortunately, King's fleshing out of this story added some nonsense for the younger crowd also. One piece is a special wheel-chair crossed with a motorcycle so that it can outrace a car. It is a rather childish idea that Spielberg would love, but which saps the film of some needed credibility.

The Amazing Transforming Werewolf is the creation of Carlo Rambaldi. The effects were inspired (to say the least) by Rob Bottin's werewolves in The Howling. The effects seem a little more plastic than Bottin's and the resulting creature is not nearly as formidable. The werewolf from The Howling still wins hands down as the one I judge most likely to be picking pieces of me out of its teeth after it catches me in a dark alley. The werewolf in Silver Bullet is formidable, but not really in the same class.

As a werewolf film, Silver Bullet is only sub-formidable. It tells its story with some likable characters, but it is no classic. It's a "see once and throw away" film. Rate it +1 on the -4 to +4 scale. My recommendation: see the film; don't buy the book.



THE FORTY MINUTE WAR

by Janet and Chris Morris
Baen Books, \$13.95, 1985

A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper

Like so many Baen books these days, this is basically not a science fiction story. The "40-Minute War" of the title provides the rationale for some very straightforward CIA/spy-type stuff, and the ending indicates that the authors didn't really have an ending. Talk about deus ex machina!

AFTER HOURS

A film review by Mark R. Leeper

CAPSULE REVIEW: A really good script makes this film funny and frightening at the same time. Packed into one night in New York City's SoHo is a lifetime of weirdos, adventure, and horror. See it and you'll laugh, but you will also never set foot in New York after dark. Good Film!

Most horror films deal with the laws of nature suddenly breaking down. Suddenly there are vampires or werewolves. A man falls asleep on a train and wakes up in a town where people have no faces. Ghosts invade a home in suburbia. Things happen that breaks the laws as we expect them. You can't really do a horror story in which the horror element is "I am going to have a really bad trigonometry exam next week." That may be a frightening thought, but it falls too well into common human experience. Perhaps the most convincing kind of horror is that something very abstract like the law of averages breaks down. The reader or viewer may say, "This is too darn much coincidence," but it is tough to get a feel for how much is too much since people run into odd coincidences every day. Falling into a barrage of unpleasant coincidences can be the basis for a frightening and convincing sort of horror story since there is -- much more than in a vampire story -- the feeling that this could happen. People will see After Hours as an often nightmarish but hilarious black comedy but it may not register that it is also very effective as a horror film.

In New York City, a word processor (Paul Hackett, played by Griffin Dunne of An American Werewolf in London), meets a good-looking girl (Marcie, played by Rosanna Arquette) in a restaurant and arranges a date with her, but for his date he has to go to an alien territory called SoHo. Now in real life there are a lot of eccentric people in SoHo and director Martin Scorsese has always had a good eye for making New York City look even more ominous than it actually is. Here he combines an extremely well inter-woven story with very funny portraits of the decidedly weird people who you very well might run into in New York City and gets a film with adventure, horror, and comedy, and none at the expense of the others. It has been suggested by critics that horror and comedy are at odds with each other, and a film that is really funny cannot be really frightening. After Hours manages quite nicely.

I do not want to say much more about the plot than I have for fear of spoiling it, but I will say that the story is a rich tapestry of coincidence with events and even objects tying together at the strangest and most unexpected times. Joseph Minion has written a truly amazing script that fits together like a cleverly designed Chinese puzzle. It is only the chain of coincidence and the believability of the story that do not



fit well together, but that is a minor flaw. It has been suggested that only New Yorkers will appreciate this film noir comedy and I suspect that remains to be seen. But I haven't laughed so hard at a comedy since seeing A Christmas Story two years ago (perhaps not even then). In some ways this is what Into the Night wanted to be and didn't quite make it. It is also what Neil Simon's The Out-of-Towners could have been. This is a +3 comedy on the -4 to +4 scale. There are very few comedies I would rate that high. See it, particularly if you know New York City, but if not, give it a try anyway.

MELANCHOLY ELEPHANTS

by Spider Robinson
Tor paperback, 1985, \$2.95.

A book review by David M. Shea

There are at least two reasons why it is difficult to recommend this book unreservedly. Firstly, it reprints several pieces from the author's earlier collection Antinomy. (Robinson professes to feel justified in this since the earlier book was "remaindered during publication" by Dell, who was dropping its SF line.) Secondly, the quality of Robinson's short fiction has always fluctuated sharply, and so it proves here. Whether there is enough new, good material here to justify the cost of the book remains an iffy question.

The title story is a didactic and whiny lecture on the injustice of present copyright law, thinly disguised as fiction; by some appalling lapse of taste on the part of fandom, it won a Hugo Award. "High Infidelity" is medium-core porno which the author has shoe-horned into the genre by setting it in some indefinite future; it would have

played just as well (or, more to the point, just as badly) set in 1975 or 1945. "No Renewal", "Common Sense", "In the Olden Days", and "Father Paradox" are all lightweight junk of the sort that would draw a form rejection letter if you or I sent it to any professional editor; Robinson's name is such a selling point that even his trash is salable.

Somewhat less bad is "True Minds", which requires far too many suspensions of disbelief to make its clunky, intricate plot work; it survives mainly on the basis of its appealing characters. "Rubber Soul" is a story which one is tempted to call manipulative, in that it jerks the reader's emotions by playing on a tragedy far too personal to far too many of us; it escapes that label solely because Robinson, in this case, feels the same as we do, and it shows. (This is evident not merely from context, but from his former work.)

"Half an Oaf" and "Chronic Offender" are examples of typical Robinson humor at work. Both are time-travel stories, and both are wildly funny. The former is strongly reminiscent of the late Fredric Brown; the latter is dedicated to Damon Runyon and takes off clearly on the famous Runyonesque style.

The two longest works in the book are clearly the best. "Antinomy" is a long, sad, rambling, paradox story which deeply explores its characters' emotions, eschewing low-grade puns, and easy gimmicky endings for a thoughtful portrait of people caught in a no-win, no-fault situation. "Satan's Children" is a searing thoughtful study of the near future with an anchor out to the direction of hope. Even the title is ironic rather than merely cutesy, as far too many of the author's titles are. This is the Spider Robinson who gave us Stardance and Mindkiller. It's a pity that Robinson feels compelled to cash in on his junk as well as his good work.

In summation, then, a highly uneven collection. The three or four good pieces are probably sufficient to justify any regular Spider Robinson reader to invest in the book. Someone less familiar with the author's work might want to explore one of the two novels mentioned first to find out if Robinson's distinctive style is really to your taste.

THE HUNT FOR RED OCTOBER

by Tom Clancy, Berkley Books, 1985, \$4.50.

A book review by Mark R. Leeper

Suppose you want to learn about life on a whaling vessel a century ago. What is the best reference book to read? (And don't you ask yourself that all the time?) My sources tell me that the best reference work is Moby Dick. Every once in a while a novel comes along that is so well researched it is an education to read as well as reading an entertaining story. What must be a best-selling novel -- based on the number of people I have seen reading it -- is an education in

submarine warfare as well. The book is Tom Clancy's The Hunt for Red October.

The story deals with a great Soviet submarine commander who has had all of his roots to the USSR destroyed by failings in the Soviet system. His wife was killed by a drunken doctor's malpractice, but the doctor is the son of a high Party official so nothing can be done. She might have been saved but for the unreliability of Soviet drugs. So Marko Ramius has had it with the USSR and decides to use his command of the Soviet submarine Red October to get revenge. With a complete plan he turns his submarine west, north of Scandinavia, and toward the Western Hemisphere.

The Hunt for Red October combines a good, though not great, thriller with a good, though not great, education on modern naval warfare. I read the book on vacation all the time wishing I had my copy of The U.S. War Machine by Ray Bonds to add even more detail and illustration, but Clancy writes with complete credibility about matters of defense I would not have dreamed were public knowledge. One never gets the feeling that Clancy's technical detail is anything but flawless.

One does get the feeling, however, that The Hunt for Red October, like the film The Final Countdown, is as much an ad for the U.S. Armed Forces as it is a piece of dramatic narrative. One almost feels sorry for the Soviets in this book as they are so thoroughly out-gunned and out-thought by the Americans that one wonders why they bother opposing the John-Wayne-like Americans at all. We see none of the incompetence of the aborted Iranian hostage rescue. Americans are killed by mechanical failure, but not nearly so spectacularly as the Soviets are. (Hey, in this book when the Soviets have a mechanical failure, they do it up right. I rarely go back to read a scene a second time. But this one scene is far and away the most enthralling in the book. If you don't want to read the whole book, have someone who has read it point out this scene.)

The Hunt for Red October is a good story and an enjoyable book to read. What makes it as popular as it is is a little tough to understand. It is just a very readable text on naval warfare wrapped in a moderately good story. Rate it a +2 on the -4 to +4 scale.

CUCKOO'S EGG

by C. J. Cherryh
Phantasia Press, 1985, \$17.00

A book review by Lan

The world is an alien one, a strange mixture of a guild system and science advanced to space travel. Into the hands of Duun, of the hatani guild, is placed a human baby. Where the human came from, why he is being raised by aliens, is the question answered by the climax of the book.

C.J. has once again successfully told a story from an alien viewpoint. Duun-hatani

is a member of the guild most feared by the people of this planet, the Shonunin. A hatani can read a person, and give binding judgement to difficult or supposedly impossible situations. Raising the human Thorn was a result of Duun's hatani decision. Thorn is raised hatani, and slowly both he and the reader learn the purpose of his existence.

Cuckoo's Egg seems confusing at the beginning, as many SF stories are nowadays, though not as confusing as some. C.J. is very good at giving you enough hints so that the confusion isn't total, and the story and questions carry the reader through to the end. And the end is not a straight-shot through the book. There are many side-roads and trials that Thorn goes through, protected by Duun, his master and only friend. Duun's decision is taking 18 years, and the political climate is changing and becoming more complex...and more dangerous to Thorn.

To tell more than this would ruin an excellent novel of discovery. I rate Cuckoo's Egg very high, and am considering it a possible Hugo contender. The novel is also available now in paperback through DAW books.

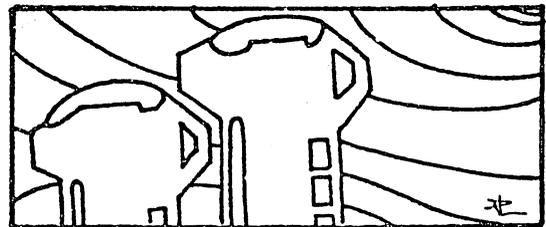
CROSS-TIME ENGINEER

by Leo Frankowski
Del Rey Books, 1986, \$2.95

A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper

Conrad Schwartz, loyal citizen of Communist Poland, goes to sleep in the basement of an inn and wakes up in 1231 A.D. In the best "Connecticut Yankee" tradition, his knowledge revolutionizes the society he falls into. Of course, he does all this in the spirit of good Marxist dedication. He doesn't worry about the paradoxes of trying to change history so that the Mongols are defeated in their (in our universe, successful) attempt to over-run Poland in 1241. (There are some time travelers in the future who are watching him via a viewscreen who do talk about this, so the reader doesn't feel cheated.)

Other than aforementioned similarity to A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court, and a somewhat gratuitous emphasis on nude saunas, the only drawback this book has is that it's Book 1 of a 4-book series and leaves, as they say, "more loose ends than an explosion in a tinsel factory." Assuming the last three are the same level as the first, wait for all four, then read them as a set.



The VAMPIRE - Jung and Old

VAMPIRE JUNCTION

by S. P. Somtow (Somtow Sucharitkul),
Berkley, 1985, \$2.95

A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper

For years vampires have been drawn in the Freudian mode--as symbols of repressed sexuality in a Victorian era and so on. (Undoubtedly Freud would say that the vampire's fangs piercing the woman's body are obviously representative of the penis.) Now, it seems, it has become time for the Jungians to have their shot at the vampire legend, and S. P. Somtow (an admitted pseudonym for Somtow Sucharitkul) has obliged with Vampire Junction.

Since it is less widely known than Freudian psychology, Jungian psychology should perhaps be briefly explained. The four identifiable aspects that appear in this novel are the archetypal unconscious, the animus/anima dichotomy, the theory of synchronicity, and the goal of individuation. The archetypal unconscious forms half of a person's unconscious, the other half being personal, i.e., composed of the person's individual experiences. The archetypal, or collective, unconsciousness seems to be not unlike the concept of race memory. Jung's theory of animus/anima is another familiar idea -- that of each individual having both male and female aspects. The theory of synchronicity postulates the coincidence of seemingly unrelated events having similar or identical meaning. (The same idea shows up in some of the strangest places -- for example, the child-like character in Repo Man, who talks about how, after you've been thinking of a plate of shrimp, someone will say "plate" or "shrimp" or "plate of shrip." But then, that's synchronicity for you.) Finally, individuation (according to Jung) is the process of uniting the conscious and the unconscious within oneself and becoming whole. End of psychology digression.

Somtow's vampire, Timmy Valentine, seeks out a therapist to help him. But he needs a Jungian therapist, because he is the Jungian archetype, formed out of the collective unconsciousness of the human beings who see him. And they see him as they expect to see him--some as a cat stalking down the street, some as a flickering shadow, some as a rock star. He finds Carla Rubens, who tries to deal with the archetype turned flesh. She, in turn, was previously involved with Stephen Miles, an operatic conductor. Miles, while at Cambridge, was drawn into a satanic group called "The Gods of Chaos" (who knew of his pyromania and used that as a hold on him). During one of their ceremonies many years ago (in which a woman was murdered)

Miles caught a glimpse of Valentine. Now The Gods of Chaos are reuniting in Thailand to recover the two halves of an idol that will give them enormous power. It may sound incredibly coincidental, but the word is synchronistic.

Valentine, in his two-thousand-year existence (give or take a century), has known many ages and many men. The usual symbols that the vampire fears no longer have any effect on him; with his age comes the wisdom that they cannot harm him. In most vampire stories, the humans fighting the vampire must believe in the symbols (especially the cross) to have them work; in this case, the vampire must believe. Valentine can walk about during the day, does not fear crosses, is not repelled by garlic, etc. But those that he makes vampires still have these fears -- they have not yet outgrown them.

While this book is written from a Jungian perspective, the frequent references to dreams seems distinctly Freudian. But these are not what we think of as dreams, but rather expressions of the collective unconscious. Valentine's house, with its ever-changing halls and rooms, is shaped by the union of its inhabitants' unconsciousnesses. Whether you find the house, or Valentine, or the novel, convincing depends in large part on whether you find Jungian psychology convincing.

And there is the real problem. Somtow can handle the horror scenes fairly well (though Junction, Idaho, reminds me a lot of Salem's Lot). The premise of a vampire living through various horrors of history is hardly new, but Somtow does manage to put some twists on it that I hadn't seen before (and I tend to follow vampire novels). But the story of Valentine's two millenia search for individuation, and its culmination, fails to convince me even on the level required for a vampire novel. I mean, one is willing to accept some mysticism, but it seems unlikely to me that even a dedicated Jungian would accept this novel. Though Somtow writes with a certain flair, the inherent unfamiliarity of his concepts (at least to most) will make this book very difficult to enjoy, which is a pity. I find the Jungian analysis of the vampire interesting, and it gives a different interpretation than the usual Freudian one. But the extent to which Somtow tries to put all of Jungian psychology in this novel smothers the originality that it would otherwise display.

THINNER

by Stephen King, Signet, 1985, \$3.95.

A book review by Mark R. Leeper

Stephen King is undoubtedly the best-selling horror author in the world, yet most of his novels do not have any horror in them. Thinner is not so much a horror novel as an adventure novel with a supernatural premise. His The Shining and Salem's Lot were true horror in which a genuine feeling of growing menace suffused the novels. That is not the case with Thinner or with recent King novels like Pet Semetary. Still, take the horror out of Thinner and you still have an interesting story. If you take out of Pet Semetary everything that is borrowed from W. W. Jacob's story "The Monkey's Paw," there is not much left worth reading. At least King's Thinner would have some interest even without the horror elements.

Billy Halleck is a heavyweight lawyer. He weighs in at just about and eighth of a ton. Then he has an auto accident in which he kills an old gypsy woman. Another gypsy from her group taps Billy on the cheek and whispers "Thinner." After that the chapters are "245," "227," "221," etc. What would seem at first to be a blessing soon becomes obviously a gypsy curse. Once Billy establishes that he has been cursed, he must find the gypsies to convince them to remove the curse. Neither half of this task is easy. The gypsies move around, well, like gypsies. Then once the gypsies have been found, there is the thorny problem of convincing them to remove the curse. As good a lawyer as Halleck is, convincing a lot of gypsies to forgive his killing one of their number is beyond his powers.

One definite problem with Thinner is its conflicting goals. On one hand King is trying to show the plight of the gypsies, even in the United States. On the other hand, this is a horror novel and he needs the gypsies to provide the horror. He is at once trying to make them more human and also make them monstrous. It doesn't really work. In the end King has totally justified--at least in part with fact rather than fantasy--the intolerance shown toward gypsies. Even without references to gypsy magic, these gypsies do not seem like people anyone would want coming into their town.

Thinner is one of five novels originally published under King's penname, Richard Bachman. The first four of these novels were published under the Bachman name early in King's career. This one has more of the feel of a later King novel. I have heard rationalizations for why King published it under the Bachman name. My personal (cynical) belief is that it was planned to be released under the Bachman name and then have the rumor openly spread that this was "the Stephen King novel nobody knows is a Stephen King novel." This was done with the full intention of later publishing it under King's real name. That way instead of being just

another Stephen King horror novel, it is a novel of sure notoriety.

In any case, it is an above-average novel for King. Give it a +1 on the -4 to +4 scale.

THE GALLATIN DIVERGENCE

by L. Neil Smith
Del Rey Books, \$2.95, 1985

A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper

This is apparently part of a series of books by Smith set in the same universe, or rather a set of alternate universes. (Other books in the series include Tom Paine Maru, The Nagasaki Vector, and The Probability Broach.) This one is set at the time of the Whiskey Rebellion in a universe in which was formed the North American Confederacy instead of the United States.

I really wish I liked Smith's writing style more -- he has such interesting ideas, but I find his books agony to read. The first-person, "slangy" style in which he writes does not flow well (at least to me) and attempting to follow the various speaking styles of the characters (one of whom is a dolphin -- what is it with dolphins these days? Every third author seems to feel he should include intelligent dolphins in his novels) is not an easy task. If you can take his style, I would recommend it, but it's not for everyone.

RE-ANIMATOR

A film review by Mark R. Leeper

CAPSULE REVIEW: A sort of a cross between the Frankenstein and Zombie genres. Re-Animator is horror done for laughs. It definitely works better as comedy than as horror.

Less than 24 hours after admiring how well Martin Scorese's After Hours combines comedy and horror at the expense of neither, I saw Re-Animator, a film which also combines comedy and horror, though much less successfully. The publicity said that the film was based on Lovecraft's story "Herbert West--The Re-Animator." I guess I don't know Lovecraft very well, because the title rings no bells with me.

In any case, West is a medical student who studied under one of the great medical mad scientists of Europe, a Dr. Gruber, who had strange ideas about how to bring the dead back to life. After Gruber's two untimely deaths, his assistant West has returned to the U.S. to be a pain to the faculty at Miskatonic Medical School in Arkham, Massachusetts. It isn't long before West is using his drug--which looks like Mellow Yellow soda except that it glows in the dark--to turn corpses into zombies that bang their heads against walls and drool something that looks like cream of wheat flavored with Lavis. Chief among the zombies is a profes-

sor who hated West. He is killed and re-animated. ("Is he dead?" asks a student. "Not any more," West assures him.) The head and the body have become separated, but the head still controls the body through telepathy. The whole film comes to your standard bar-room brawl scene except that it takes place in a morgue, most of the brawlers are dead, and some are missing inconsequential body parts like heads.

There is, as you might imagine, a fair amount of gore in this film, including some graphic shots of an autopsy. Nothing looks particularly real, but if just the thought of what you are supposed to be seeing bothers you, you may want to keep your distance. There is a rather interesting musical theme used under the credits and oftentimes in the film itself. The theme, by Richard Band, is just barely different enough from the title music of *Psycho* to avoid a lawsuit...or perhaps not quite.

As for an overall rating, some of the comedy is worth seeing but as a horror film, this is pretty much a washout. The comedy saps any suspense the film might have. I'd give *Re-Animator* a -1 on the -4 to +4 scale. If it had tried real horror rather than just gore to make itself frightening, it could have done better.

"Herbert West--The Re-Animator"

by H. P. Lovecraft

A book review by Mark R. Leeper

Having recently seen the film *Re-Animator*, I was curious to read the H. P. Lovecraft story on which the film claimed to be based, "Herbert West--The Re-Animator". I found it in a British paperback, *Dagon and other Macabre Tales* by Lovecraft. Reading it, I got some insight into how the author must have used his name to get stories published. At first it would appear to be one story in six chapters. It quickly becomes apparent, as each chapter is self-contained and re-introduces the characters, that this is not one story in six chapters, but six stories which must have been published separately. The stories must have been collected without re-editing and called a single story. However, if one reads still further, it dawns on the reader that this is not six stories but one story told six times with minor variations. Lovecraft wrote these stories much the way Kelly Freas did covers for Laser Books or producers make *Friday the 13th* films.

Lovecraft churned out these stories by formula. He introduces the main character and Herbert West, stating how they met in medical school. He says that West re-animated the dead and it caused trouble in the past. Then he explains the new experiment, and how, by bringing someone or something back from the dead, West had created a really hideous being, that if you saw it, it would really scare the Bejesus out of you.

Actually, the closest analogy to this style of story-telling is that of the Hammer "Frankenstein" series, in which the scientist tries a different experiment in each film, but they all seem to end in shambling horror.

Lovecraft told this same story six times and was probably paid as if each was an original. In actual fact, the film was probably no worse than the story. It did use a number of ideas from the stories, and molded them together into a seventh Herbert West story, somewhat more complex than the first six, but not all that different.

A MATTER OF TIME

by Glen Cook, 1985

A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper

The still warm body of a man who died fifty years ago is the first clue in this mystery of agents from the future trying to preserve the past to insure the continued existence of their future. While Detective Cash tries to solve that mystery, his son is being brain-washed by the Chinese Communists to carry out a very important mission. If it sounds like *The Terminator* meets *The Manchurian Candidate* to you, well, you're not far off. Nothing great or earth-shaking here, but a good read, especially for those who like mysteries of spy adventures. (I bought it as an alternate history, which it isn't really, but it has the thread of time paradox running through it, if that's your thing.)

NIGHT OF POWER

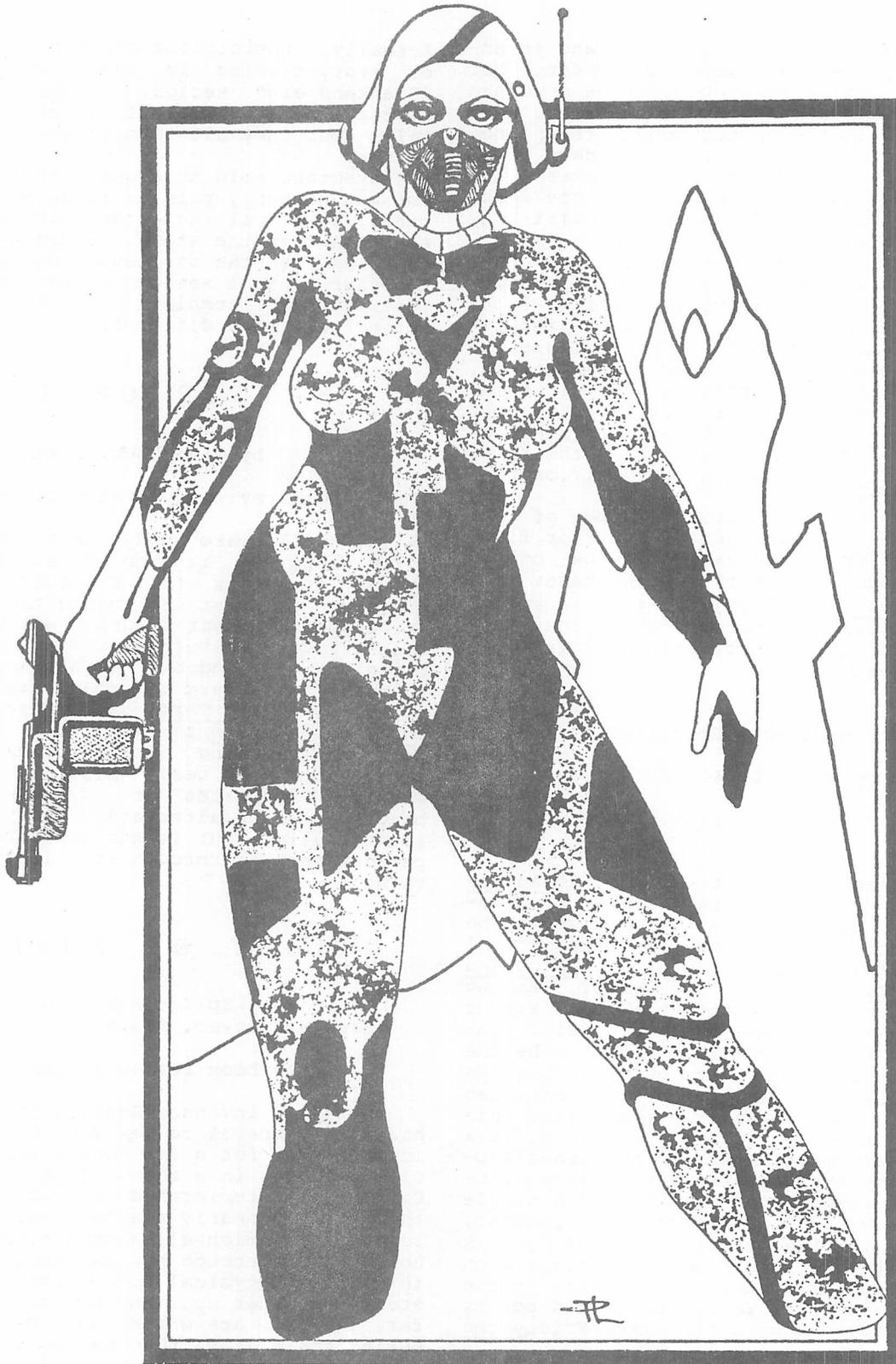
by Spider Robinson

Baen Hardcover, \$13.95, 287 pages.

A book review by Lan

In 1996, inventor Russell St. Claire and his family travel to New York City from Halifax to stay for a few months while Dena St. Claire dances in a show. This United States City has deteriorated considerably, and their car is nearly trashed before they are rescued by Michael, a huge black man who holds power through his own personality, not through any physical force. Important to the story is that Russ and his daughter Jennifer, age 13, are white, and Dena is black. During their stay, they become involved in a civil war, and are drawn deeper into the power structure that could radically split the US, or maybe save it.

As is typical of a Robinson story, you get to know the characters, sometimes more than you really want. At one point I did get tired of Russ whining about his non-racism. Still, the story and characters are powerful, and some of the action and scenes are quite violent.



There is some stretching of the suspension of disbelief. Jennifer taking care of her potential rapist was gory, though the reader was prepared quite well for her to be competent under pressure. Her loss of virginity was taken almost too nonchalantly by her parents. No matter how good a friend

.teenager is with her parents, I don't think one would run and tell her parents that soon, if at all.

Although I am glad I read it, it was a bit too violent for me, and probably won't re-read it. Those who like that sort of stuff will probably like it a lot more.

BETWEEN THE STROKES OF NIGHT

by Charles Sheffield
Baen Books, 1985, \$3.50

A book review by Lan

Sheffield's novel tells a story of mankind's strange trip to the stars. It begins in the near future with experiments in cold-sleep, orbiting habitats called arcologies, and the destruction of the world as we know it.

Jump ahead more than 25,500 years and mankind is still around, but apparently not on Earth since the locale is now another world. The scene is that of the Planetfest and an arduous contest of physical and mental acumen. The winners are taken off-planet to meet the "Immortals". This time, the group that wins makes more than a nuisance of themselves, and starts an adventure unfolding to larger and larger vistas, and the secrets of the immortals.

I found Between the Strokes of Night intriguing, and playing on my sense-of-wonder in a way I haven't felt since last year when I decided to read an old novel by Edmond Hamilton. I immediately considered this one to be a Hugo contender, but after settling down and "chewing" on it for a couple of weeks, I found a few flaws, particularly with the characters and characterization. However, it still is a fascinating read, and a high recommendation. If Ender's Game by Scott Card, The Postman by David Brin, Blood Music by Greg Bear, Cuckoo's Egg by C. J. Cherryh, Spinneret by Timothy Zahn, and Emprise by Michael P. Kube-McDowell had NOT also been published this year, Between the Strokes of Night would definitely be on my Hugo-nominations ballot.

REMO WILLIAMS: THE ADVENTURE BEGINS

A film review by Mark R. Leeper

CAPSULE REVIEW: A reasonable variation on the James Bond formula directed by a James Bond director. Joel Grey has some fun as the Korean martial arts expert Chiun and is the best part of the film. Without him, this would be a bland spy film.

One of the many jokes of Woody Allen's Sleeper is that we Americans of today have everything backwards. Tobacco and hot fudge are the healthiest things for your body and health foods are poison. The core of Remo Williams is a Korean martial arts expert named Chiun, and what makes Chiun interesting is that Woody Allen's joke is part of his character. Everything that Americans think is good is really bad; everything we think is bad is really good. You like hamburgers? They're poison; all fast food is poison. You think an automatic is a good weapon? It is useless. And what is the paragon of American culture? The soap opera, and the more melodrama, the better.

But I am getting ahead of myself. The main character of Remo Williams (played by Fred Ward, who played Gus Grissom in The Right Stuff) is, not too surprisingly, Remo Williams. That's not his real name. He was a policeman killed in the line of duty, or so the world thinks. Instead he was given plastic surgery to make a new man of him -- literally. To finish the job of making a new man of him, he is given a mentor--the super-human Chiun. Based on my memories of the two novels of The Destroyer series--the series on which the film is based--Chiun has a greater presence in the film than he does in the books. In the books he is the spicing that gives the dish character, but he is used sparingly. Of course, part of the difference is that the film concentrates on Williams' training, so there is more of his teacher in the film. Chiun is played by Joel Grey, perhaps best known as the owner/entertainer in Cabaret. The make-up used to transform Grey into Chiun is somehow not entirely convincing. Some of what Chiun can do in the book -- like dodge bullets -- sounded good in the book but was not (and probably could not be) realistically translated to the screen. Instead, they just show him ducking out of the way, but not fast enough. Also in the cast is Wilford Brimley as the head of the top secret government organization. Brimley is a very good actor, but only playing characters who are basically Wilford Brimley under other names. Kate Mulgrew's character is a big disappointment. She starts out gutsy and intelligent, but by the film's end she proves to be a more traditional bubblehead. Charles Cioffi plays the villain, an unscrupulous defense contractor.

Remo Williams was directed by Guy Hamilton, who also directed spy adventures like Goldfinger, A Funeral in Berlin, Diamonds are Forever, Live and Let Die, and The Man with the Golden Gun. The screenplay was by another James Bond veteran, Christopher Wood. This new film is certainly better than the worst of the Bond series, but one suspects from the title that the producers want to start a new series, and it seems unlikely that the public will really want more than two or three films with this set of characters. Rate the film +1 on the -4 to +4 scale.

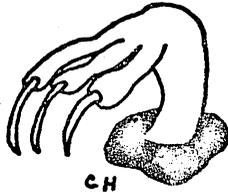
THE LONG FORGETTING

by Edward A. Byers
Baen Books, \$2.95, 1985

A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper

Once more, Baen Books takes an interesting premise (a "fugue" in space that causes the loss of all memory and higher brain functions) and throws it away. Instead of spending time showing how mankind regained his former glory, surely the most interesting story, Byers tells us of the discovery of some religious documents that, if revealed, will completely change the way people look at their beliefs. Irving Wallace did the same thing with The Word and he didn't need science fiction to do it.

THE RETURN OF THE ANTHOLOGY SERIES



by Mark R. Leeper

It used to be that there were several anthology series on TV. Then the powers on high decoded that if you miss one week of an anthology series you really haven't missed anything. The way to grab viewers is to have continuing characters whom the audience can identify with. As television writing has generally gone downhill, this piece of wisdom has been called into question. Further, the popularity of Tales from the Darkside and HBO's The Hitchhiker has convinced networks to give anthologies a try again.

What is nice about anthologies is that the stories are short and self-contained. No continuing characters means that almost anything can happen to the characters in the stories. I really am pleased to see the anthology series return. I think that there is much more room for creative story-telling in the short story on film. And based on the premieres of three new anthology series this season--for me the most anxiously awaited TV season in a decade -- we can expect a spotty season with a few gems.

"Shatterday" and "A Little Peace and Quiet" Premiere episodes of the new Twilight Zone series; First aired on Friday, 27 September 1985

Due to the magic of videotape, I saw Amazing Stories and Alfred Hitchcock Presents before I saw Twilight Zone. This means that of the four stories I saw, each was better than its predecessor.

Twilight Zone led off with an adaptation of a Harlan Ellison story, "Shatterday." I have an irrational dislike for the stories by Ellison that I have read because I really dislike the man and usually also his writing style. I have never read an Ellison story that indicated he had nearly the talent of a Richard Matheson, a Charles Beaumont, or perhaps even a Robert Bloch. His stories strike me as rich in style but poor in content, and I consider content to be by far the more important. Of course, I cannot claim to have read a whole lot of Ellison and these opinions may be based on inadequate samples.

At any rate, "Shatterday" was a much better story than I expected out of Ellison. It was a story with an engaging premise and the premise was developed. In spite of myself I found myself enjoying the TV version of the story. I would fault the story only in that the ending was weak. It was a promising idea but it led to a dead end, a weak ending that

just sort of peters out. The premise was good but its treatment was unimaginative.

The toughest thing for a redux of Twilight Zone to do is to recapture the feel of the original stories. That is where the film (Twilight Zone: The Movie) failed entirely. At no point did I feel watching the film that these were really Twilight Zone episodes. "A Little Peace and Quiet" was the big surprise of the week. Serling would have gone for this story in a big way. It combines themes that he used in the series with a nifty ending. This story could not only have been an episode of the original series, it would have been one of the better ones.

I don't know how long it will last, but the spirit of Twilight Zone lives.

"Ghost Train"

Premiere episode of the Amazing Stories series;

First aired on Sunday, 29 September 1985

The real problem with the first episode of Amazing Stories is that it isn't one. It isn't even a surprising story. When a wise old man says X is going to happen and everybody says the old man is senile, the rest of the story is as unpredictable as the order that the days will be in next week.

The second problem with the first episode is that the first three ingredients on the label are sugar, corn sweeteners, and honey. The fifth ingredient is molasses. After watching for a half hour, my weight was up a half a pound and my teeth had three new cavities.

Spielberg has the budget. He directed the show himself. He has a score by John Williams. The logo for the show is nicely polished. There isn't a thing wrong with Amazing Stories that couldn't be fixed with a script by Rod Serling. What Spielberg used instead was a script by a relative unknown based on Spielberg's own story. If this is the best script Spielberg has, he and NBC are in real trouble.

"Revenge"

Premiere episode of the new Alfred Hitchcock Presents series;

First aired on Sunday, 29 September 1985

NBC rounds out the hour of Amazing Stories with Alfred Hitchcock Presents. Hitchcock himself is on hand via framing introductions taken from the original series and colorized by computer. The lead story was predictable, in part because one expects a little spin on the ball and the surprise ending was by far the most likely. But the story was slickly produced without the cuteness of the Amazing Stories premiere.

On what had to have been less than half the budget of the Amazing Stories premiere, the Alfred Hitchcock crew turned out a story with some genuine suspense and even what passes on TV for artistry. Amazing Stories is the series with a two-year guarantee from NBC, but Alfred Hitchcock Presents already looks like it might outlast it.

SANDBAGGERS

An endoresment by Mark R. Leeper

Back when I was working for Burroughs in Detroit, my supervisor once commented to me that he had seen part of a pretty good war film on Canadian TV the previous day (Sunday). It had been about prisoners of war trying to escape from Germany. He had only seen part and he wanted to know if I could tell him something about the film. The first thing I told him was that it was on every week. "The same film?" No, it isn't a theatrical film at all. It was a British TV series called Colditz. If it seemed good enough to be a theatrical film, it was because British TV is often very good. Some series are good enough that most episodes measure well against films made in the same genre.

I saw the first episode of a British series called Sandbaggers, about British intelligence. Channel 21 in New York has picked it up and is showing it. I expected to watch one episode, but to decide it was not that good. The first hour has to rank as one of the best spy films I have seen. "First Principles" concerned a request from Norwegian intelligence to have British intelligence rescue a Norwegian spy plane that crashed just inside the Russian border. British intelligence refuses so the Norwegians do some economic arm-twisting. That is the first ten minutes of the story. I won't tell you more, but it gives you the feel that we are not talking about a James Bond sort of spy story. If anything it is closer to LeCarre or Deighton. In fact, I would say it moves a little better than LeCarre does, but without sacrificing the feel of authenticity. If you like spy films, watch for Sandbaggers.

NIGHT SONGS

by Charles L. Grant
Pocketbooks, \$3.95, 346 pages.

A book review by Lan

Haven's End is a quiet little town on a small island off the coast of the Carolinas. Colin Ross went there to escape his romantic failures, and work on his art as well as teach school. He meets and falls in love with Peg Fletcher, whose husband was killed opposing the establishment of a gambling casino on the island, though his death was never actually proved to be murder. Bob Cameron, the president of the town and island Board of Governors and local rich man, wants the casinos, and Colin decided to oppose him in the coming election. Of course there are mainland backers who would also like to see gambling on the island.

So far the setting is much like a typical small town ripe for scandal and soap opera. There's even ther even-tempered town doctor, the competent chief of police, and the town drunk.

Impending is a Carolina Screamer, a fierce storm that comes off the coast and does considerable damage to the homes of Haven's End every few years. And the death of one of the older inhabitants of the island, Gran D'Grou.

Gran was from one of the Carribean islands, a chief, or maybe a witch doctor. No one knew for sure. He was convinced that he should have been wealthy, especially coming to the US, but things never really worked out that way. Thus he blamed many of the island's inhabitants for his own shortcomings, and vowed to exact revenge after death.

Charlie Grant is meticulous in setting up the whole scenario for this story. The "night songs" referred to in the title are the songs that Gran's granddaughter Lilla sings to restore him to semi-life, and maintain control over various bodies Gran "recruits" for his vengence. The characters (and there are a lot of them) do make things seem like a normal mainstream novel until the funny things start happening. The effects that come as a result of Gran's attempted vengence are well within keeping of the initial premises. Some become hysterical during the experience, others are controlled, all are changed.

I don't read much horror, but if I get the urge, I can always count on Charlie Grant to deliver a good story. Night Songs didn't disappoint me at all.



THE BOOK OF KELLS

by R. A. MacAvoy
Bantam, 1985, \$3.50

A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper

John Thornburn, through Celtic Music and artwork, opens a portal back to Tenth Century Ireland. A young woman of that time, Ailesh, comes through, fleeing from Viking raiders. John and she return, along with Derval O'Keane, a friend of John's who just happens to be studying Celtic history, literature, language, etc. What you start out

with is an old standby of a science fiction premise (time travel); what you end up with is basically an historical adventure novel. After MacAvoy's first four novels, I was looking forward to this one. Though it's competent, it doesn't have the magic touch that her earlier works did. I can't say that I strongly recommend it.

KING SOLOMON'S MINES

A film review by Mark R. Leeper

CAPSULE REVIEW: Weak comedy-action imitation of Raiders of the Lost Ark. H. Rider Haggard's great adventure novel was completely ignored in the making of this non-adaptation.

H. Rider Haggard's novels of African adventure, often tinged with fantasy, have every now and again been the bases for films. His novel She had been adapted to the screen five times before sound films came along, and there have been three more adaptations since then. His novels King Solomon's Mines and Allen Quartermain, both about the adventures of his great hunter Quartermain, have also given rise to films. Perhaps the best known is the 1950 King Solomon's Mines starring Stewart Granger and Deborah Kerr, although there was a 1937 version starring Cedric Hardwick and Paul Robeson. Allan Quartermain was adapted into the rather low-grade film King Solomon's Treasure in 1977. Now, Golan-Globus has made back-toback King Solomon's Mines and Allan Quartermain. I had been looking forward to these films. They star Richard Chamberlain as the intrepid hunter. King Solomon's Mines has just been released.

I suppose that had I seen the film without expecting much I might have enjoyed it more. The 1950 film was sort of a travesty on the novel. It was mostly about how Quartermain is at first skeptical of, and then learns to respect, a woman who hires him for a safari. The novel had no such woman, so right there the film was a bad adaptation. I was hoping, since the new film had some substantial actors and it had to be popular enough to justify the concurrently shot Allan Quartermain, that it would be a faithful adaptation. Instead, we got a low-grade imitation of Raiders of the Lost Ark with little relation to the original story. This film not only throws in the female character, it throws out the whole safari of the book. Instead, it is about a race with German soldiers to find the treasure (the film takes place just prior to the first World War, though the woman's hair-do is right out of 1985). There is in this film almost no adventure at all. There is only action, and that is done on complete self-parody. The first priority of the script is humor and the second is stunts. Story takes a distant third place. That is okay in an occasional film, and had this film been called Congo Bill and the Lost Treasure it might have gotten a flat 0 on the -4 to +4 scale. Be-

cause of the hypocrisy of calling this film King Solomon's Mines purely for title value, without any of the original story present, rate this one -1.

SHE

A film review by Evelyn C. Leeper

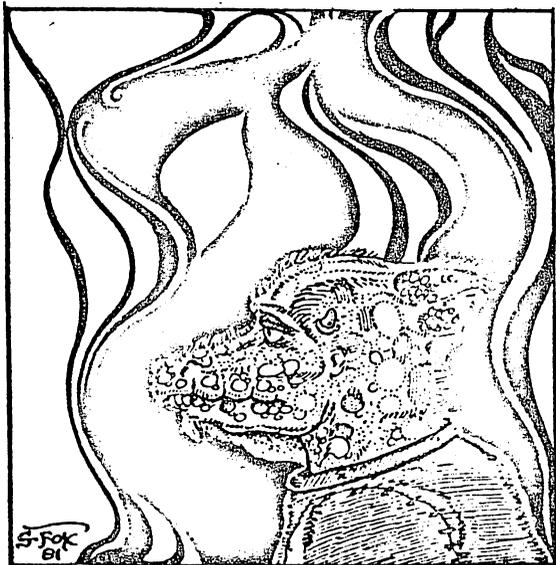
In Mark's review of King Solomon's Mines he commented on how little it resembled the novel by H. Rider Haggard. Well, if you want to see a real abomination on a Haggard novel, see She, an Italian film made in 1983 and starring Sandahl Bergman.

Let me attempt to summarize the plot. This might be termed a spoiler, but as someone said, "Some movies can't be spoiled any more than they already were."

It is 23 years after the Cancellation. (The Cancellation of what? Logic, to judge by this film.) Our hero (Tom) and his sidekick (Dick) are wandering through a post-holocaust Renaissance-type fair where people are bartering for old boxes of Kellogg's Rice Krispies. (And just how good would they taste after 23 years? Well, never mind.) The bad guys show up and kidnap some women, including the hero's sister (Hari). (Get it -- Tom, Dick, and Hari? Well, never mind.) Tom and Dick attempt to find her. They are drugged and Tom is brought before "She" (Sandahl Bergman), who forces him to run a gauntlet which he barely survives. (All this to a rock score -- with lyrics.) Left for dead (Why isn't he killed outright? Well, never mind.), he is rescued and recovers to rescue Dick. She has a fight with some robot warriors in a warehouse, but defeats them. Wounded in the fight, She bathes in a pool that heals her wounds. Together Tom and Dick kidnap She and go looking for Hari. They are captured by mutants and put in a room whose walls start closing in on them, but they are rescued by She's Amazon warriors who have a swordfight with the mutants (who are armed with chain saws). (Oh, by the way, the mutants have arms which keep falling off.) She frees Tom and Dick, who go off and find a society that engages in intellectual repartee and dresses formally for dinner (where they play 1960's rock and roll music). Unfortunately, at night the people turn into cannibalistic vampire ghouls. Tom and Dick eventually escape (with the help of She and Shanda, one of She's amazons, who have secretly followed them). They ride to the village of Godan, the Man-God. Godan has the power to make his eyes glow green and levitate people. (His name is written with a hammer through the first letter so as to form a hammer and sickle.) Here we get a chance to see Bergman and Shanda shackled, whipped, racked, and threatened with burning irons. (See? You knew there had to be some redeeming feature to this movie.) They are rescued by Tom and Dick, and in the process, Godan is killed by a follower jealous of his interest in She. However, Godan kills the follower before he dies, so when all the

guards come in it looks like She has killed Godan. His followers now accept She as their goddess since She killed their god. The four of them leave and capture a 250-pound man in a ballerina's tutu and a feather boa. But they are overcome by poisonous gas, and the ballerina takes them to a mad scientist (all except Tom, who gets away). There, they are kept in Saran-wrap hanging cages. Shanda is sent back with the ballerina to get the Uric crystal, and She and Dick escape by setting fire to the laboratory. They follow Tom's trail. Meanwhile, Tom meets a guard at a river crossing who quotes Marx Brothers movies and sings the theme song from Green Acres. Tom fights with him but discovers that whenever he cuts off a head or an arm, the two pieces each grow into a full person. Eventually he escapes the eight of them. She and Dick get to the Norc city where they sneak in, disguised in the garments of the last two members of a group that's entering (shades of The Wizard of Oz?). They end up in a free-for-all battle with ten other applicants for the position of Norc warrior, from which only two will survive. Just coincidentally, Hari is brought in as the leader's slave. She and Dick defeat all but one other warrior who reveals himself to be Tom. The three of them escape with Hari (the leader lets them, for some inexplicable reason), and there's a big battle at the bridge with the four of them against the Norc warriors who want to attack She's kingdom. Just as things look their darkest, Shanda returns with the Amazon warriors and they are saved. Dick decides to stay with Shanda, but Tom and She realize they must go their separate ways (sob!).

How do I know it's supposed to be based on She? They say so in the credits at the end!



TEEN WOLF

A film review by Mark R. Leeper

CAPSULE REVIEW: This is the third worst film I have seen released to a theatre this past summer. It does even less with the premise that I Was a Teenage Werewolf. The story doesn't make sense, the makeup is poor, the script is riddled with cliches. This one is a real howler.

It has been 28 years since Michael Landon starred in I Was a Teenage Werewolf. Even at the time it was pretty mediocre fare. It would be pretty surprising if in these days of more and better fantasy films a filmmaker couldn't improve on the theme with an updating of the concept.

SURPRISE!

Teen Wolf strongly tempted me to walk out. This is a weak, stupid and banal comedy. It is much less a remake of I Was a Teenage Werewolf than it is a second sequel to The Shaggy Dog. Michael J. Fox was quite enjoyable in Back to the Future, but Fox as "The Wolf" is a dog. Once he gets the power to transform at will, and it makes him the superstar of his school, he becomes insufferably conceited and dull as a character. Rather than examine how somebody would cope with this odd fact about himself, the filmmakers think what the audience wants to see is a guy in a hair-suit break-dancing and doing handstands on the top of a speeding van.

And how does the world react to the discovery that there are real werewolves? Well, the kids in the local high school think it's real nifty and the rest of the world seems totally oblivious to the first werewolf ever to reveal himself to the public at large. And such fresh and original questions the script asks. He has the choice of getting the girl next door who has loved him since he was small or the shallow sexpot he has been drooling over. Can you guess which one he picks? His basketball team was a loser until he started using his lycanthropic powers to make them win. Can they get along without his powers and defeat a nasty opposing team? Can you guess whether they can or not?

The werewolf makeup is something else again. Visually there were no clues as to why anyone associates the transformed boy with wolves at all. He looks more like Ben Gunn from Treasure Island than anything even vaguely lupine. The makeup is also reminiscent of the (rejected) early sketches for the apes in the production of Planet of the Apes.

Teen Wolf joins The Heavenly Kid and Weird Science as the worst of last summer's major fare. All three get -2 on the -4 to +4 scale and, by the thinnest of margins, this is the best of the three.

COBRA STRIKE

by Timothy Zahn
Baen Books, 1985, \$3.50

A book review by Lan

In Cobra Strike, the sequel to Cobra, Timothy Zahn sets up an apparent no-win situation, but as a master plotter, he makes things work out, almost too neatly. The pieces are intricate, and they fit finely together, and this novel gives one a good feeling of triumph of brains over brawn. The humans are clever in their solution, and far-ranging in their planning.

It has been more than a quarter of a century since peace had been made with the Trofts, and fourteen since the Cobra worlds have been separated from the Dominion of Man. Although the population of the Cobra Worlds has not increased to fill the three planets under their control, they have found nothing within a 20 light-year radius to which they could expand in future years. Then the Trofts came to Aventine and offered them five worlds in return for the Cobra force dealing with a world which offered a potential threat to the Assemblage of Troft demesnes.

Before accepting this job, Jonny Moreau, Governor Emeritus of Aventine, and the Council of Syndics needed more information, both about the five worlds offered to them, and about Qasama and the inhabitants of this planet of potential threat.

What threat could they harbor? The scouting team found no heavy industry, no space-flight or satellite net. The environment was somewhat hostile, forcing the Qasamans to build according to the dictates of the wild fauna of the planet, apparently retarding technological advances. The more Joshua and Justin Moreau (Jonny's twin sons), and other members of this scouting team, learned, the greater their uneasiness about the Qasamans grew. Inconsistencies cropped up in the information they gathered and eventually mistakes on both sides aroused even more suspicion. The contact team returned to Aventine a bit worse for wear, but with definite information about the potential threat of Qasama. But will the Council and people of the Cobra Worlds want to fight only because of a potential threat?

Meanwhile, strange information appeared from the group sent to investigate the five worlds offered to them by the Trofts. Still, the planets seemed inhabitable, and Jonny Moreau finds the one with the warmest climate soothing to the ailments afflicting his aging body (many of which are long-range effects from his transformation into a Cobra).

One interesting part of the background is the society that has sprung up around the Cobras. After the Troft war, the Dominion had trouble accepting these soldiers back into society since removing all of their implanted weaponry would have killed them. Instead, they became protectors on colony

worlds, where the society developed to include these super-soldiers as an integral part. These events were chronicled in Cobra and continued here.

Although Tim admits he has trouble with characterization, he has done a good job here with it. There are a number of principle actors in this drama, and it is easy to tell them apart. The names and character traits are easily distinguishable. But because of the number of players, not all are as fully developed as in other stories. In this case, the plots and ideas pull the reader through. The characters are bonuses.

The cover, again, does not portray what a Cobra really is. There is no display of the weaponry concealed within the body, nor of the marvelous powers the Cobras have.

Now, with the developments from Cobra Strike, I wonder what next will happen. I anxiously await the third Cobra novel.



LIFE PROBE

by Michael McCollum, Del Rey, 1984, \$2.95

A book review by Mark R. Leeper

I read a science fiction book for ideas and entertainment, and Life Probe has both. Life Probe is a slick, enjoyable novel by a relatively new author, Michael McCollum. The odd thing about Life Probe is that the ideas are all, or nearly all, in the first three pages and the rest of the book is the entertainment. In the prologue, we learn that the Makers are scouring the galaxy looking for races that might have FTL (faster than light) travel. Why do they need FTL so desperately? Pretty much for the same reasons (in my opinion) that Earth currently needs space travel. The implication is that when you start outgrowing your planet you need space, but without FTL travel, space only postpones problems -- it does not eliminate them. Eventually the same species that out-

grew its planet will outgrow its neighborhood of the galaxy. Of course, it will take a long time by our standards to do that.

Those first three pages over, McCollum sets out to tell us the story of what happened in 2065 when the probe came to our solar system looking for FTL travel or help in developing it. And, as has become traditional in this sort of story, the aliens are willing to trade their technical knowledge for ours. The rest of the novel is a pleasant enough story of how Earth reacts to the coming of the probe and to its offer of technical exchange. There is a girl-meets-boy subplot with characters fleshed out just enough so that the reader wants to know that they get together, or at least wants to see how it will happen. And the whole story is set against the background of a new Cold War in which it is the Americans and Europeans on the one side and a unified Africa on the other. That part is not well-handled since if we went in with a text editor and replaced all the African names with Russian ones, the story would work just as well. We never see how a Cold War with an African Bloc is any different from one with the Soviet bloc.

I have to give Life Probe my most common criticism of novels of the 1980's: there is enough idea and story here for a really good, really tightly written short story. There is occasionally something to be said for stretching a good short story's material out into a leisurely novel, but it is done too often these days. If publishers somehow paid by content rather than by word count, we would be getting a lot of good short stories and a lot fewer novels. Life Probe is a +1 book on the -4 to +4 scale.

PROCYON'S PROMISE

by Michael McCollum
Del Rey books, \$2.95, 346 pages.

A book review by Lan

Procyon's Promise is a sequel to Life Probe. It takes place four centuries after the expedition left Earth to investigate the gravity waves sensed around the star-sun Procyon. Now, the expedition returns, or rather, the descendants of those who colonized the planet circling Procyon. In the ftl ship Procyon's Promise, Captain Robert Braedon, his daughter Terra, and a complete crew, confront their home planet with their discovery, and ask for help in carrying the knowledge they've gained to The Makers, that ancient race whose original probe started them on this quest for the ftl drive.

Earth, however, had grown rather comfortable staying within the solar system, so it takes a bit of convincing and prodding to get the people to help, but fortunately there was Chryse Haller who was the first earthperson to meet the Promise, and pledged her support. And it just happened that her father owned a spaceship manufacturing company.

In any case, the fleet of ships is constructed, an expedition is sent forth, and they explore a portion of the galaxy in hopes of finding The Makers.

It's a nicely-paced story with intrigue, twists, and a few interesting ideas, not all thrown into the first few chapters this time. The outcome is somewhat predictable, but the story is well-told and enjoyable. Good reading for a pleasant afternoon.

INFINITY'S WEB

by Sheila Finch
Bantam, \$2.95, 1985

A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper

The back blurb says "Each life is the result of an infinity of choices -- choices that separate who we are from who we might have been.... This is the tale of the many possible lives of Anastasia Valerie Stein which come to touch one another through a twist in the fabric of spacetime..." To this Finch has added the mysteries of the Tarot and her interpretation of quantum physics (apparently Gregory Benford checked the physics sections, so I suppose they have some validity). The cover is pretty bad too.

Joanna Russ did it better.

THE PROTEUS OPERATION

by James P. Hogan
Bantam Spectra, \$16.95, 1985

A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper

Hogan has written an unusually complex alternate history novel. Unfortunately, I can't explain the complexity without ruining some of the surprises, but I can say that he does think through many of the real questions of time travel and alternate history.

The main character, living in a 1974 in which Germany has won World War II, travels back in time to 1939 to try to convince Winston Churchill to take action to prevent this from happening. In addition to all the usual obstacles they expect, there are many surprising twists and turns which make this a most satisfying novel. I can't speak for the accuracy of all the historical details, but I found no obvious errors, except for Hogan's portraying Isaac Asimov as "somebody [...] who entertained hopeful notions of becoming a famous science-fiction writer one day." Since Asimov himself has said that it was decades later that he even considered making science fiction a career rather than a mere sideline, this sort of name-dropping definitely falls under the heading "gratuitous."

This book is a must for alternate history fans.

MULTIPLE-PATH ADVENTURE BOOKS

A book review and article by Mark R. Leeper

To start with, I am not much of a game-player. Still, these programmed game books seem to be popping up like mushrooms and while I have bought only one, I now have been given, one way or another, more than a dozen. I will review the ones I have seen by series, though there are a number of series I have seen in the bookstores that I have never been given a copy of, so I know this guide will neither be complete nor particularly well-informed. Still, here it comes.

The first series of multiple-path books I ever saw, back in the sixties, was called Tutortexts. They were not games but courses in book form that asked you a multiple-choice question at the end of each page. If you gave a wrong answer, it explained your mistake and might even give you a separate path explaining some topic in detail. They worked like a teaching machine. In fact, that was how I first learned algebra. The book was called Adventures in Algebra and I enjoyed it thoroughly. There were also Tutortexts in everything from Contract Law to Contract Bridge. Good series of books.

The first series of games like this I saw was called "Choose Your Own Adventure" published by Bantam Books. Perhaps inspired by multiple-path computer adventure games or role-playing games like Dungeons and Dragons, these books allowed the user to have some control over the events of the book. Bantam gets all the credit for the idea--the games themselves are not so hot. There is no way to decide if a given course is a good one or not. The reader's decision of what course of actions sounds best is the only thing controlling his fate. The ideal age would be something like eight to fourteen. Otherwise, they are still diverting for a good ten minutes or so.

Because the first multiple adventure books that came out were for children, people seem to have assumed that the idea is appropriate for children's books only. Granted, multiple adventure books are hardly the medium for a modern Tolstoy, but just like computer games are reasonable on an adult level, it is conceivable that the multiple path book might be the basis of a more sophisticated game than it usually is. The same sort of pegging a genre as only appropriate to children happened to the animated film. Adult level animated films are rare or non-existent, depending on your opinion of Ralph Bakshi, but there is no reason a multiple-path game or an animated film cannot be on a sophisticated level.

Imitating the popularity of this first (I think) multiple-path adventure series, a number of different series came out. Usually they had names like Zork, taking the name of a popular computer adventure game. They are

mostly intended for the eight to fourteen set. I have seen a number of them, without playing. One of the more unusual series is called "Lifechoices" or something like that. It is published by Signet and is the same sort of format but for love story fans. It follows some woman up the corporate ladder or into a blissful marriage.

I have played a series designed by Steve Jackson, who is apparently a well-known game designer. These games--I cannot find a series name, but they are published by Penguin Books in England and Dell in this country--are probably the best of a bad lot and are a reasonable facsimile of a mediocre to good computer or role-playing game. The user has to keep track of quantities like his luck and his stamina and occasionally roll some dice to find the outcome of battles. It seems to me that logic here helps as much as luck does, but I have never played one of these games to victory, so I cannot be sure. I can say that this game can remain interesting for hours for ages ten to adult.

Signet has a new series called "Dragon-tales." Each month an adventure comes out for boys and another for girls. Each is at least nominally written by one Rhondi Vilott. The name looks like an anagram and is probably a house name. The "About the Author" page says she is a writer of science fiction who has attended the Clarion Science Fiction Writers' Workshop. It is pretty hard to believe there really is someone named Rhondi Vilott who can turn out two of these things a month, but it's possible. Dragon-tales are very much like the original Bantam series. The fate of the character is totally determined by the path the reader takes through the story. It is a little better written than the original Bantam series, but not that much. Give this series an age range of nine to sixteen.

The latest series I have seen is called "Wizards, Warriors, and You." It is published by Avon Books at \$2.50 a shot. It is a poor imitation of the Steve Jackson books which are thicker, better designed and go for only \$1.95 a crack. WW&Y is aimed a little lower and doesn't require dice. It does have instructions like "flip a coin ten times" or "If it is Tuesday morning or Thursday evening turn to page 17. Otherwise turn to page 83" or "Quick -- pick a number from one to ten. If it is even turn to page ..." The player can choose to be either a wizard with three spells or a warrior with three weapons. Not so hot. Make the age range ten to eighteen.

So what are my recommendations? Obviously the Steve Jackson games are the best. Not perfect by a long shot, but pretty good as a role-playing game.

CLAN OF THE CAVE BEAR

A film review by Mark R. Leeper

CAPSULE REVIEW: Modern feminist issues create havoc in a society of 35,000 years ago. Darryl Hannah as a career cavewoman fight prehistoric prejudice. Somehow, though, the film transcends all that and is really engrossing at times.

A durable genre of fantasy is the prehistoric man melodrama. Cavemen like Alley Oop and B.C. hang around in our Sunday funny papers. Chic magazines like The New Yorker have cartoons showing how primitive man first came up with the idea for taxes. On Saturday mornings, children listen for caveman calls like "Yabba-dabba-doo!" In films, the stories go back at least as far as Willis O'Brien's Dinosaur and the Missing Link, made for Edison in 1917. More recently, there were films like One Million B.C. and a string of prehistoric films from Hammer. Most recently we have seen the surprisingly funny Caveman with Ringo Starr, which could have ended the genre, but we also saw Quest for Fire, which claimed to be trying for realism. Now, based on the first book of Jean Auel's series about prehistoric man (and woman) comes Clan of the Cave Bear.

Somehow the film gave me every reason to hate it, yet I didn't. It is about an unmarried woman doctor with a child who has to decide if she wants to settle down with a man or continue with her career. Set it in modern Manhattan, and you would not want to see this soap opera, but set in 33,000 B.C. this sorry plot had some novelty. Ayla is a Cro-Magnon child grudgingly adopted by a clan of Neanderthals. The clan's attitude about the place of women is medieval--which is progressive by Neanderthal standards, I suppose. This is the story of how Ayla grows up and wanders into the careers of hunter and medicine woman. Ayla is played by Darryl Hannah. As a Cro-Magnon she is tall, thin and blond. This means that she is not squat enough nor does she have a thick enough forehead or nose to attract a Neanderthal man so she turns instead to healing and secretly becomes the first female marksperson.

The story is simple (but then it is hard to envision what a complex story about Neanderthals would be like). If it seems anachronistic to put a feminist in this period, let me assure you it is far more so to have a dinosaur. Some of the details did bother me. The film gets off to a shakey start (quite literally) when there is an earthquake that destroys the clan's home. It seems to be a cliché of prehistoric films that the Earth was just forming when the action takes place so they have volcanos or earthquakes as often as we have hailstorms. The question I ask is: how did an earthquake leave them homeless? It is not like they have skyscrapers to knock over. They live in huts or caves. Both are pretty earthquake-proof. Any cave you find in earthquake country has to be quake-proof. If it isn't, it wouldn't still be a cave.

Auel's books do have pretty paintings on the cover and the photography does a good job of creating the same feel.

The story is definitely the weakest part of this film, but for a soap opera, it is still a watchable film. Give it a +1 on the -4 to +4 scale.



BRIDGE OF BIRDS

by Barry Hughart

Del Rey Books, 1984, \$2.95,

A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper.

Terrific! Wonderful! Marvelous! Nominate this for a Hugo!

This is the story of Number Ten Ox and his travels with Li Kao to save the children of his village from a mysterious plague. It's full of the feel of China and the Orient. It's full of philosophy and humor and you should all run out and read it immediately!

(P.S. I liked it.)

LIFEKEEPER

by Mike McQuay

Bantam, \$2.95, 1980

A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper

Mike McQuay got such good reviews elsewhere, I thought I'd give him a try. In Lifekeeper, Doral Dulan (an "Exceptional") goes to Milcom Forty-Three and meets Beatrice Delacorte (an "Outsider"). They fall in love, in defiance of the Milcom's orders, and... Well, if you've read Brave New World, you can pretty much substitute "Alpha" for "Exceptional," "Primitive" for "Outsider," etc., and know what's going on. The big secret at the end is no secret, and in general, don't waste your time on this one.

C O N T A C T

by Carl Sagan
Simon & Schuster, 1985, \$18.95

A book review by Mark R. Leeper

Back when Cosmos was on TV, I read an article about how Carl Sagan's TV series was being merchandised. There were books, calendars, and more esoteric things like star balls. About this time, as I remember, it was announced that Sagan received some sort of record-breaking monetary advance to write a science fiction novel about mankind's first contact with intelligent aliens. I knew of no previous fiction that Sagan had ever written and frankly I was a little suspicious that it would be handed off to a ghost writer and that it would be sold more on the Sagan name than on the story value.

In the ensuing months Sagan's fortunes went downhill. His series did not have the popularity expected. In fact, his brand of popularizing science, and particularly his repeated use of the word "billions", became a laughing stock. Sales of "Cosmos" goods were poor and I heard that Sagan was blaming the distributors. In any case, it became clear that Sagan as the super-star scientist was just not going to hack it. I occasionally wondered about Sagan's novel and whether it would ever see the light of day. Last autumn Contact was finally published.

Now that I read the book, I find it much more believable that it could have been written by Sagan. To begin with, the basic story reads like a scenario that might have appeared in one of Sagan's books about SETI (the "Search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence"). The book is far less about the nature of the aliens than it is about the reaction to the news that a SETI project has been successful.

Clearly the book was written by someone who has given thought to how an extra-terrestrial contact might affect international politics, how factions would oppose responding to the communication, and how other factions would refuse to believe contact had really been made. In fact, the humans are far more believable than the aliens. The aliens come off as being Sagan's ideal of what humans should be. They have intercepted all of our television signals from the beginning of TV broadcasting, a commitment to their own SETI project that Sagan no doubt envies.

Another way you can recognize Contact as Sagan's book is that the book seems to have a number of axes to grind and they are all on issues about which Sagan has strong feelings. His scientist/main character has to debate fundamentalists and people who have phobias of technology. It gives Sagan a chance to editorialize on some of his favorite topics.

My big complaint about this book is that it gives far too little information about the aliens. The actual contact is described

as an almost mystical experience, but one that leaves us little the wiser. It seems that Sagan had thought out the earthly implications of a contact and then only put in the aliens because the build-up demanded them.

Contact is not a great piece of science fiction. If it had been written by an unknown, it would not be getting the glossy Simon and Schuster treatment it is getting. It wouldn't have gotten a mammoth cash advance. But it probably would have come out in a nice Del Rey edition. It might even have gotten a better piece of cover art. Not a great book, but easily a +1 on the -4 to +4 scale. I'm glad I finished it. Now I can wake up in the morning and not see first thing the apparent message "Contact Carl Sagan."

THE EMPIRE OF TIME

by Crawford Kilian
Del Rey, 1978, \$2.50

A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper

Jerry Pierce, crack agent for the Inter-temporal Agency, goes back in time to find out why an enormous disaster stuck Earth in the future. He meets an African Bushman named Anita !Kosi (who has some not very secret powers). They mention all sorts of paradoxes without resolving or explaining any of them. Like, if someone gives William Blake a copy of his collected works published in 1930 before he's written most of them, does he actually bother to write them? If he doesn't, do they vanish? Kilian farbles around this by having these be either alternate worlds or our world, only earlier on time, depending on which suits his need. Disappointing.

E N E M Y M I N E

A film review by Mark R. Leeper

CAPSULE REVIEW: Film adaptation of Barry Longyear's story slams home its message of racial tolerance. The matte and model work are more imaginative but less well-executed than is expected these days.

Last Christmas season brought two major science fiction films to grab the holiday marker. Neither Dune nor 2010 did very well at the boxoffice, so this year we get only one. Enemy Mine is an adaptation of the Hugo-winning novella by Barry Longyear. The story is a cross between the plots of two Sixties films, Hell in the Pacific and Robinson Crusoe on Mars. A human and an enemy alien are stranded together on a planet and must overcome their instinctive mutual hatred if they are to survive. There is more plot to the story than that, but that is the core of what Enemy Mine is all about. The film talks down to its audience as a slight

inclination when presenting its message of tolerance for those different than ourselves.

Enemy Mine was directed by Wolfgang Peterson, who previously directed Das Boot, one of the best films ever made about submarine warfare, and The Neverending Story, which rose above the mismatched patchwork of ideas and images it had only because some of the ideas were really interesting. Enemy Mine goes to the other extreme from The Neverending Story. Enemy Mine is a little too pat, a little too simplistic. Peterson took over the reins from the film's first director, Richard Loncraine. (Why Fox threw out Loncraine and nine million dollars of his work is unclear. People in production report that Loncraine's version of the story was as good as Peterson's.) Peterson had the alien make-up done over -- a number of times, in fact. The resulting make-up does not quite look believable, particularly a tail that looks borrowed from a stuffed animal.

Dennis Quaid of The Right Stuff, Dreamscape, and Breaking Away stars as the human and Lou Gossett, Jr. (An Officer and a Gentleman, Sadat) is quite good as the alien. Also on hand is Brion James, continuing a career of belligerent parts like the replicant Lean in Bladerunner and a rough redneck in the "Mummy Daddy" episode of Amazing Stories.

The special effects of Enemy Mine are fun rather than believable. Much of the landscape is provided by unconvincing matte paintings. Curiously enough, these were done by Industrial Light and Magic, who usually have much higher standards. The spacecraft models were created by the Bavaria Studios model unit. They look like something off the cover of a Sixties science fiction book. When one crash-lands on a planet, it is obviously model work, but it was fun to watch much like a similar landing was fun to watch at the climax of When Worlds Collide.

In total, there is much to like in Enemy Mine, but curiously the adaptation of the prize-winning story it was based on is what lets it down. Give it a +1 on the -4 to +4 scale. The film is just a bit simplistic in its Yuletide plea for peace off earth and good will towards aliens.



EROS at NADIR



by Mike Resnick
NAL/Signet, 1986, \$?.??

A book review by Lan

It has been almost two months since I read this and now (as I try to write the review), and I am still very impressed by the novel. Eros at Nadir is the fourth and final book of the "Tales of the Velvet Comet" series. The Comet has been decommissioned as a result of the events in the last book, Eros Descending. James "Bull" del Grado has bought the "dry-docked" vessel and has commissioned Nate Page to write a musical comedy about the hey-day of the Velvet Comet.

That's pretty much the story. So what was so fascinating that I still find it difficult to review it? The story takes place on the ship with long conversations between Nate and Cupid, the Comet's computer. They talk about rounds (three-dimensional productions), the technical aspects of producing any theatrical performance, construction of plots, musical themes, and creative writing, and all the stuff that goes into, specifically, Eros at Nadir. Although not self-referential, the book is a novel about how to write Eros at Nadir. For anyone who is thinking about writing, this is a must-read. (And since I have been writing some fiction, this was a very helpful guide for me.)

Aside from this, references are made to two other works that Mike has written. Nate Page wrote a piece called "The Ballad of Billybuck Dancer" which now definitely ties the four novels from the "Tales of the Galactic Midway" into his future universe, and at the end, Nate and his composer-friend, Kipchoge Kamala, are to begin a round about Conrad Bland, a character in Walpurgis III.

Is there more? Yes. In his research, Nate learns what life was really like for the prostitutes of the Velvet Comet, and interviews with some of the survivors after it closed down reveals much of the nastier side of that sort of life.

Mike ties up the series very nicely, and doesn't leave much for continuing it, if that were to happen (which I doubt). The only question I have at the end of Eros at Nadir is: what about this musical on Conrad Bland, the "evil incarnate" who has slaughtered millions of people? Maybe Mike will write it.

nation disillusioned with its heroes, either real or imagined, is lost indeed."

"I said that?" Jimpson had edged into the room and was curiously examining my collection of pulps, now scattered. A Street & Smith's Wild West Weekly, featuring "Johnny Forty-five Rides the Skyline Trail", caught his eye. "Ah, the rhyming deputy marshall. I remember him well. However, I have always believed, and even written to the editor on several occasions about the matter, that Johnny should have given more heed to the mature and valuable advice of his colleague and superior, Geogre Krumm. Since they did not see fit to act on my advice, I was regretfully obliged to discontinue reading their magazine. I have often felt this deplorable lack of maturity, as exemplified by Johnny, is the basis of what is wrong with the generation of today."

"Exactly, Jimpson, exactly," I said reverently.

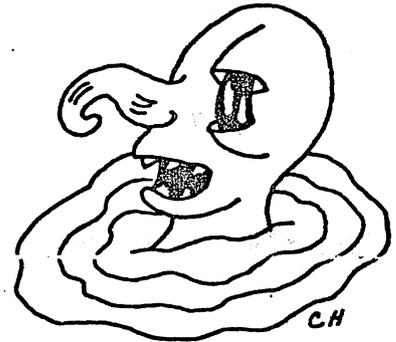
Like so many of these manuscripts that are published either in the pulps or about the pulps, they come to us in funny ways. I found this floating down the Maumee River enclosed in a 40 oz. Blatz Beer bottle. It was discovered near Napoleon, Ohio, on a Saturday afternoon while I was out drowning black cats. The manuscript was signed by a Dr. Samuel Potts. Whether or not we will ever meet Dr. Potts, or if he is even still living, I do not know. However, I feel we owe Dr. Potts a thank you for showing us how American life is really lived. Thank you, Dr. Potts.

In our next column we will delve into the early issues of Thrilling Adventures magazine and talk about some of the SF and fantasy they published in 1932 and 1933.



GREEN SLIME

A commentary by Mark R. Leeper



I was listening to a record of music from science fiction films. They played the title song from the epic science fiction film Green Slime (yes, there was a Japanese-American co-production called Green Slime). The lyrics contain the lines:

Man has looked out into space in wonder
For thousands of years,
Sometimes thinking that life could be
somewhere
And now...now it's here!

"What a pity," I thought, "if after all that searching we found life and it made you sick just to look at it."

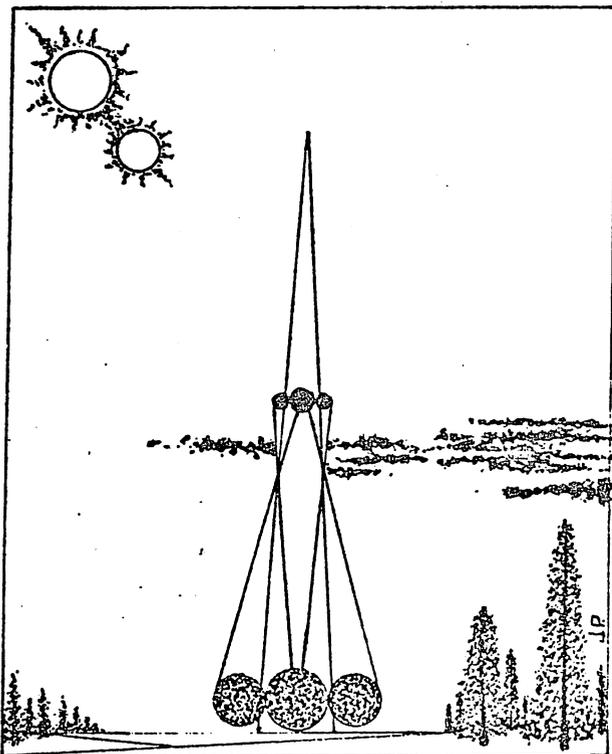
But that got me thinking about how likely it was that if we found life in the universe it would likely be something that would turn our stomachs. There are, after all, not many life-forms on this planet that, if you saw one scaled up to about six feet tall or 180 pounds, would not make you at least a little queasy. I heard someplace that most of the animal bio-mass of the world is beetles. We should certainly be used to what a beetle looks like. Let's face it -- Gregor Samsa didn't have any groupies. Mick Jagger has groupies, but even that is pushing human tolerance.

Not that there isn't a good reason to instinctively be disgusted by relatively alien life-forms. That's nature's way of saying "Do not touch!" It is similar to the instinctive fear some people have of spiders and snakes. Somewhere in our past, there were some pre-humans who hated spiders and snakes, and some who thought they were pretty and grabbed for them. The former group were our ancestors; the latter ended as Caveman McNuggets for jackals or buzzards or something. Life-forms fall into three classes: friends, food, and foes. That's the safest way for a pre-human to live. Friends better be close friends.

So most life-forms we find disgusting, but the converse is even more true. Only a small part of the matter on earth is connected with life-forms, yet everything disgusting is. I don't mean virtually everything, I mean everything. Think about it. What your cat left on the floor, the disposable diaper you kicked in the grocery parking lot, what you stepped in on the sidewalk: they are all icky because of their connection to living matter. There's nothing disgusting about rocks on the moon. People say space is barren and cold but it isn't disgusting. When you find green slime, then it will be disgusting.

+++++ Mark R. Leeper +++++

MY VIEW OF _____



CLARION WEST

by GERRI BALTER

Although Clarion officially started on Monday, July 1, we were asked to arrive the day before for orientation. When I arrived in Seattle a former Clarion West graduate I knew met me at the airport and drove me to my home for the next six weeks, a dorm building on the Seattle University campus. My eighth floor room was long and narrow with a single bed, desk, closet and drawer space on each side, enough room for one person but crowded for two. I was glad I didn't have a roommate.

Since the orientation didn't begin until 7:00 pm that evening, I had plenty of time to explore. The Seattle University campus was beautiful with sculptured trees, exquisite flowers and green grass everywhere. I walked to Seattle Community College, eight blocks away and stood across the street, staring at the amroon building trying to imagine what Clarion would be like and what I would be after six weeks.

I hope the experience would give me the answer I'd come here looking for. I thought I was a good writer as did my friends. But nothing I wrote came even close to getting published. Was I fooling myself? I applied to Clarion, partially, to see if I was good enough to get accepted. I equated being accepted to Clarion with having writing talent until someone wondered out loud if I got in because only a few people applied, or because I had sufficient funds to pay the price they asked. I had no answer for them, not then, at least.

Those were the thoughts in my mind that evening when I met the other Clarion students for the first time. My first impression was one of surprise. The group looked more diverse than I had imagined, with gray-haired men and women interspersed with those who didn't look over sixteen.

J. T. Stewart, one of the group's coordinators, started out by introducing herself, Marilyn Holt, the other coordinator, and Kay Kinghammer, who was part den mother, part troubleshooter, and part gopher. She was also a former Clarion graduate.

After the introduction J. T. asked us to tell the group a bit about ourselves. That's when I found out how diverse the group really was. The age range was from early twenties to late fifties. I was the only one in my forties. The occupations ranged from student to psychologist. Most of the Clarionites came from the west coast. There were three who came from the east coast. I was the only midwesterner.

Then we were introduced to our first instructor. Arthur Byron Cover, the only author in the program I had never met. I imagined him to be a tall, slim man dressed in a three-piece suit with a British accent. Instead he was of medium height, dressed in jeans and t-shirt, and spoke with a thick southern accent. By the end of the week we were all saying, "you-all."

Art started out by telling us that we were going to begin by critiquing the stories we sent in to be considered for Clari-

-----Gerri Balter-----

on. Everyone groaned, not only because all the stories were around 26 pages (that was a requirement) but because we all thought we'd progressed since then. I knew I had, since I'd misread the directions and sent in my story in February instead of May. I had revised my story completely since then.

While J. T. and Marilyn were setting out the stories, we stood around and tried to converse. Although some of them knew each other before Clarion, I knew no one. I felt self-conscious and uncomfortable. Everyone else acted so competent talking with assurance about everything. I was sure I was the only one with doubts. What would happen if my doubts were justified, if I found out I really had no writing talent? My stomach tightened painfully just thinking about it. Then some of them came up to me and started talking about word processing. I'd mentioned buying a printer and spelling check program for WordStar. We stood around talking about how wonderful WordStar was. Once I was able to find something I could talk about with assurance, I began to feel a little bit as if I belonged.

After we collected a copy of each story, Art told us which ones to read for the next day. Kay then suggested we all meet for breakfast the next morning so that those who wanted rides would get them as well as giving us time to get better acquainted.

Even though I am a fast reader, I didn't finish my reading until almost 2:00 AM, and I was up at 7:00 AM.

We met downstairs and all walked over to the Seattle University cafeteria where I would eat breakfast and supper for the next six weeks. Some people brought food and rented a refrigerator so they didn't eat with us after this. Breakfast was a lively meal, full of conversation about how tough it was to stay up late, how terrible university food was, and about our respective homes.

Art and I found we knew some of the same people and we started talking about fandom and science fiction conventions. Art and I were both surprised when a majority of the Clarionites didn't know what we were talking about. They asked us questions about fandom and conventions. We gave a brief overview. Later they met some of the local fans at the various parties we were invited to.

After breakfast we went to class. The room was large and air-conditioned with large tables arranged to form a square. Art started the critiquing process by calling one person who would read what he/she wrote on his/her copy of the story, and then we would proceed around the room clockwise with Art always being the last to comment. The person whose story was being critiqued had to sit silently until everyone had finished. Then he or she could rebut. A pattern soon formed. Each person had his or her own manner of critiquing. One person cracked jokes about any sentence that had a double meaning. Another would tell each person how terrible his or her story was from between clenched teeth. Still another would only comment on ways the story could be improved.

The instructor's critique would consist of points he/she agreed or disagreed with and any additional points no one else had mentioned. Sometimes they compared something in one of our stories with what another author did in a science fiction/fantasy novel or short story. More than half the class didn't know either the author or his/her work although they picked well-known authors (well-known to me, that is). I never considered myself especially well-read, but I was compared to most of the Clarionites not because they didn't like to read but because they lived in areas which had few well-stocked bookstores and/or libraries. I realized how lucky I was living in the Twin Cities (Minneapolis/St. Paul) with their wonderful libraries and bookstores.

We all ate lunch together in a private room at the community college at the beginning of Clarion. Lunch topics consisted of soothing over wounded egos and talking about things that interested us. I was very vocal about my fear of the critiquing process. I had a bad experience just before leaving for Clarion. My stories were torn to shreds in a ruthless manner which resembled sharks' feeding frenzy. I was worried about having to go through a similar experience although I hadn't seen it happen that morning.

Several people told me I was over-reacting, that I should just shrug off the ruthless critiques, if there were any. These were the same people who would turn red or bow their heads, not looking at anyone, during their critiques or say they weren't going to submit anything again because we just didn't understand.

No one liked being critiqued, least of all me. Each instructor said a bit about the critiquing process, reminding us that they have to deal with bad reviews and fans who come up to them and tell them how crummy their last book was. That helped me somewhat. What helped me more was that each instructor told us that what they said was only their opinion. Ultimately, we have to do what we think is best.

After lunch we did more critiquing until about three when Art dismissed us after telling us he wanted us to write a description of an alien planet, not one that was familiar to us.

Wouldn't you know he'd pick descriptions, the one thing I was worst at doing, for the first assignment. I didn't have to do it. None of us had to do anything we didn't want to do. But if I didn't do it, then why did I come here in the first place?

After reading and critiquing the stories assigned for the next day, I tried to think of an alien landscape. I came up with all sorts of ideas, none of which worked on paper.

In desperation, I went to Kay's room and asked her for help. We talked for a while and she helped me formulate a plan. I would write something funny, a planet designed for writers. I went back to my room and started to write it when someone knocked at my door. I opened it and Art was standing there, wanting to know if I wanted to join a dinner expedition to the college cafeteria. I said

yes and he told me to come down with the others to get him.

When it was time to eat, we all gathered at the elevator to go down and get Art. All the instructors lived on the fifth floor of the dorm, while the rest of us lived on the eighth floor.

We got into the habit of going down to get all the instructors when it was mealtime. At breakfast, it was whoever got up first. At supper, someone would knock on all the doors to ask who was going down and we'd all go down in a group.

I enjoyed mealtime with the instructors and other Clarionites. We'd take over one of the tables and tell all sorts of silly jokes or tell stories about strange things that happened to us, quite a relaxing experience.

After supper we'd go back to our rooms and work. Art would get lonely in his room and sometime during the evening he'd come up and visit us. He'd go into the first room with an open door and those of us who needed a break would congregate in that room for general silliness. After he'd leave, we'd go back to work.

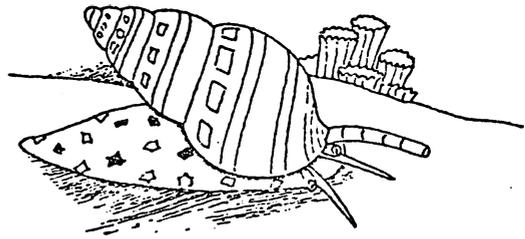
Writing rarely went uninterrupted. Someone would get stuck, need to look up a word, or need a break later in the evening. We'd congregate in our smaller groups then and talk about ourselves or about our writing. I was one whose door was open most of the time so someone would stop in for a chat at least once or twice during a long evening, after asking if I wanted to be bothered.

I am the type of person who needs at least eight hours of sleep to function. During Clarion I averaged four and it didn't hinder me. I felt a push, coming from me, to write as much as I could. After all, this might be my only chance for professionals to look at my work.

My third day at Clarion was when my story was critiqued. To say I was nervous was putting it mildly. I was petrified. Yet the critique wasn't as bad as I thought it would be. Most of what I heard were things I'd already corrected. The only shock was when someone accused me of being anti-strong women because she felt there were no strong women in my story. I am a strong woman and very pro-strong women. I found it hard to believe that anyone would think that. It was the first time that I realized what it meant to have a stranger critique my work. After I had a chance to rebut, she retracted her statement.

The fact that we were strangers to each other and, in some cases, to each other's life styles and experiences made the critiquing process very interesting at times. For instance, the people from the east coast couldn't seem to understand why it was important to teach a child to hug a tree if he/she were lost in the forest while the west coast people couldn't believe that anyone could smoke marijuana in a bus and not get thrown off. This is something that never happens in any of the writing groups I belonged to because we all came from the same part of the country and had similar life-ex-

An Artist's conception of Chompa----



periences. I had never stated in what city a story takes place, believing it wasn't necessary. I learned that it is necessary when I would keep on getting critiques that started with, "In ---- where I come from you can't do that."

Wednesday evenings were special. Each instructor would either give a reading or give an interview which the public paid to see while we got in free. Sometimes we would resent these evening sessions because it would cut into our writing time, but we always went, even though it wasn't mandatory. I felt it was common courtesy to the writers who were helping us so much.

Art chose to read a portion of a screenplay he was working on. It was about a giant snail named Chompa and was wonderfully funny. Because of Chompa's silliness and his being a relative of Seattle slugs (which we heard a great deal about but never saw), we decided to make him our mascot.

The day after my entrance story was critiqued, my alien description was critiqued. The biggest complaint about it was that it couldn't be used in a story. Art, however, complimented me and one other Clarionite for daring to be funny. He kept telling us that this was our chance to experiment. "Dare to be stupid," he'd remind us every day. At the beginning it was difficult to be stupid in front of a group of strangers. But as we got to know each other better, especially the dorm people, we became more daring.

Friday, the last day of Art's week with us, Chip Delany, our next instructor, came to class. Although we were supposed to start at 9:00 AM, we rarely did. Art would let us ramble through our critique. It was a relaxing week, one that we needed to help us get over our initial nervousness and help us get into the habit of critiquing and writing every day.

Chip let us know that things were going to change. Class was going to begin promptly at 9:00 AM. Lateness would not be tolerated. Critiques would start with each person saying whether he/she liked or disliked the piece. Then he/she would read exactly what he/she had written. There would be no repetition. If someone said what you wanted to say, then you'd pass after saying whether or not you liked the story. He also gave us an assignment, to write a short story from fifteen to twenty-five pages.

Art threw a party in his room on Friday night, our first time to socialize as a group. He also invited Clarion graduates and

local fans. I'd mentioned to several people that I didn't really know anyone in Seattle. At the party several people came up to me and said, "Aren't you Gerri Balter? I'm -----." I'd forgotten about the people I'd met through apas and at conventions.

I spent the weekend working on my short story for Chip, while some of the others went out to relax, because I needed to revise more than the others did. I thought it was terrible to have to revise so many times until Chip told me that he revises a great deal too.

That Sunday one of the dorm people confided to us that she felt so depressed she wanted to go home because she felt inadequate as a writer. Several of us told her we'd felt the same way. We decided to band together to cheer up anyone who felt depressed. After that I didn't feel alone anymore. Here was a group of people who understood how I felt and didn't tell me it was silly. They empathized. That helped me more than anything else.

Chip started out his week by giving us writing exercises in class. He used them to illustrate his points. When it came time to critique our stories, I was worried. What would happen if everyone said he/she didn't like my story? To me that would be the worst thing that could happen, because writing stories people like is of prime importance to me. When that didn't happen to me, it happened to someone else. I felt so sorry for him. After that, I managed to tolerate the critiquing process without being petrified, although I was never completely relaxed. Chip, like Art, would drop up to visit us in the evenings. His stories were fascinating. I loved to sit and listen to him. Chip was great fun. One day he serenaded me with "The Eggplant that Ate Chicago" on the way to breakfast. I told the others what happened and they wanted to hear the song too. He sang it again at the party that weekend.

Wednesday night, Chip acted out one of the Tales of Neveryona, making the story come alive for his audience.

Although Marta Randall didn't come in until Sunday, she phoned in an assignment. We were to write a two page story and turn it in on Friday so we could start critiquing them on Monday. Most of us, myself included, had never written a short-short. The meal-time conversation became filled with ways in which we could express an idea in two pages. It was really tough for those who wrote stories which were 30 pages, minimum.

Chip said those of us who wanted to could make an appointment for a private meeting with him. I took advantage of that to ask him about my writing. He gave me a great many useful suggestions.

Every weekend during Clarion there was a party. But I wasn't in a party mood. I didn't want to take any time away from my writing. Although we did get assignments, we were also encouraged to write stories other than those needed to fulfill them. Instead of going to a party, I would spend Saturdays walking around Seattle, letting plot ideas mull around in my mind.

Marta arrived with her husband and lovely eight week old baby. Because she was nursing, we only had morning sessions during her week. She talked a great deal about how important language was to our writing. She brought us samples of poor writing which came from Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine, courtesy of Shawna McCarthy, and copies of "The Eye of Argon", a piece of fan fiction no one would admit to writing.

After hearing Marta try to read parts of "The Eye of Argon" and fail because of hysterical laughter, we decided to write our own group masterpiece called "The Eye of Clarion." Each one of us wrote one page, filling it full of all the things we were told not to do in our stories.

Marta did something that no other instructor did. She wrote a story while she was in Seattle and let us critique it. I thought she was brave.

On her Wednesday, she read a trio of short stories, all different, yet each one special in its own way. Each writer had a question and answer session after his/her reading or interview. Most of the time, the questions were about their fiction. In Marta's case, people were more interested in her experiences as SFWA president.

Marta couldn't come up to see us because of her baby, but she'd invited us to come down to visit her. She also scheduled meetings with us. She gave me even more encouragement than Chip did.

By this time tempers were beginning to flare. Part of it was due to the weather. It was hot during the day and the dorm rooms which either faced east or west had no air conditioning. The people whose rooms faced east woke with the sun at 4:30 AM. By class time their rooms were unbearably hot. After class, however, their rooms began to cool off as those rooms which faced west heated up. The heat didn't bother me, but many others complained about it especially once we were told how cool and rainy Seattle was and the majority of us didn't bring the clothes needed to withstand the heat.

Then some people suffered from writer's block, which is difficult to deal with under normal circumstances, but even worse when under their own and peer pressure to produce.

Others were upset because they weren't getting the encouragement they thought they should get. Still others were upset with the critiques they were receiving. That's when Octavia showed up. She'd just come from Peru and was full of stories about roughing it, helping us see that things weren't that bad in Seattle. She encouraged us to write about our feelings. Her assignment was for us to pick an emotion and write about it without mentioning it.

I'd been writing about my emotions since I arrived and felt drained by then. I could not seem to express any emotion on paper, but I kept trying, ideas crowding around my head begging to be put on paper.

Octavia chose to be interviewed Wednesday night instead of giving a reading. She confided to us that she'd had one bad experi-

ence when someone who was supposed to interview her was completely unprepared. She hoped it wouldn't happen again. But it did. Luckily, she took charge of the situation and entertained the audience with her trip experiences.

I didn't have a formal meeting with Octavia because I had gone down and talked with her several times during the week.

Chelsea Quinn Yarbro, our next teacher, didn't give us an assignment. She let us work on whatever we wanted. She knew how burned out we were feeling and kept telling us to pamper ourselves because no one else would. She also gave us writing exercises in class. She did not critique them, but would tell each of us that he/she did a good job. The one I remember was when she asked us to describe how our clothes felt. All the women complained about tight bra straps and the men complained about tight jockey shorts.

Quinn was also interviewed on Wednesday night, but her interviewer knew what she was doing and the interview went well.

Chelsea's week was the highlight of Clarion for me because she said in class that she thought I was a very good writer. I was so shocked I thought she meant someone else at first. That was the first time a professional had said anything like that. When I met with her, she told me I only needed to work on a few minor items and pointed them out. Chip and Marta told me much the same using different words, but I didn't see it until then.

Norman Spinrad was our last instructor and the one who told us we needed to write a good novel. He had us do outlines, the basis on which novels were sold, and then talked about the differences between short stories and novels. He also told us about the publishing houses.

It was time to go home, a sad time for us, almost like saying goodbye to your best friends.

AFTERWARD

We were told that we would all suffer some sort of writer's block when we got home. Mine consisted of spending several weeks sleeping late and writing almost nothing. I did do a great deal of reading during this time and found my reading tastes had changed. Authors I had previously enjoyed I no longer liked. I could no longer tolerate poor writing. When I started writing, I found that I didn't have to do as many rewrites.

Many times during the six weeks at Clarion we all wondered if we were masochistic spending money to work harder than we ever had and had to suffer through the critiquing process. And yet, knowing what I know now, I'd do it again because I learned more at Clarion than I learned in all the writing courses and writing groups I'd been in. Most of all, I now have confidence in my ability as a writer.

NOTICE

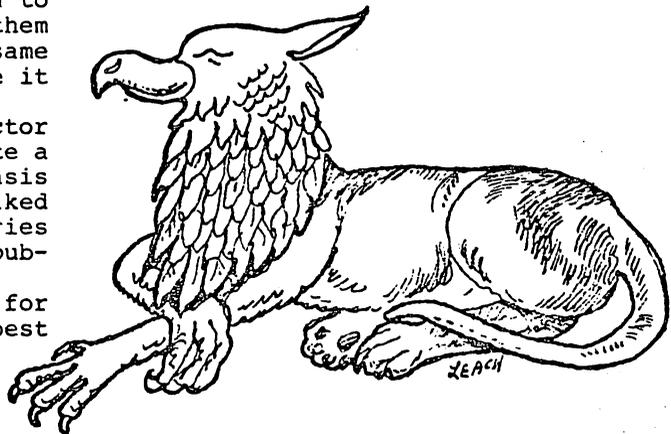
The third annual Clarion West Science Fiction Writing Workshop will be held June 23 through August 1, 1986, at the Seattle Central Community College.

To apply, submit a 20 to 30 page (typed, double-spaced) manuscript of original fiction. The manuscripts may be one or two short stories or a portion of a novel (include an outline of the novel). Also include a short statement about yourself and why you want to participate. A \$50 refundable deposit, applicable to tuition, must accompany entries. Manuscripts must be submitted by May 15, 1986.

Approximately 20 students will be selected to attend. Send manuscripts to:

CLARION WEST
Seattle Central Community College
Continuing Education Office
Room BE4180
1901 Broadway, Seattle, WA 98122.

Make checks payable to Clarion West/SCCC. Faculty members are: Edward Bryant, Suzy McKee Charnas, Joan Vinge, Patricia McKillip, David Hartwell and Norman Spinrad.



CRAZY JANE IMPROVED (After William Butler Yeats)

by Sourdough Jackson

I care not what the ops-smofs say:
All that dreadful planning-churn,
All those crises, night and day,
Cannot slow the music-quern;
Daft the fan is, hopes in air,
Who swaps sweet music for a Chair.
Fiawol, Fiawol.

To sing with verve of seas that boil,
To beller out with "Hearts of Oak",
To wail while burning midnight oil
Makes the hotel windows crack:
So follow well, if fun's your plan,
A scribbling, noisy filking fan.
Fiawol, Fiawol.

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NOVELETTES

- "The Fringe," by Orson Scott Card. F&SF, October
- "The Embezzled Blessing," by Robert M. Greene. F&SF June
- "The Cajamarca Project," by Charles L. Harness. Analog, February
- "Portraits of His Children," by George R. R. Martin. IASFM, November
- "When the High Lord Arrives," by Eric Vinicoff. Analog, April

In "The Fringe," Great Salt Lake has become the Mormon Sea, with farmland painstakingly reclaimed and nurtured from the surrounding desert. The hero of this story, a teacher with cerebral palsy, is portrayed with vivid empathy. The story tells of his struggle not only against his students' ignorance, but against the community's defiance of the long-term demands of survival in a wasteland.

"The Embezzled Blessing" retells the story of Jacob and Esau. (For the non Judeo-Christians among us, Esau was the older twin son of Isaac, son of Abraham, and so the rightful heir. But Jacob, with his mother's connivance and apparently Jehovah's approval, conned him into giving away his rights; then tricked their father into giving him the eldest's blessing.) With a narrative flavor of the Old West and a strange supernatural being on hand to guide the father, "Blessing" has an eldritch grace. It's a good reminder that myths are indeed timeless.

"The Cajamarca Project" blends history and science fiction to good effect. Maria Antis, an Incan, hires biochemist James Ruiz, descendant of the conquistadors, to develop a nitrogen-fixing bacterium which would be drastically more effective than natural strains. The project is somehow related to her obsession with the centuries-gone conquest of Peru. The project's purpose and the story's outcome may not be entirely surprising, but they are effective.

The main character -- he could hardly be called a hero -- of "Portraits of His Children" has driven away his wife and daughter by his absorption in his writing. The daughter sends him disturbing (to say the least!) paintings of his novels' characters, his "children." This story is the best I read the entire year, of any length. The people are real, the story is engrossing, the development and style are flawless.

I liked "When the High Lord Arrives" partly because of the development of its world-setting, a Japanese orbital habitat. It is very plausible that the Japanese, with a society already adapted to close quarters and a tradition of harmony and discipline, would most effectively adapt to space dwellings. The style of this story, too, fits the subject matter. The background is woven seamlessly into the storyline.

Honorable Mention: "Gaby," by Andrew M. Greeley (Amazing, January). An Irish-American Nobel laureate and his guardian angel. I can't point to any one thing that makes this story great, but I became very fond of the characters.

NOVELLAS

- "George Washington Slept Here," by Charles L. Harness. Analog, July
- "When Winter Ends," by Michael P. Kube-McDowell. F&SF, July
- "Green Mars," by Kim Stanley Robinson. IASFM, September
- "The Gorgon Field," by Kate Wilhelm. IASFM, August
- "24 Views of Mt. Fuji, by Hokusai," by Roger Zelazny. IASFM, July

In "George Washington Slept Here," Charles Harness gives us the unlikely character Oliver Potts, a lawyer who's never won a case. His "losses," however, usually involve an unlikely turn of events, and none so much as this story involving a woman who claims, among other things, to have been George Washington's lover.

"When Winter Ends" is yet another post-Holocaust story. It begins before The End and proceeds to several centuries afterward, with the linkage between the two developed toward the end. There seem to be a preponderance of post-disaster stories published in 1985. This, like others mentioned here, is saved from redundancy by strength of characterization and a story that moves beyond its setting.

"Green Mars" brings together an odd mix of people to climb the Martian Olympus Mons, among them an opponent of the Red Planet's terraforming. The journey up the mountain is also a journey into the planet's past and future, and his own involvement with them.

"The Gorgon Field" is, I believe, one of a series of stories about Constance and Charlie Meiklejohn; it has the feeling of more background than what's stated, and the characters seem familiar. Whatever, in this story they investigate an alleged shaman's hold on a wealthy Western rancher, and the eerie fascination of the ranch itself. Mystery and magic impeccably written.

"24 Views of Mt. Fuji, by Hokusai" offers what Zelazny does best, a science fiction story woven around ancient themes. Instead of using myth, here he follows the "path" of a set of ancient Japanese prints. The ending gets a bit muddled in another of Zelazny's favorite ploys, the melding of human and artificial intelligence, but the story moves toward it so inexorably that the outcome does work.

I have no doubt that some people will be moved to write disagreeing with my assessment of the stories, or wanting to know why I didn't include their favorite among the best. In fact, I'm hoping they will. The more we admit in public that we read the magazines, the more other people may be inspired to read them, too.

An Article by Dennis Fischer

The Rise of and Decline

ROBERT A. HEINLEIN

Part Two: EXPANDING INTO NEW FIELDS AND NEW DIRECTIONS (1947-1959)

The War was over, and Heinlein felt the writing bug biting at him again. However, this time instead of submitting to John Campbell's Astounding, he decided to try a new tactic -- submit to the better-paying slicks, which with their larger circulation and broader-based readership, as well as a larger word rate, brought respectability to those writers which appeared in their pages. For his "slick" science fiction, Heinlein scaled down the science content of his stories much as Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle reduced the science in their best-selling novels that they have written together.

The first of these stories was "The Green Hills of Earth", which introduced the character of Rhysling, the Blind Singer of the Spaceways. Despite the fact that a science fiction poetry award has been named after him, Rhysling's doggerel as written by Heinlein is far from admirable. The poem this story is titled after has turned up at many science fiction conventions, sometimes set to decent original tunes, but often to the tune of the theme song from "Gilligan's Island" or "It's the Real Thing" Coke theme, and has unfortunately plagued filksingers and con-goers for years.

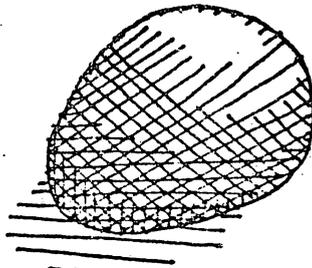
"The Green Hills of Earth" appeared in The Saturday Evening Post in 1947 and was followed shortly by "Space Jockey", "The Black Pits of Luna", and "It's Great To Be Back". Of these, only "It's Great To Be Back" is notable for its carefully thought out depiction of what kind of adjustments a couple who had been living on the moon would have to make if they returned to Earth. As science fiction, it's simple but well done.

Heinlein mined the idea of comparing the lifestyles of Earth- and moon-dwellers for even richer ore in his novel The Moon is a Harsh Mistress.

After achieving some success in The Saturday Evening Post, Heinlein tried some other slicks with equal success, but the stories were all minor with nothing more going for them than a simple idea presented in sf terms and packaged for the general audience unused to thinking in terms of rocket ships and space travel. In "Water Is for Washing," he let part of California fall into the ocean while in "Gentlemen, Be Seated" the importance of air-tight seals in vacuums is stressed. From the title, one can easily detect the solution of the story's central problem. In "Ordeal in Space," saving a kitten helps a spaceman overcome his fear of falling while "Delilah and the Space Rigger" presents a view of women in space. Heinlein was never one to degrade the competency of any human being, male or female, and his stories are full of extremely competent females who are often better leaders or better organized than their male counterparts. Heinlein's wife, Virginia, is indeed such a woman, or should I say, a "Renaissance Person"? It is Heinlein's opinion that "women are more practical than men. Biology forces it on them.... Until a female bears a child her socio-economic function is male, no matter how orthodox her sexual preference."

Feminists have never quibbled with this aspect of Heinlein's thinking. What typically bothers them is that when married, all of Heinlein's femals become domesticated -- totally dedicated homemakers, supportive of

Empathic Post Scriptings



#.HERTA

Letters from you, replies to other letters, comments on the articles and reviews and all that stuff from LL #18 and even earlier issues. As before, my comments are in double parentheses. Except this one!

GENERAL COMMENTS ON LAN'S LANTERN

Mike Glicksohn: The one thing LL #18 demonstrated to me was that if you take two short, bearded, slightly stout math teachers and lock them in a room with reams of material and masses of paper and duplicating equipment, it is a long shot indeed that both will produce the complete works of Shakespeare. I could no more produce a fanzine that looked or read like LL than you could do a Xenium, but in that diversity lies the inherent fascination of fanzine fandom. Or so I hope. My difficulty with sercon fanzines such as LL is not that I'm one of those idiots who brags that they no longer read science fiction, but rather that I still read a lot of SF. However, as I've always done, I read it rather uncritically and primarily for entertainment. The difference between me and Dennis K. Fischer, for example, is the difference between a discrete and a continuous function. I've read practically everything Heinlein has written, but my mind tends to see his output as a set of individual pieces, not a tapestry to be searched for connecting threads. I envy those who can take a large number of isolated stories and see the underlying themes and the continuing ideas they represent, but I don't have that sort of ability myself (or if I have, it has atrophied from lack of use). With me it doesn't take long for the specifics of any given book or story to fade, leaving only a vague general impression as to whether or not I liked or disliked the work in question. You can probably see that this makes it rather difficult for me to comment coherently on sercon fanzines! But there are always the fannish parts....

((That's why I try to include a variety of things in each issue, so that there's something for everybody.))

Keith Allan Hunter: Friday, Kelly Rae McMillan gets her copy of LAN'S LANTERN out of her post office box and I peruse it, wondering if I am going to get one of my own. Monday she meets the mailman and hands me my copy. While I am opening the envelop she says, "He wants you to contribute something."

Now at that instant the first thought that hit me was, "How much?" You see, I know that you have read my stuff in D'APA and having already skimmed thru Kelly's copy I had a good idea of the quality of writing

inside, so...when I sat down to read thru the LANTERN the possibility that you might have meant that you wanted a literary contribution was the furthest thing from my mind.

As I read my way thru, tho, the possibility became more and more plausible until I realized that these people actually knew how to write! At which point I wrote you a check.

I can't write, I can't spell, Noam Chimp-sky [sic] knows more about grammar than I. I don't know a semicolon from a half a stoma-ta. What I write in D'APA is sometimes less coherent to me than to those that read it. I write that stuff with the intensity (but not the grace and style perhaps) of an AA rail trying to get under a 4.8 E.T.

Years from now, when I have managed to get control of my spleen vent and have managed to grasp the Kabala of Strunk and White, I might feel competent to write. Until then, I am content to pay for good reading.

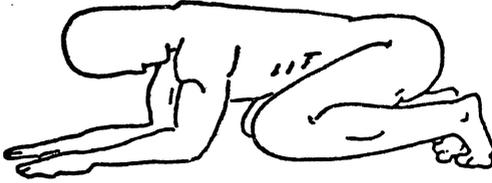
((I guess I should be more specific when I say I would like a contribution -- letters of comment are fine, articles and reviews are better. And I won't turn down stamps or money. Your writing is fine, but as for the spelling...well, I have trouble too. Actually, I can spell fine (and I am not adverse to looking words up in the dictionary), it's the typing skills I don't have.))

Steven Fox: Well, another issue of LAN'S LANTERN has come and gone. However, it has managed again to be impressive! Most impressive! You put a lot of work in each issue and it shows. I'm not sure I mentioned this before, but your zine is one of the ones I do keep even (if I don't have work inside) for the simple reason that your zine has substance to it. So keep up the good work!

((Thanks for your nice comments. It is lots of work, and I keep trying to be innovative. And I do try for substance and variety. Nice to know it's appreciated.))

Bernadette Bosky: I do think that a zine half as large and twice as often would be preferable, also getting a more thorough reading and more response. It's nice to have a meaty zine to really dig into, but even 40 pages would qualify, I'd think. Anyway, it's a good zine with a nice range of material; I especially like the blend of reviews, humor, and thought-pieces (on the future, SF, or both).

((Would you believe that I cut several articles from this issue because it would be too long, and it looks to be close to 70 pages anyway. Well, I do have material for the next one!))



WHEN THEY MET, HE ATTEMPTED TO SHOW THE
PROPER RESPECT OF ONE FAN FOR ANOTHER.

H.H.B.S

TEN YEARS A FAN

Mark Schulzinger: Congratulations on ten plus years in fandom. I don't know if I still brag about being a fan or not. I've been around so long that I can hardly remember a time when I wasn't one. Of course, GAFIA took its toll and now my wife is discovering what fans are really like. It was a bit of a shock to her, albeit a pleasant one.

Bernadette Bosky: I've been in fantasy and SF fandom a bit over nine years now, and my list of accomplishments are pretty similar to yours, including meeting the love of my life. Ain't it great?

Cathy Howard: I've been a fan for six years myself. I can't see me ever giving it up. Tend to concentrate on different aspects of it from year to year, but it is all fan-nish. Before I found fandom I read, collected stamps, and wrote pen pals out of these strange little magazines. The penpals (who were never very faithful) and the stamps went. Still read.

Harry Andruschak: 10 years a fan, eh? Well I got sort of introduced to fandom at the 1975 WESTERCON, but my real involvement started at the 1975 NASFiC which I still remember as quite an enjoyable con. Since then I have been an apahack, an editor of SOUTH OF THE MOON, done 4 issues of my genzine INTERMEDIATE VECTOR BOSONS, descended into alcoholism and am trying to struggle out, had a 10-1/2 year heterosexual relationship, and all in all cannot say it was all bad or all good. I certainly haven't been as active as you have. Drinking interfered with a lot of it, and lack of money, but most of all the daily activity at Jet Propulsion Laboratory was so time and energy consuming. Seems a pity that it may all be coming to an end.

Ben Indick: First, I congratulate you for ten years of devotion to the hobby you love, shown by the love you lavish on your fanzine, and the sense of camaraderie for fellow fans. The attitude is reminiscent of the group which composed the "Fellowship of TITLE", Donn Brazier's beloved, unique, lost and irreplaceable zine. For nearly 80 month-

ly issues it was a marketplace of ideas and musings. In a small way, through your own presence, LL does this too. I wish you continued pleasure. Second, congratulations for the recognition fans have awarded you. Next, my pleasure in your happy marital relationship.

I am just a bit your senior (I'll be 63 this August) and I have shared 33 years--the best--with Janet, who is a familiar person to fans we met in the several years she accompanied me to occasional cons. I am old fashioned enough to believe in the value of a sincere marital relationship. Oh, what my patient spouse has had to put up with! I hope she can retain that often-strained tolerance.

My own fan history is, of course, older than yours, but it has been off and on. It began during my WW II service, in 1944, and I can assure you that when fanac reached me, it was heartening. I was in a branch which moved constantly across the Atlantic, never on the same ship or post twice, so it was remarkable that mail got through to me at all. I recall with warmth the postcard "Fanews" regularly put out by Walt Dunkelberger of Fargo, N.D. I hope he is well and still with us! I even did occasional articles for a few fanzines.

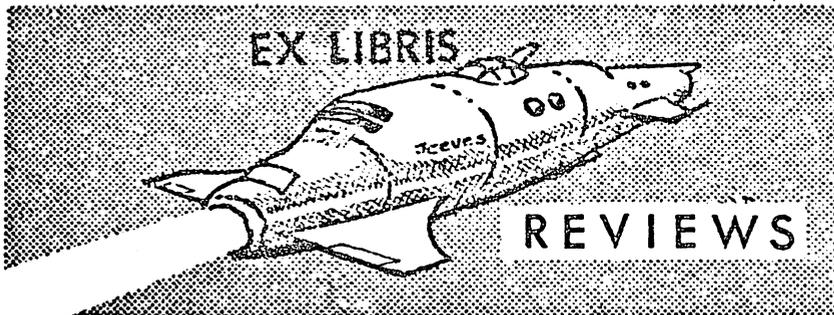
However, in the early 50s I lost interest in fantasy and dropped it all. To my regret. I threw out all that WW II fanstuff and even later material, as well as donating a few dozen better SF books to the library nearby. It was in those days deficient in SF, a condition remedied today.

In the late 60s I had a heart attack. Sitting there in the hospital, I thought back to older days and literary loves. I had read Tolkien a few years back and that rekindled the feeling. And now, in bed, generous letters from old friends and especially one from August Derleth helped me, and also brought back the feeling. I returned to fandom, and in the early 70s commenced IBID for the apazine ESOTERIC ORDER OF DAGON, an endless source of joy for me. For some years my mailbox received an average of 5 fanzines a day, to each of which I responded, feeling that the love and effort of the editor, whether the work was good or crudzine, deserved acknowledgement. At length, it was too much, leaving no time for reading or writing. And, by chance, after all those years, I was having essays in print. So, regretfully, I had to cut out those locs. Nowadays, occasionally, for an old friend like yourself, the old urge is still there. So, good luck, keep up the good work.

((Thanks, Ben. You keep up the good work, too.))

Mike Rogers: It seems like only a few days ago when the neo with my name saw LAN'S LANTERN for the first time. We've both been in fandom longer than we realize. It looks like you've just gotten your second wind. Congrats are in order.

The only problem with being in fandom that long is that one's interests change. I still enjoy science fiction enormously but



BOOKS

FILMS

MOVIES

BOOK REVIEWS

Fred Jakobic: I like Timothy Zahn's novels, The Blackcollar, Cobra, and just recently Cobra Strike. I hope he keeps it up. Ralph 24C41+ was an interesting and fun book to read. In a way I liked it. There is an analogy between this early book of wonders of the future and the early attempts by the movie industry at making science fiction films, and the special effects employed in the silent film days...humorous.

Cathy Howard: The reviews were both good and helpful. I'm going to wait till The Postman comes out in paperback before I get it.

Something I've been wondering about is with the hardback companies acquiring paperback ones, and paperback ones making arrangements to have hardbacks, what is this going to do to the wait between when the hardback comes out and the paperback is published? Get the depressing feeling it will probably be forever...barely.

I just finished Dayworld by Phillip Jose Farmer. I highly recommend it to you.

Brad Foster: Highest praise possible to give here, in relation to reviews -- several of the reviews this issue have gotten me interested in actually going out and looking for some of these books, rather than just picking up on what happens my way, as is my usual book-shopping method!

Craig Ledbetter: I was pleased to see such a long "Pulp and Celluliod" section. I love reading reviews, whether I agree or disagree is really of no consequence. Bill Warren's Keep Watching the Skies! has been reviewed in many diverse publications and it is deserving of the universal praise it has received. The second volume is set to come out in March, and I for one have my \$40 set aside already.

Mark Leeper's comparison between the short fiction of Stephen King and Clive Barker made for an interesting read. King is a master at taking a cliched situation and involving us in it due to the way he uses characterization. Barker on the other hand uses original or off-beat premises masterfully, but his characterization falls far short of his weirdness of plot. A collaboration between these two would truly be an event to look forward to.

Ed Chambers: I was so glad to see these reviews. I often have trouble deciding which books to get. I usually go by the author first: if I liked the author's work in the past, I'll read more by him/her. But as for new authors, or authors whom I've never read before, I usually like to read the reviews. It has been very discouraging to see all these trilogies and series and sequels and prequels. But I shouldn't complain too much: some of my favorite works are parts of series (e.g., Zelazny's Amber series, Varley's Gaea trilogy, Anthony's Xanth series (cute and quick reading), Tolkien's Lord of the Rings stories, etc.)

Some of the authors reviewed in LL #18 do seem to be promising. There are a few new and original ideas. Although David Brin's The Postman doesn't sound like a completely original idea, it does sound to be entertaining. Others that I think I will enjoy are The Black Ship by Rowley, Emprise by Kube-McDowell, Spinneret by Zahn, and Adventures by Resnick.

Cheryl Horn: I have to agree with Harry Andruschak -- "I seem to have lost my taste for 'hardcore' SF." Tell him it can't be just him. The Integral Trees was okay, but it just didn't give me the thrill, or challenge me mentally, the way I have been in the past. I not others also commented that the book was "boring" (Steven Fox) or otherwise not up to par.

Robert Teague: There are a few things in the published Guide to the Commonwealth that make me cringe, errors that slipped past Mike Goodwin in the final process--like the T-standard calendar. He accidentally used an early edition of it instead of the later corrected one I sent him. I left off at least one planet in the Galographics section. The Minerology section needs a complete revamping. Typos abound. *sigh* At least an update will be ready by 1990. Then we can add new material and correct the old.

I have been asked for my autograph on a few copies sold at cons. You know that's embarrassing. Like Piers Anthony said at NECRONOMICON, he has no trouble writing when he sits down at the typer. But what to put in a book for a fan? My mind goes blank.

((I understand typos -- just look at this zine. As for autographs, occasionally I've been asked to autograph LLs. Beyond this, I've had little experience with it.))

Ben Indick: I surely agree with Mark Leeper about H. G. Wells. For me, his Time Machine remains the greatest SF novel of all. Mark's comments on Stephen King are generally good, but I think he'll find, if he gets to Skeleton Crew, that when King is discriminating about his own work (which is not always the case) he is a remarkable and fluent author.

Steven Fox: I found the book and movie reviews to be, again, quite useful. Your review of David Brin's The Postman was the sort of book review I find useful. It told me a lot about the book. I think it's important that book reviews in zines be extensive so that the reader will be informed enough to go out and buy the book or not buy the book. Another book you reviewed, Sentenced to Prism, was as good as you said it would be. I read it already.

((There are differing opinions as to how much information a reviewer should reveal in a review. I try to give a good general idea without spoiling the book, then evaluate it on both good and bad points, try to give a balanced view. I guess it works!))

Hank Heath: Strictly as a result of the reviews in your zine I am planning to buy Blood Music and The Postman (which you reviewed -- you're a very good reviewer, right up there with the best). I'm also thinking about getting A Mortal Glamour, mainly because of Evelyn Leeper's review, though I have to think about it a bit more. But definitely Blood Music, and The Postman. To coin a phrase, "The Postman has definitely rung my bell" -- not twice, just once.

Craig Ledbetter: I disagree completely with Murray Moore's comment about reviews. I'll always prefer reading a fanzine filled with reviews versus a fanzine filled with fiction (fan, that is). Mediocre fiction is pure hell on my sensibilities.

I too find value in printing older reviews, mainly because I rarely ever see a film in a theatre, for a variety of reasons. So I either wait six months to a year for it to be released on tape or be shown on satellite. The Red Sonja review, therefore, is relevant to my situation. It is now out on tape, and based on Mark Leeper's (and others') comments, I'll pass on renting it.

FILM REVIEWS

Fred Jakobic: The ending in Odyssey Two was lacking and did nothing to explain anything. I still have not seen Ghostbusters. I liked Dune, but have not read the book since it first came out, so my memory is fuzzy on how the two compare. I especially liked the music, but agree on some of the special effects: some of the worm-riding scenes did not come off very well, like the close-ups of the worm riders. Yet it is a movie I will see again and again. I liked

The Last Starfighter. Star Trek III: The Search for Spock irks me. It is too short. I much prefer the novelization of the movie which explained much more of what happened, showed the relationship between Saavik and David Marcus, and explained Carol Marcus and Kirk. The movie ignored Carol Marcus like she never existed!

Not everything in the book could have been put into the film, but some short scenes could have added a lot to the movie, and not made everything zip along so darn fast. I would have liked to have seen more made of the Enterprise's entry into the space station, of that battle-weary ship that looked like it had been through a lot. Instead, this was glossed over rather quickly. Still, I await ST IV!

From the review of Red Dawn by Mark Leeper, this piece stands out: "Most people who have actually tried to make the world sing in perfect harmony are not the people you'd want to share a Coke with." I very much agree with the thoughts in this sentence. This applies to religion and politics so very much, and I am thinking of Jerry Falwell (and others) and Ronald Reagan in particular. Read a book called Holy Terror by Flo Conway and Jim Siegelman. The cover blurb says of this book, "The Fundamentalist War on America's Freedoms in Religion, Politics, and Our Private Lives." I consider Ronald Reagan to be the Pope In The White House, such is his violation of the Separation of Church and State doctrine of our Constitution. He seems to have forgotten that he is President of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, not just part of the country and the people who morally agree with him. His violation of the Doctrine is very blatant, and his actions very biased and prejudicial.

I liked Return of the Jedi to a point. That point was the ending. I would like to have had a postscript to the main characters, Luke, Leia & Solo, as to where they went from there.....at least a general idea. Did Luke go on to complete his Jedi training, or was he already there? What of Leia and Solo? What became of them? The type of ending in ROTJ just does not sit well with me.

Craig Ledbetter: Dennis Fischer's review of Time Masters only reminded me how bad I want to see this film. I first heard of it a few years back in a review in VARIETY. Since Dennis lives in Los Angeles, he's privy to seeing these special films. Oh well, with videotape we can always hope for the best.

As for Mark Leeper's reply to Dennis Fischer, I disagree about Destination Moon being overall a better film. Technically maybe, but I got tired of the script's total lack of humor and just plain lack of entertainment value. Rocketship X-M was fun and stayed away from the documentary stodginess of DM. Also, Mark, you're wrong about who played Schlockthropus: it was played by director John Landis. Chambers was in the film but he played a military leader or cop (my memory on specifics is vague). Chambers had

a hand in The Planet of the Apes make-up creation as well. (I'm not trying to dump on you, Mark, because you are one of Lan's biggest assets in the fanzine.)

Joan hanke-woods: I really enjoyed Five Million Years to Earth; when I first saw it I was absolutely surprised and delighted with the depth and delicacy of the story line and its treatment. These concepts can be re-examined with excellent effect for a good long time with little threat of boredom. It's a form of "ancestor-worship", an indelible segment of our psyches.

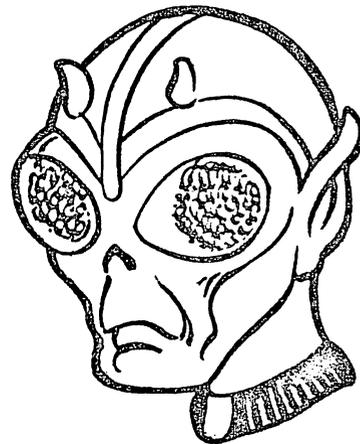
I really enjoyed Back to the Future as well. (After a saccharine attack during EI I swore off Spielberg, as did Mark Leeper.) I plan to sing "Power of Love" (by Henry Lewis and the News, BTF movie music -- love that beebop) at the party following my black belt exam in karate.

DALE SKRAN: LIFEFORCE/SPACE VAMPIRES

Craig Ledbetter: Dale Skran, Jr.'s article comparing Lifeforce with Space Vampires read very well. Unfortunately, I've not read SV and was discouraged from seeing LF due to the tremendously negative reviews it received. I'll see LF eventually, but only when it appears on satellite and I can see it on my earth station for free. Still, this article will be a handy guide when that day arrives.

Bernadette Bosky: I enjoyed Dale Skran's review of Colin Wilson's Space Vampires and the movie Lifeforce made from it. I reviewed the movie as compared to the book in a zine for the ESOTERIC ORDER OF DAGAN, the Lovecraft apa, with pretty much the same conclusion. I didn't pick up on the Quatermass influence, but it definitely is there; I think there's a Poltergeist influence as well as that of Alien and the Romero "living dead" movies--it's all mashed up together haphazardly, a catch-all of special effects and thrills with no unity or thought to it. And I agree with Dale that Wilson's novel was its ideas. In fact, Colin Wilson is one of the few remaining practitioners of the 19th century "novel of ideas" tradition of Wells and company. (Another, too-little known example is Geoffrey Ashe's The Finger and the Moon.)

The only disagreement I have with Skran is in the estimate of the novel's ending. In a way it's Great Old Ones ex machina, but thematically, it's very significant and not at all arbitrary. The beings that stop the space vampires are in the higher state the SVs fell from, and they explain that energy "stealing" is only a product of a debased self and limited perspective: what the SVs were doing to humans, they explain, was like stealing apples from another's larder, when actually all around is a huge, fruitful orchard. This message, the culmination of all the energy/consciousness theory of the novel (and also Colin Wilson's non-fiction), made the ending one of the more memorable I've read.



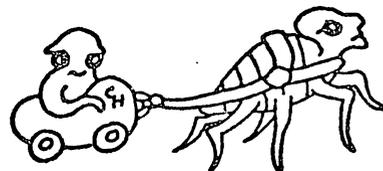
Mark Schulzinger: Dale Skran's double review was effective: I wish to neither read the book nor view the movie. Yuch! And thanks, Dale, for an effective review.

CONREPORTS and RAMBLINGS

John Thiel: I was surprised to hear you were at the '85 INCONJUNCTION. I was there, but only for about an hour or so, as I just crashed in to pay my respects. One can't ignore forever a convention that is that near. I met a few of the people you did -- Juanita, Michael Kube-McDowell, and Roger Reynolds -- as well as some you didn't mention meeting, such as Rusty Hevelin, an S.S. Voyager from Purdue, and Indianapolis and Bloomington (Indiana) fans. I'm sorry I didn't get to you, but it wasn't always possible to read name tags and certainly not to know who was in their rooms. Anyway, feel free to drop down for an Indiana con anytime. You have some remarkable inside viewpoints on our consoms. Sorry I missed the Roger Reynolds Roast.

Ed Chambers: After reading your conreports I am very envious of you and Maia. I wish I were able to attend as many cons as you two! Up until the present I have only attended cons in Philadelphia, since it is so close. But New York is about two hours away and Baltimore is not much farther; perhaps in the future I can extend my convention attending area.

((Maia and I are fortunate in living in the Lesser Midwest Triangle (vertices at Chicago, Detroit and Cincinnati) in which there are a dozen conventions within a 6 hour drive. If you take the Greater Midwest Triangle (vertices at Minneapolis, Toronto and Louisville), the number of cons in a 12 hour drive triples. A two hour drive to a con should be nothing for you.))



Mark Schulzinger: As you probably know by now, INCONJUNCTION didn't break even, but that was not because it was such a big con. I'm breaking no confidences by telling you the registration was over 800 -- that means the committee took in about \$15K. The problem came when a bad judgement call was made and the tap for the hospitality suite was left on for the entire con. To be fair to the chairman, the Hilton management was less than gracious at the last minute and some snap decisions had to be made without adequate information available.

While the programming may have had problems, you can see that I did my best to help out -- and if it meant that you got to bed one or six hours later than usual Saturday night, then phoo! I think we all had a good time in the Cincy suite...why I even drank a bit.

((I was glad to have that back cover. My dad looked at it and said, "Oh wow, look at that. Three sets!" // I purchased the lilac colored paper for the cover because I saw in my mind's eye how the art would look on that cover. I didn't care for the result at first either, but after a couple of minutes it seemed to work. The next day I looked at it and liked it an awful lot.))

John Thiel: That's a fine illo on page 14, and I'd like to encourage Paul Lambo to keep at it.

Craig Ledbetter: Beautiful cover, very lyrical in its approach and design. I enjoyed everyone's contributions, but single out Brad Foster. I've enjoyed his work for years, and he never seems to be at a lack for ideas.

Ben Indick: I especially enjoyed Brad Foster's art, and that of my good friend, the newly married and surnamed Bob Whitaker Sirignano--a lot of letters there!--and the rest!

Steven Fox: Art by Lambo, Foster, Jeeves, was very good! I found it odd that the back cover art was reproduced better than the front cover art. What happened? Or rather I should ask, why? The reproduction of the art throughout the issue was better--fewer problems with faded line drawings. I gather you used a different printer? The art on page 35 was very good.

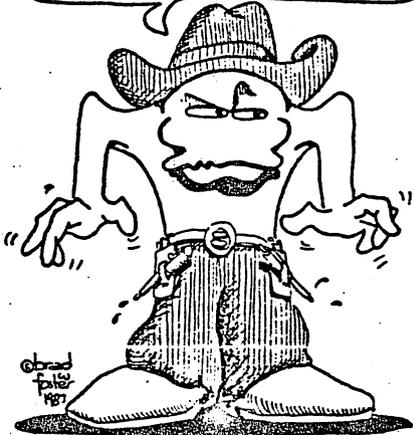
((I used the same printer, but the machine was kept cleaned and tuned. That made a difference. // The contrast of black on purple made for the difficulties in discerning the art on the cover. I still like it, though.))

joan hanke-woods: Your LAN'S LANTERN 18 is beautiful! A lavender cover -- wow! A horsie and a dragon slashing and clawing at each other----in reverse! Zot! How and why did you flop the image? Did the artist approve? Very strange---but then, how could I expect less?

Now I must find my contributions....only one? Haven't I sent you more? Enclosed find something I've done and given to a "Battlestar Galactica" zine editor (Joy Harrison--PURPLE AND ORANGE). It has been published thus far only once--if you don't mind such a blatant piece of lascivious extra-terrestrial conjugation. Meanwhile, why did my dragon get to sit upon "Pulp and Celluloid"? I hope he doesn't get a rash!

Paul Lambo's art is very fine. I see that First Comics' American Flagg series was nominated by SFWA members....very interesting. Was the story or the art considered? More importantly, how do you separate them? This concerns me, as Alex Wald, Doug Rice and I are experimenting with my art as a penciller for First Comics. As Alex and I were kicking around ideas in the art, he was laughing as I ranted about the obvious "Bond-esque" treatment of the female characters. Yet, in my rant, Alex was say-

TRY IT - GO AHEAD, TRY IT!



- FASTEST DRAW W - the WEST -

ARTWORK

Cathy Howard: I must have an ego a mile wide. Something about seeing my illos in print gives me a smug thrill everytime it happens.

Would like to know how many pictures Brad Foster draws in a year's time. And should one divide or multiply said number to find the number of letters Harry Warner Jr. wrote during the same period of time.

Brad Foster: Thanks for running my full pager as your back cover on issue #18. Nice seeing it in print at the full-size I'd intended it for.

Lovely cover by Sylvus. At first I was a bit put off by the faint printing on the purple stock, made it difficult to really appreciate the line work without having to bug my eyes out -- then realized it was coming across more with the look of a silver-point drawing, subtle tones like that with line. Intentional or not, very nicely realized.

Great TK cartoon on page 57!



ing, "Yes, yes! I know that it works, that's what it's supposed to do!" And I greatly admire the artwork, it's excellent.

This is a first for me. I've never even read comics too much as either a child or an adult. The 60s and 70s "undergrounds" in particular had an extreme attraction/revulsion; and then, as now, I am not the target audience for these stories and images.

((The image was not reversed -- Sylvus signs her name backwards; it's her trademark. // I thought that your dragon would be great as the title page for "Pulp and Celluloid" since it was reading. // I don't think you can separate the art from the story in cartoon, although some panels I've seen can stand alone as "art". // As for the American Flagg story that was nominated -- for a Nebula --, it was for the

story. It didn't make the final ballot. // I have a few early pieces of yours which I have not used yet, But I am using the one you sent me.))

Mike Rogers: Love Mel. White's work!! If HARMONIC DISSONANCE ever rises from the dead I intend to offer Mel. whatever it takes to get her to illustrate an entire issue. Do you know what her vices are? (No, wish I did))

Hank Heath: I've been out of fandom for anywhere from 7 to 1-1/2 years (depending on whether you count from the last time I did anything, or from the last fanzine I received). To receive one of your little productions in the mail made my day. Then to see that you had been foolish enough to use some of my drawings even made my day better. I really appreciate you using my art -- oh, a slip of the tongue (typer?). I don't consider my work "art", it's more like cartooning. Being a cartoonist I can draw what I want rather than what other people consider to be "art." An artist is always up for critical accolade, or praise, or negative judgement. I'm not in this for praise, or to be best fan artist. I'm in this for other sorts of rewards. If I have an idea, I could spend two hours expressing this idea in an essay, or in a ten-minute cartoon -- or an hour and a half cartoon, depending on how complex the idea is. That's rearding to me, because I used to spend hours writing thousands of words to express my ideas and found out that they weren't too well received, particularly since I'm not that great a writer. Whereas in a cartoon, not only can I express them in a short amount of time, people pay attention to them. You can skim over a couple hundred thousand words of print and just sort of ignore them. But when it comes to a cartoon you take the time to look at it and get its message. Then you might reject it, but you have all the implications of that thrust upon you. This is rewarding to me.

Also, in this fanzine game, I get all sorts of good vibrations from seeing my stuff in print. It immediately jumps out of the page at me, and when you get a little praise for the stuff that you've done that's even better. Moreso, when a person is willing to trade a fanzine for these silly little drawings, it's more rewarding. So I have found this to be an ideal-type situation. If I draw sloppy, people say, "Hey, he's just cartooning. He's not going for any of the fan art stuff."

So, pretending that I have some sort of an artistic bent, let me critique the artwork in the fanzine, starting off with the bad stuff.

The major criticism is the reproduction of some of the pieces. The washout of the photocopying doesn't accurately allow the hard work that the artists put into their pieces to come through, particularly in the fine-line drawings. For example, the cover by Sylvus Tarn; it took be a while to dis-

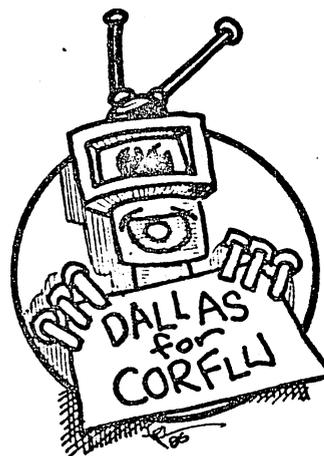
cern that it was a dragon and a horse, and not two horses, fighting. It is very well done, but difficult to distinguish. (And I thought I had caught you printing the cover backwards, till I read later that Sylvus signs her name that way. I had though of doing that myself, more as a joke, but now it's been done.)

I'll send you more of my art to take care of your needs. I try to find out what kind of art fan-ed's like and send them what. After a while you find that their tastes have changed, which is all right. It just makes this sort of fan-art pubbing more of a psychological guessing-game situation than you would normally suspect. So I'll send you a few things which may warm the cockles of your heart. Or maybe the other tings I sent were just a one-shot deal for which you said, "Hmmm, I have some white-space, let's see if I can put something ugly in it."

Of the art you included which was not mine, I especally enjoyed Paul Lambo's -- what would you call it? -- landscapes? Mars-scapes? Sceneries? They are fantastic. He is accomplishing what I hope to accomplish (when I get good at this stuff): to convey as much as possible in as few lines as possible. This is my ideal. This is more difficult than one might think. It is easier to draw a "busy" picture than to draw a "simple" one. In a simple picture, if you make a mistake, it stands out; in a busy picture you can hide mistakes easily (with cross-hatching, out a vase in front of it...). Paul Lambo has this down to an art-form. He's done a very good job.

So has Diana Stein. I enjoyed her landscapes. I just wish she could get rid of those little spaceships she puts in--I think they're distracting. They would be stronger drawings without them. They're just "busyness". I think she's afraid that people won't think they're fannish if she doesn't put in a spaceship. But they're extremely fannish, or science-fictional, without them.

Of the other artists--Mel. White, Alexis Gilliland, Mr. Atherton, Brad Foster, Terry Jeeves, Steve Fox -- good competent stuff, what you'd expect from them. Artistically, you've got a good looking zine. It's fun to pick it up and see all that fannish stuff.

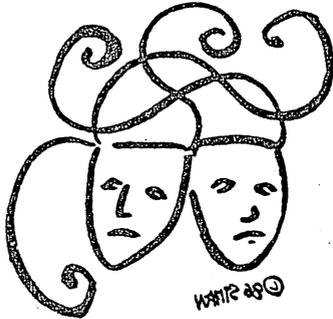


air. Those without VCRs, eat your hearts out!!

Along that line, Ewoks and Droids has also been pulled. I can't understand why, though. Maybe the Star Wars craze is dying down. Of course, that in itself is a mixed blessing.

[never watched MO myself, but I am learning value of vcrs -- several people after me to get one]

((I have not seen Mighty Orbots, since I only watch Bugs Bunny on Saturday mornings. As for VCRs, we don't have one...yet. Many friends have encouraged us to get one.))



THE RISE AND DECLINE OF ROBERT A. HEINLEIN Part I

Cathy Howard: The Heinlein article was informative in that I didn't know it was tuberculosis which had ended his service career. Otherwise fairly dull.

John Thiel: Note a decline of Heinlein's parallels a decline of SF--for example, E&SF was not in its best years when it published his war notes and corny parallelworldisms.

Craig Ledbetter: Dennis appears in my fanzine HIGH TECH TERROR as often as I can get him; he's so damn prolific and what is even more amazing is the quality of his writing. Anyway, Dennis' Heinlein overview was thorough and reminded me of all those author articles Don D'Amassa use to churn out. True, Dennis has some controversial things to say but he'll back it up. Obviously, Dennis is not a fan of Heinlein's later stuff. I look forward to his further delving into Heinlein's fiction.

Ed Chambers: In my opinion this was by far the best article in the issue. I was brought into fandom by reading Heinlein's The Moon is a Harsh Mistress. This was a very exciting piece of fiction for me at the time I read it (about the age of 13). Just imagine: living on the Moon! What a neat concept! Then this led me on to other works by him and other SF writers. Naturally I didn't agree with all that Dennis Fischer had to say, but that's why we are all different. I am eagerly awaiting Part II of his article.

Mark Schulzinger: Dennis Fischer's article on RAH was welcome. He hasn't the unbridled, uncritical enthusiasm of Spider Robinson so he can take a better view of our favorite warhorse. The story behind Sixth Column is more straightforward than Dennis' version of it. Anyone who has read Campbell's original story can see that the two are identical practically on an event-by-event level. JWC's version was written in pseudo-King James language which was popular at the time and was a lousy write. By the time RAH finished putting it through his typewriter it was a fun story and one I still enjoy re-reading from time to time. Don't get too upset about the anti-yellow-peril tone of the book -- it was a common thing in this country until recently. Just read the Fu Manchu stories or the Gray Mhatma to see what I mean.

I wouldn't accept anything RAH wrote in Time Enough for Love as having anything to do with earlier stories. Lazarus Long is such an incredible liar that nothing he says after Methuselah's Children has any validity whatsoever. Remember that Heinlein wrote TEFL for grins and bucks.

"Buck" Coulson: Dennis Fischer says of Beyond This Horizon that "In this future, everyone is armed." Nonsense, comparable to the misstatement by all too many fans that "only soldiers can vote" in the Starship Troopers society. I quote from page 5 of the hardcover edition of Horizon: "Two of them were elderly men who wore brassards of peace The two remaining men were both armed." Later in the book (page 77 of the hardcover) he implies that most women go unarmed. In fact, it seems that a minority of the population of the book's society goes unarmed, though "Armed citizens" have additional rights, and most of the book's actual characters are armed (not all of them; the time traveler wears a peace brassard).

Somewhat more interesting than arms is the unique economic theory presented; it's explained to the time traveler on pages 101-103 of the hardcover, and I'm not about to quote three pages of dialog. Go read it. I suppose I should specify the Fantasy Press hardcover; I see the page numbering is different in the Grosset & Dunlap, and I haven't any more recent hardcovers.

While I'm arguing with Fischer, let me jump on "the Kuttner byline disappeared in favor of pseudonyms from that point [in 1938] on." To the contrary, Kuttner had fiction published under his own name in every year from 1939 through 1950. Check the Day index.

Ben Indick: With regret, I must agree with Dennis Fischer's more adverse comments. I reread --or tried to-- some of Heinlein's early work, stories I had loved quite well decades ago, and I found the writing bad, forced, super-self-opinionated. Indeed, I did not dare reread my special favorites, especially "Universe", a classic case of original concept dazzlingly done, and the Harriman stories. When I did reread The Puppet

Masters-- a thrilling read 20 some years ago -- I was less than impressed. His recent books, self-indulgent to the extreme, have been unreadable. That Number of the Beast, with two men and two women rotating chapters of narration--can you believe any woman describing her "teats" as they so often did? Are they cars? I gave up quickly. Still, for the stories which are (I hope) still alive, Heinlein remains a star for me, diminished but shining. Good article.

Bob Rodgers: The article on Heinlein was quite good, though I sometimes think that analyzing Heinlein is the third favorite pasttime in Fandom...after sex and drinking.

Hank Heath: I am anxiously looking forward to Dennis Fischer's follow-up article on the RAH juveniles because those are the ones that got me reading SF. In my high school library there were at most a half-dozen SF books. Most were Heinlein juveniles; there was one anthology, and one by Asimov. I read the Heinlein, then went to the county libraries and got more RAH, and branched out into other authors. I owe Bob a debt of gratitude. Okay, so he's getting a little bit self-centered in his writings. I can forgive him for that. I can still purchase his books and feel pretty good about him, because I feel pretty good about what he's done for me, and the ideas that he just throws out. I'll accept him. For all of his works, all of his problems, all the things that fans dislike about him, I love the guy. I love his writing, and I probably always will.

And I think that was what Fischer's article was all about. Despite what he says and what he writes, he's going to read RAH, no matter what. Me too. And that says a lot for the man, an awful lot. Try to find someone else who is in that spot. There are some Asimovs I won't pick up -- they're nonsense. Clarke every once in a while goes off the deep end. Spider Robinson I will read, regardless, at this point, although I'm getting a little ill of the fact that he's trying to become the second RAH. I'm thinking of telling the man to write his own stuff, not the Old Man's stuff.



EVELYN LEEPER: ALTERNATE HISTORY

Mark Schulzinger: Evelyn Leeper makes a cogent point in her article concerning alternate histories. The problem is that it's difficult to determine cause-effect patterns and sometimes you've got to get very simplistic about it. A case in point is the Lord Darcy series by Randy Garrett. He postulated a world in which King Richard Plantagenet didn't die in Austria, but returned to become an effective ruler. Whether such a notorious pederast would ever have produced an heir is a tough question to answer. Even if Richard had done so, it's doubtful that world history would have proceeded the way Garrett suggested. The premise, however, allowed Garrett to write some delightful stories and that's all a writer needs -- a premise.

Craig Ledbetter: "The Road Not Taken" revealed the BBC series, "An Englishman's Castle." I'll be on the lookout for that one. I'm sure it played here, and I let the title pass me on by.

"Buck" Coulson: Talking about alternate history in the visual media, what about Marco Polo? It certainly wasn't actual history....

MARK LEEPER: PIZZA

Cathy Howard: Mark Leeper's comments make so much sense I wouldn't be surprised if archaeologists (robbers of ancient graves) did find a petrified pizza with anchovies.

Ed Chambers: I was relieved to hear that pizza is so good for me! Now I won't feel so guilty having it for dinner at least once a week!

joan hanke-woods: Leeper's "Pizza" remarks brought to mind my childhood revulsion of it. When the family ordered it, I got hot dogs or nothing. It looked like someone's guts on a plate to me. Only when adolescence drew a strong peer-group connection between pizza and sex could I overcome that association. (Also, ham was like eating little baby-flesh. I had hot dogs again, or spaghetti.)

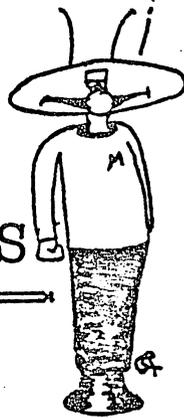
POETRY

Ben Indick: How nice to see Ruth Berman's always estimable work! Her NO was a fine fanzine and the talented lady has had many professional appearances. I liked both little poems.

Mike Resnick's history of SF, print and film, in 35 lines, is a delight, and I can in no way complain at his insights.

HUGO AWARDS AND WORLCON COMMENTS

DON'T YOU JUST
HATE KNOW-
IT-ALLS?



HANDICAPPING THE HUGOS

Paula Gold Franke: "Handicapping the Hugos" --what more can be said? It's purely a popularity contest. Most of the people have not read all of the nominees, or even more than just a few (maybe). So voting comes down to WHO YOU KNOW. Granted, there are some knowledgeable fans who have made an effort to be familiar with the works so as to make an intelligent and thoughtful decision, but these few are overwhelmed by the rest of the voters. As such, the selection of Hugo winners does not necessarily equate with the selection of the "best". So, does the privilege of voting for Hugos warrant the high cost of a supporting Worldcon membership? I think not.

THE HUGO AWARDS and VOTING

Rob Gregg: It was good to read your Hugo Comments after the awards have been given, and I not that you did well. I'd like to add a few comments of my own, and in true perverted Brit fashion, I'll leave the fiction to the end.

The non-fiction result surprised me, as I was convinced George Turner would do far better in his homeland. Could be that the con was packed full of Americans anyway. The Faces of Science Fiction was obviously a lavish production, but I'm amazed that few are so impressed by this kind of coffee-table book. Personally, I'd have gone for the Ellison.

Little doubt about the dramatic presentation result, although I rated Dune much higher than fourth best. It is a rare year which produces two films this good from books which must've been tricky to adapt. I always regarded Dune as unfilmable, and was pleasantly surprised after it was so hated by the critics. No Star Wars this. Still, 2010 was better all around, and one didn't have to have read the book to understand it.

I agree with you that Schmidt has been doing a fine job at Analog of late, although he is rather inclined to include too much science and not enough fiction. The Terry

Carr vote was confusing, but presumably it was for his Ace Specials and the Gibson one in particular. F&SF is consistently good but unspectacular, Scithers is turning Amazing into "Asimov's Mark Two", and IASF itself publishes too much non-SF for my taste. Maybe the latter will improve under Dozois.

I'm no expert when it comes to art, so I can only go by what I like, rather than what is professionally well done. The Vincent DiFate covers for Analog are usually excellent. In the fan section I agree with you regarding Rotsler. Hanke-Woods has often impressed but we don't see her work much in Britain. I gather that Stu Shiffman has been ill, which might account for his lack of output. Of the remaining nominated, I'd have placed Brad Foster ahead of Fox and Gilliland.

Of the semi-prozines, I prefer the fan-ish SFC style of news reporting to that of Locus. The Brown mag is more professional, but has too much space devoted to non-English language SF. I prefer the short book reviews of Don D'Amassa too. SFR is consistently good, but not regular enough for my liking. Actually, I'm confused as to how SFR features as a semi-prozine while it's writer is in the fan writer category.

((It's a mystery to me too.))

The best fan writer result was very popular in these parts. I haven't read enough of either Glycer or Hlavaty to comment, but I find Leigh Edmonds a little boring. Geis is good when he forgets the politics.

I thought HOLIER THAN THOU would win the fanzine award, which just shows how wrong one can be. ANSIBLE is good, but a bit gossipy. RATAPLAN and MYTHOLOGIES I haven't seen. The one issue of FILE:770 I've received was very good, so I guess it is a worthy winner.

It was inevitable that Lucius Shepard would snatch the John W. Campbell award, and I don't disagree with this, but I've been impressed by every story I've read by Bradley Denton, and I thought he'd do better.

Which only leaves the fiction. I'm not really all that keen on this 'cyber-punk' thing which seems to be taking over, but I guess the Gibson result means it will continue to flourish. Having said that, I haven't read Neuromancer yet as it hasn't been published in Britain to date. I thought the old guard of Heinlein and Niven would fare far better, although the former was probably only nominated because at his age, every novel is likely to be his last.

Moving into the shorter fiction, it'd be rather unfair to make too many precise comments as I haven't read all the stories nominated. I feel certain that "Press Enter_" would've won in any year though, I enjoyed it so much. In the short category, I rather liked George Alec Effinger's light-hearted effort, "The Aliens Who Knew, I Mean, Everything" -- I think we all know someone like this! The novelette section was the most difficult. I don't like Robinson too much, the Willis tale was dreadful, Hilbert

/#####/ Hugo A. Ward is Alive and Voting /#####/

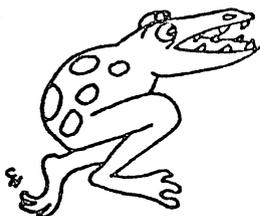
Schenck probably suffered from being yet another computer tale. I'd probably say that Octavia Butler was a worthy winner.

I managed to read more American mags in '85, so should be better informed next year. Personally, I think George R. R. Martin is a nailed on certainty to win something with his Haviland Tuf series of stories, with "Loaves and Fishes" being the best of the lot. He is still a little known author over here, but I've enjoyed all his work to date. Although the mags aren't at hand at this moment, I also seem to recall a tale called "World of Crystal, Sky of Fire" by Bob Buckley, which I think ought to be nominated at the very least. Others of note: Robert Grant -- "Where You Lead I will Follow" (Twilight Zone); Bradley Denton -- "Top of the Charts" (F&SF); Gordon Dickson -- "See Now a Pilgrim" (Analog); James Gunn -- "A Man of Parts" (F&SF); G.A. Effinger -- "Unferno" (IASFM); Gael Baudino -- "Shadow of the Starlight" (F&SF); Eric Iverson -- "The R Strain" (Analog); Charles Harness -- "George Washington Slept Here" (Analog); Lucius Shepard -- "Jaguar Hunter" (F&SF). haven't read all the last few editions yet, so possibly they'll be even better, but as of now I'd nominate Martin for novella and Buckley for novelette.

((I agree with some of your choices, but not all. I do think Martin should win something, but it might be for "Portraits of His Children". I liked Gael Baudino's "Persistence of Memory", rather than the one you picked. If all went well, there should be a list of this year's Hugo nominations on the inside back cover.))

Mike Glicksohn: Guess what, George? LAN'S LANTERN has had at least one salutary effect on me. Reading all those comments on the Hugo nominees has made me very anxious to read Varley's "Press Enter _" and I've just checked the new signed limited edition of Varley stories I bought at CONFUSION last week (I declined to play poker all weekend so had lots to spend in the Hucksters' Room -- see, I really do read your fanzine!) and sure enough, the story is in there. So excuse me if I cut this short and go read a Hugo winning piece of science fiction, okay?

Craig Ledbetter: It was amazing how many of your readers (myself included) hadn't read many of the 1985 Hugo nominees. Makes you wonder how anything gets nominated. With work and a new child, I can't even watch much TV (I know I'm probably better off, but I mainly watch old 30s and 40s films).



HIGH COST OF HUGO VOTING AND WORLDCONS

Mike Glicksohn: I like Mark Bernstein's idea for separating the Hugo voting from the Worldcon committee, although I'd probably like to see at least a \$10 voting fee for the reasons several other writers pointed out. However, Mark is unduly naive if he really believes "no individual has ever profited financially from a worldcon." I expect that what he meant was "nobody has ever embezzled many thousands of dollars from worldcon funds" which I'd like to think is still true, but we all know of people who've had their rents paid or ended up with copiers or typewriters from working on worldcons. And they probably deserved it, what with the amount of time and work a modern worldcon requires of its central committee members.

The only way I'd be willing to see a worldcon help poorer fans would be via a blanket reimbursement of part or all of the attending members registration fees (assuming supporting memberships were set to cover the costs of what the supporters received through the mails). I can think of no fairer way of disposing excess con profits than that. (That's after the appropriate donations to fannish causes and reasonable non-fannish organizations, of course.)

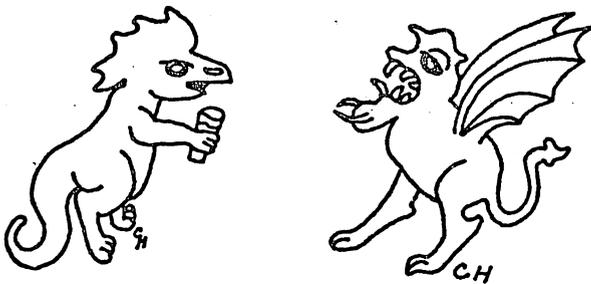
Mike Rogers: One disturbing trend cropping up in fanzine lettercolumns is a tendency to view Worldcon committees as *fnord* Big Businessmen who are to be mistrusted until they prove otherwise. Especially alarming is the suggestion that some future Worldcon committee will essentially abscond with whatever profits remain after its con is history. Well, there's a small chance of it; there's a small chance people will do the unexpected. But I know the people in our organization and I have made the acquaintance of various fans from previous Worldcon committees, and I don't buy that argument. I was a fan before CONFEDERATION, and I'm a fan now, and I'll probably be a fan after the con. I still believe that this is a labor of love--believe me, there are lots easier ways to make money if that were my main goal. In my recent experience, I have yet to meet anyone who seemed to be a Worldcon fan because they wanted the profits. I truly wish fans would remember that even though the worldcon may look like big business, it's still run by Joe Fans, not Snidely Whiplashes. If you want the real truth, modern-day Worldcons are strictly Mom-and-Pop operations compared to other businesses.

Another complaint is that Worldcon committees have forgotten the poor, starving fan. That's a stinking pile of bullshit. I'm past the poor, starving stage but as I write this, I'm wondering if I'll have enough credit left on my Visa card to handle the major car repairs that were just dumped on me. Our Art Show director is still in the poor, starving stage and he's in his mid-forties. We don't like setting prices where we do, but our current budget projections for CONFEDERATION show a deficit of over

twice CONSTELLATION's loss. Either we have to bring in a lot of new memberships, which may or may not happen, or we have to slash our budgets something fierce. I know this much: we ain't losing money as long as I have anything to say about it. And since I write the checks, I have a hell of a lot to say about it.

One of your writers asked what could be done to reduce the cost of Worldcon memberships. Aside from the fact that costs keep going up, it should also be pointed out that inflation psychology has taken hold in this country. Even though the last few years have seen inflation rates of about 3% to 4%, many people still think like the rate was still 10%+. Given all this, prices will continue to rise until a Worldcon suffers a dramatic falloff in attendance which can only be attributed to people thinking it costs too much. Then the con will shrink and prices will come down. Not before.

As to the Hugo Awards, Milt Stevens has summarized the situation very well. I rather like the idea of farming out the administration of the awards to a separate organization. The only problem is that this brings up a question many fans would just as soon not face: will there ever be a central organization for science fiction fandom? It would be most difficult to implement this idea without one. The concept doesn't bother the SCA, but most fans would be violently opposed to it. Personally, I think it should have already happened. The only reason Worldcons can function with a new committee every year is that past Worldcon workers are generous with information and advice for the newer workers. But if the Worldcon gets much larger, it will just about require a continuing organization to avoid utter collapse. Someone will have to run this organization, but that's a can of worms I refuse to open.



2050: THE EYE OF THE NEEDLE

Ed Chambers: This is an interesting hypothesis. Just think: in 64 years I will be a mere statistic (instead of a 90 year old living man).

Paula Gold Franke: Easton makes several interesting speculations regarding future population growth patterns and environmental issues. I often think that the world has gone incurably insane. We know that the environment is being fouled, but we keep adding filth to the cesspool ("oh, a little bit

more won't matter). We know that famines and bad crop years continue to occur, but every year more arable land is blacktopped, bulldozed, and otherwise ungreened. We're drowning in pollution and if that's not enough, we live under the constant threat that someone will push the damn button. I've just finished reading an amazing novel which I found on the remaindered shelf at the bookstore: The Last Gasp by Trevor Howard (Crown Publishers, 1983). It deals with these issues to some degree. It's a very scary vision and one which, sadly, we as individuals can do nothing about. We can write, protest, scream, and boycott for as long as we can. But what really is ultimately accomplished? Oh, there may be small victories here and there, but the species seems hell-bent on turning the planet into a cosmic septic tank. Easton's vision of an eventual mass population die-off as mankind returns to some sort of balance with nature sounds horrifying, but also strangely optimistic. One can only hope that the planet can also survive its own "die-out", and that the human survivors have something left that could even remotely be considered Utopia.

Mark Schulzinger: Tom Easton's article was good but nothing new. We've known for the past several decades that we're staring SRO on this planet in the face. The last projection was that 2010 is the critical year. Birth control takes both voluntary awareness, as has occurred in parts of this country, and radical measures such as those adopted by the PRC. The USSR is trying to reverse the trend toward smaller families in European Russia because the Eastern SSRs are breeding so rapidly that European Russia may become a satrap of the East real soon now.

P. M. FERGUSSON: A MATTER OF TIME

John Thiel: P. M. Fergusson startled me with the opening to his article, because I have a computer story by him I'm using soon; but the paragraph he cited was not in it. How do you like the way so many Indiana SF writers are making you aware of themselves?

((I like the new writers coming out of Indiana: Pete Fergusson, Mike Kube-McDowell, Arlan Keith Andrews, Sandra Miesel, as well as the ones who have been publishing for years, like Buck and Juanite Coulson, and Roger Schlobin.))

Mark Schulzinger: Pete Fergusson is a nice guy. Well, most of the time. His wife is nicer. I disagree with his view of artificial intelligence as residing eventually in the realm of analogs. Luria's masterful, although I feel flawed, evaluation of the human brain maintains that it works on a discrete level. He goes so far as to postulate that each brain cell carries one datum or bit of information. While this may be flawed theory it works in practice, as witness the effectiveness of the "Luria-Nebraska" brain damage battery. Even if we consi-

der axon-dendrite connections, which really aren't because the two never link up with one another and the impulses are transmitted between nerve cells by means of the acetylcholine metabolism, data appears to be transmitted within the brain in discrete packages. Even the study of neuron activity shows that a neuron can muster enough "strength" to fire only once (well maybe once and a half) before it has to undergo a latent stage. All of this looks more and more like digital communication than analog.

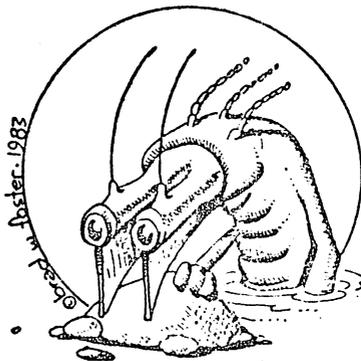
The old analog computers, such as those described by L. Sprague DeCamp in 1939 (ASF, July, 1939), were so large they occupied entire buildings and required 25+ people to operate them. They were cam-driven and the cams often measured several meters in diameter. Even with the advent of capacitance-resistance analog computers, size was still pretty large -- meters are big compared to microchips. Articles in recent issues of American Scientist and Science have addressed this issue pretty thoroughly. It appears that languages such as LISP aren't the way to AI but the use of multiple preprocessors may point in the right direction.

Actually it doesn't matter which way the problem is solved--if it can be solved. The history of human progress has shown that there are multiple pathways to the same end, and usually all of them are taken simultaneously.

Craig Ledbetter: As a petroleum engineer, I'm spending more and more time in front of a PC and monitor, dealing with all the fun and not-so-fun details of predicting oil in place and performance curves. True, I had some computer courses in college but it was so boring. This is a long-winded preamble to say how much more I enjoyed P.M. Fergusson's discussion of what makes a computer tick than any previous exposure I've received on those @*!! machines.

Steven Fox: P.M. Fergusson's article was interesting. I really know little about computers, but the article caught my interest quite strongly. Now at least I know the difference between the two types discussed here, digital and analog computers

Joan Hanke-Woods: Fergusson's "time-dependent artificial intelligence" exploration is an excellent clarification of something I was not even thinking about.



REPLIES TO LETTERS

Mike Glicksohn: One thing that surprised me in your letter column was its make-up. I can't remember the last time I saw Gil Gaier or Murray Moore in a fanzine. So howcum Degler didn't write?

Odd how differently two people can see a similar situation. Take me and Craig Ledbetter, for example. Hell, greed is one of the major reasons I stay in the teaching business! And as to all this to-do about working 18 hours, well gee whiz, I frequently work 18 each week. What? Oh... well, that is too many!

Not surprisingly, I don't recall exactly what I said in response to what Mark Leeper said, but it would appear that either I misinterpreted him or he wasn't too clear in his original statement. Five Million Years To Earth may well have had some great ideas (although it's been too long since I've seen it for me to recall it as clearly as Mark describes) but to me it just didn't work too well as a movie. I remember it as having rather inept special effects, run-of-the-mill acting and a somewhat confusing storyline. The next time it comes around, though, I'll give it another try and see if it holds up better under re-examination. Somehow I expect I'll find that good ideas were wasted on a mediocre movie but if I don't I'll certainly apologize to Mark.

Robert Bloch: Someone in the lettercol refers to the composer of the "Grand Canyon Suite" as "Fredric Grofe". My late friend's name was "Ferde" --originally "Ferdinand von Grofe", and he deserves far more recognition than he's yet received for his work.

((Sorry about that, Bob. When I first saw the name "Ferde", it looked wrong to me, so I changed it, but I meant to look it up when I got home (I was doing the work at school). Unfortunately I forgot to check the spelling.))

George Ewing: I got an anonymous phone call the other night from a very sexy-sounding femfan who was apparently either one of your readers or a government agent "surveilling" my mail. She said she "knew all about" Dickie Dare, but "who the hell was Don Winslow?"

Don Winslow was a hero of a series of nautical adventure movie serials, (and, I think, pulp novels) made in the mid-30's. Titles that come to mind are Don Winslow in the ... (Navy, Coast Guard, Eagle Scouts, Marine Corps, etc.) They were only slightly more jingoistic than Teddy Roosevelt, and not quite as racist as other pulp films of the period. I actually remember some GOOD Hispanic, Chinese, and Filipino characters, though there were also greasy banditos and piratical warlord types. I saw them as after-school daily serials on Canadian television in the 1950's, before the Americans in my part of the world were advanced enough to have TV, and even the Great White North stations had to fly the films in from Sudbury

"Buck" Coulson: Last time we saw Barbi Johnson, she was doing something for children, and I can't remember what, but I don't think it was illustrating. Designing stuffed animals? Something like that. As far as I know, she's never had illustrations in any other adult book, and I don't see all the juveniles. It's been years since we've seen or heard from her.

ON ANDRE NORTON

Robert Bloch: Thanks for all the enjoyment found in #18! And it's especially nice to know you are on the side of the Angels -- like Andre Norton, for example. I had the pleasure of meeting her twice this past fall and she is indeed a lovely lady, as well as a great fantasiaste.

Ramblings 19 and Short Con Reports by LAN

Originally I was not going to have room for the Ramblings and Conreports. I still don't have the room for full conventions reports, but I will put them in the next issue with all the little details. For now, I'll just sketch out something of what has happened since CONCLAVE in early November.

School continued as usual. I taught my five classes and worked on the Service Program which ate into my time for other activities like reading, doing fanac, and sleeping. I did join another apa, D'APA out of Denver. Don Thompson mentioned in his personalzine that the apa could use an influx of new writers, so I asked him to send details. It was a small, monthly affair, so I joined. I continue to have fun with it, and found that I could juggle the free time I have to accommodate the other two bi-monthly apae I'm in.

The conventions I attended during this period included:

CHAMBANACON: my anniversary-con. We spent lots of time with Tim and Anna Zahn, and had our traditional lasagna dinner with them. I missed seeing Sam and Mary Long this year, though I did see Bill and Judy Sutton whom I didn't expect to be there.

CONFUSION: Lots of fun wandering and talking with various people including Joann Pauley, Julie Ecklar, Joey Shoji, Doris Ber-carich, Mike Glicksohn and many others. We shared a room with Hania Wojtowicz, and she hosted the traditional "Dress-up Dinner" in the Jolly Miller, the restaurant attached to the hotel. I also handed out copies of LAN'S LANTERN #18, which I had been working on all Christmas break.

MILLLENICON: The first for this group in Dayton, and I had a good time. I met some fans I hadn't seen in several years (like Debbie, Cheryl, and Sonia), many of the fans I see at other cons, and met some new people (like Joyce Andrews, Arlan's wife with whom I had a delightful conversation). Mike and Carol Resnick had just returned from their trip to Africa (Mike's report will appear in the next issue) and they had stories and pictures. Maia went with me to the hotel, but spent all of Saturday in Columbus visiting her family.

NOVA: Although mainly a gaming convention, they have different sorts of Guests of Honor. Diana Stein was the Fan Guest, and I had fun talking with her. David Stein worked

furiously on a story for the Short Story contest, and I wandered around a lot with Joann Pauley.

There were lots of parties during these five months: The Doris and Hania Christmas get-together in Toronto, Chris Clayton's New Years party, David and Diana Stein's Christmas party, several parties at Anna O'Connell's and Tom Barber's, Brad Westervelt and Wendy Council's February party (at which was a large contingent of Canadian fans, and where we found out that Ray Thompson and R-ane Simkin were getting married).

There were the usual family commitments for the holidays. Maia and I split Christmas between Ohio and Michigan. I spent most of the holiday time working on LL #18 so that it would be ready for distribution at CONFUSION.

The new year brought in several hectic days at school. Exams were at the end of January, and after being off for three weeks, many students needed a lot of "refresher" material. Once exams were over, I started the new semester by handing out the requirements for the paper in all my math classes. Groans went up, but they accepted the work. It wasn't due until the end of the third quarter, which meant that they could use some of their Spring Break to write it if they wanted.

The dorm duty I had went smoothly, and the second semester found me free from the Service Program. I really thought that I would be pressed into doing it for the rest of the year. However I now had the free time to try some writing. Since Maia and I were to be the Fan GOHs at CONTRAPTION, the con-com wanted something from each of us for the Chapbook they were putting together. I tossed off a story in an hour and a half, then revised it over and over again for the next month.

My Spring Break was mostly spent putting together this fanzine. I had hoped to do more fiction writing, but that will have to wait...again.



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Diana Stein
Sylvus Tarn
Robert Teague
Larry Tucker
Nancy Tucker
Kees Van Toorn
James Woodruff
Tim & Anna Zahn

Hugo Nominations

This is the unofficial list of Hugo Nominations, courtesy of Jeff Copeland and Liz Schwarzin, the official vote-counters. Nominees are subject to confirmation.

NOVEL

Greg Bear: Blood Music (Arbor House HC)
C.J. Cherryh: Cuckoo's Egg (Phantasia/DAW)
Orson Scott Card: Ender's Game (Tor HC)
Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle: Footfall
(Del Rey HC)
David Brin: The Postman (Bantam)

NOVELLA

Kim Stanley Robinson: "Green Mars" (IASFM Sep 85)
James Tiptree, Jr: "The Only Neat Thing to Do" (F&SF Oct 85)
Robert Silverberg: "Sailing to Byzantium" (IASFM Feb 85)
C.J. Cherryh: "Scapegoat" (Alien Stars, ed. by Betsy Mitchell; BAEN)
Roger Zelazny: "24 Views of Mt. Fuli, by Hokusai" (IASFM Jul 85)

NOVELETTE

William Gibson & Michael Swanwick: "Dogfight" (OMNI Jul 85)
Orson Scott Card: "The Fringe" (F&SF Oct 85)
Michael Bishop: "A Gift from the Graylanders" (IASFM Sep 85)
Harlan Ellison: "Paladin of the Lost Hour" (TWILIGHT ZONE Dec 85)
George R.R. Martin: "Portraits of His Children" (IASFM Nov 85)

SHORT STORY

Bruce Sterling: "Dinner in Audoghost" (IASFM May 85)
Frederik Pohl: "Fermi and Frost" (IASFM Jan 85)
Howard Waldrop: "Flying Saucer Rock & Roll" (OMNI Jan 85)
William F. Wu: "Hong's Bluff" (OMNI Mar 85)
John Crowley: "Snow" (OMNI Nov 85)

NONFICTION

Algis Budrys: Benchmarks: Galaxy Bookshelf (S. Illinois Univeristy Press)
Harlan Ellison: An Edge in My Voice (Dunning)
Douglas E. Winter: Faces of Fear: Encounters with Creators of Modern Horror (?)
Perry Chapdelaine: John W. Campbell Letters, Vol. I (Authors Co-op)
Brian Aldiss: The Pale Shadow of Science (?)
Tom Weller: Science Made Stupid (Houghton Mifflin)

DRAMATIC PRESENTATION

Back to the Future Brazil
Cocoon Enemy Mine Ladyhawke

PRO EDITOR

Terry Carr Judy-Lynn Del Rey
Ed Ferman Shawna McCarthy
Stanley Schmidt

PRO ARTIST

Frank Kelly Freas Don Maitz
Rowena Morrell Barclay Shaw
Michael Whelan

FAN ARTIST

Brad Foster Steve Fox
joan hank^e woods Bill Rotsler
Stu Shiffman

SEMI-PRO ZINE

FANTASY REVIEW INTERZONE LOCUS
SCIENCE FICTION CHRONICLE
SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW

FANZINE

(Zines with less than 20 nominations got on the ballot)

ANVIL, Charlotte Proctor
GREATER COLUMBIA FANTASY COSTUMERS GUILD NEWSLETTER, Bobby Gear
HOLIER THAN THOU, Robbi and Marty Cantor
LAN'S LANTERN, George "Lan" Laskowski
UNIVERSAL TRANSLATOR, Susan Bridges (not yet confirmed that 4 issues have been published)

FAN WRITER

Richard Geis Mike Glycer
Arthur Hlavaty Dave Langford
Patrick Neilson-Hayden Don D'Amassa

JOHN W. CAMPBELL AWARD

Carl Sagan Guy Gavriel Kay
Tad Williams David Zindell
Melissa Scott Karen Joy Fowler

VOTE FOR LAN'S LANTERN FOR BEST FANZINE

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ARTWORK: Mary Hanson-Roberts

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