



All the news that fits.

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Harmless literature
OR
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From The Editor:

by Lan

Time & Fanzines

All I can say is that you think of all the reasons why an issue of your fanzine might be late, and one of them is bound to be one of mine. Several actually.

I have been promising this issue to be out since November of last year. Lots of submissions prompted me to put it together, but the time to actually sit and work on it was not there. Oh, I suppose I could have not gone to another convention, not made that extra trip to Lansing to see Andrea, skipped one or more of those boring faculty meetings, not watched another of the videos that keep piling up, not gone to Vic Tanny to exercise, or not done the laundry, cooked dinner, washed dishes, cleaned house, catalogued books, prepared classes, write and grade my students' tests, etc. And not taken care of Maia! Details about all these things are in my Conreports and Ramblings (page 122). Some of these were not options; obligations had to be met. Thanks to Maia and her understanding, and the understanding and compassion of friends like Andrea Yeomans, Lynn Margosian, and Kathleen Camargo, I made it to June, when I finally found the time to work on this.

It is finished, though with a few things missing which really should be included. There is no letter column. To publish what I wanted precluded that, and there are still more things I left out--they'll go into the next issue. To those artists and writers who have to wait a few more months, I apologize. I hope to have time the rest of this summer, midst garden, teaching HUB classes, running to a couple of conventions, fulfilling family obligations, and preparing for another vacation at Worldcon. Meanwhile, enjoy this issue.

In This Issue

Jeff Tolliver's cover lends some frivolity to this issue; some of the articles mentioned are even written, so check them out.

Deaths abounded this past year. Joe Schuster is eulogized by Julie Washington as the lead article. He finally received the recognition he deserved for his creation (with Jerry Siegel) of an icon of modern mythology: Superman. Fritz Leiber, Lester del Rey and Avram Davidson, as well as many others have left the field much poorer. We will miss them all.

I am still publishing travelogues--it seems I can't get away from them. Mike Resnick sent me the write-up of his latest trip to Africa; his daughter Laura is currently traveling around Northern Africa

and I hope she will have something for me. Meanwhile, she went "Caving in the Bronx," and wrote up her adventures for publication. And E. B. Frohvet made a trip to Grundtharian Fandom somewhere in Europe (I'm fairly sure it's fictional, but then...). These three are all illustrated by Hugo Nominee fan artist Diana Harlan Stein, whose work adds to the enjoyment of the writing.

When I read Ben Indick's trip report to Egypt ("Oh no," I hear you cry, "not ANOTHER Egyptian travelogue!"), I wanted to include it, since Ben offers a different perspective of the country. I think you will enjoy it--the photos were taken by him, his wife, or companions on the trip.

Steve Green and Mark Leeper offer some filmographies of various sorts, which the movie buffs of my readers may find interesting. Some film reviews are included in the regular "Pulp and Celluloid" feature. Other features include my "Conreports and Ramblings", Fanzine reviews and listings, and some poetry.

Another interesting item is a short story contest winner from Janeen DeBoard (p. 115). Janeen writes fact articles for horse-riding magazines, and has been working on a novel; this is an excerpt which stands alone, the best of the submissions for the CONTEXT V short story competition.

Comments about MAGICON, the Hugo Awards, and writing are in my Ramblings, and in articles at the end of the zine. My interest in filk and other music has become very strong in the past year, so there is an undercurrent of that here.

I hope you enjoy the zine.

In Upcoming Issues

I already mentioned that I had several articles that I did not have room for here which would be going into the next issue. Also the lettercolumn. But I am collecting articles, art and various items for special issues on Hal Clement and Wilson "Bob" Tucker. If you can help, please do.

Now read the rest of this issue and enjoy yourself![*]



Superman Creator Joe Shuster Dies

by Julie Washington

Superman creator Joe Shuster, who with Jerry Siegel created an enduring pop cultural icon while the two were boyhood pals in Cleveland, died July 30. He was 78, and had been in failing health for some time. He died of congestive heart failure at his home in Los Angeles.

Mr. Shuster was born in Toronto, and moved to Cleveland as a child, according to the New York Times obituary.

One hot summer night in 1934, Mr. Shuster conceived of a super hero with amazing abilities. The next day he asked his friend Mr. Siegel to draw it. The cartoon strip was rejected repeatedly until Detective Comics, the predecessor to DC Comics, bought it in 1938 for the then-princely sum of \$130. Remember, at this time the comics industry did not exist. It would be born with the publication of Superman.

But while the creation flourished, the creators did not. When Mr. Shuster and Mr. Siegel pressed DC for more money, they were fired. By the 1970s, both men were broke, due in part to protracted litigation with DC.

Finally, DC agreed to pay each a pension, which, while better than nothing, was miniscule compared to the millions reaped from Superman comics, licensing, books, TV series, movie serials and more from around the world. In the 1970s alone, Superman sales exceeded \$1 billion, according to the New York Times.

But at least one Clevelander never forgot Mr. Shuster or Mr. Siegel. As a child, Tim Gorman revered Superman, his personal hero, protector and friend.

As the 50th anniversary of Superman's creation approached, Tim dreamed big. He dreamed of a way for all the Superman fans here and across the country to express their love and admiration for the two men who had created Superman. He dreamed of a party for a few thousand of Superman's closest friends. And he dreamed of a permanent monument in Cleveland to Mr. Shuster, Mr. Siegel and Superman.

The dream took form as the 1988 International Superman Exposition, a four-day fan-fest that took place in the Cleveland Convention Center. It brought about 8,000 fans downtown, many of whom had never experiences fandom before.

Despite repeated urgings, Mr. Shuster and Mr. Siegel declined to attend. I suppose that after everything that had happened, they were too demoralized to attend a celebration for a creation that had brought them as much pain as pride.

Unfortunately, the Expo would have needed to pull in about double its attendance to be financially successful. Since its purpose was to raise funds for a permanent Superman memorial, the event took on an air of failure. To make matters worse, the organizers---some of whom had lost significant amounts of money in the effort---fell to finger-pointing and blame-laying. In just a few days after the Expo, the entire organization had unravelled, with the office dismantled, top people unreachable and the rest of us committee workers left to swap questions with few answers.

Personally, I maintain that the Superman Expo was one of the best things to happen in Cleveland fandom. First, it was a helluva con. Second, it shook up the previously moribund local fandom. Third, my work on the Superman Expo inspired me to start Cleveland ANSIBLE.

But the biggest reason why Cleveland should be proud of the Superman Expo became evident when I learned of Mr. Shuster's death.

Tim said it lots of times during the months leading up to the Expo. The worst thing that could happen, he said, was for us to let the 50th anniversary pass and do nothing to tell Jerry and Joe how we felt.

They won't be alive much longer, Tim said.

And, of course, he was right--sooner than we'd hoped. [*]



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Evolution and the Human Race: Is a Master Race Possible?

by Marian Skupski

There are many science fiction stories that include changed or "improved" versions of the human race. Examples include novels such as Aldous Huxley's Brave New World, Robert Heinlein's Friday, David Gerrold's Star Wolf, C. J. Cherryh's Forty Thousand in Gehenna, to name just a few. Recently, it seems like stories with these kinds of changes are proliferating at a great rate. Given the popularity of this theme, I thought I would examine the likelihood of the human race being improved in some way.

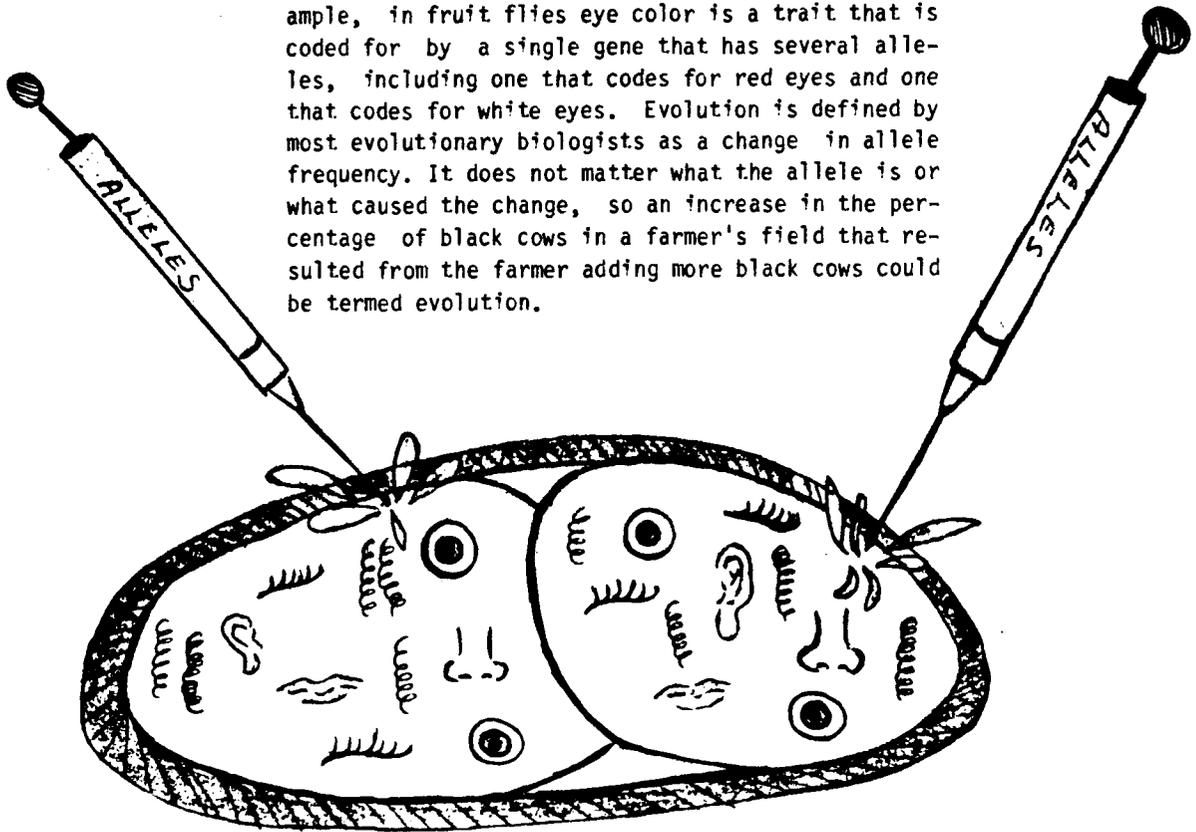
Improvements that appear in these stories range from a barely noticeable change (e.g., the absence of an appendix in humans from far in the future in Isaac Asimov's The End of Eternity), to gross chan-

ges in form or features (e.g., those of some of the genetically engineered humans in Robert Heinlein's Friday). The explanations for the origins of these changes are often glossed over, however there are only a few ways that these kinds of changes could be produced. In many cases there is an implication that natural selection is responsible for the change. As an evolutionary biologist, I find it difficult to believe that many of these changes could occur through natural selection alone. In our high-tech society, selection has become very relaxed. By this I mean that many people are living normal lives that would not have survived through childhood without extensive medical intervention. This relaxation of selection makes it difficult for



improvements and innovations to evolve. Let's examine why relaxation of selection causes this problem.

First, we need to define a few terms. Individuals carry genes that code for traits. Different forms of single genes are called alleles. For example, in fruit flies eye color is a trait that is coded for by a single gene that has several alleles, including one that codes for red eyes and one that codes for white eyes. Evolution is defined by most evolutionary biologists as a change in allele frequency. It does not matter what the allele is or what caused the change, so an increase in the percentage of black cows in a farmer's field that resulted from the farmer adding more black cows could be termed evolution.

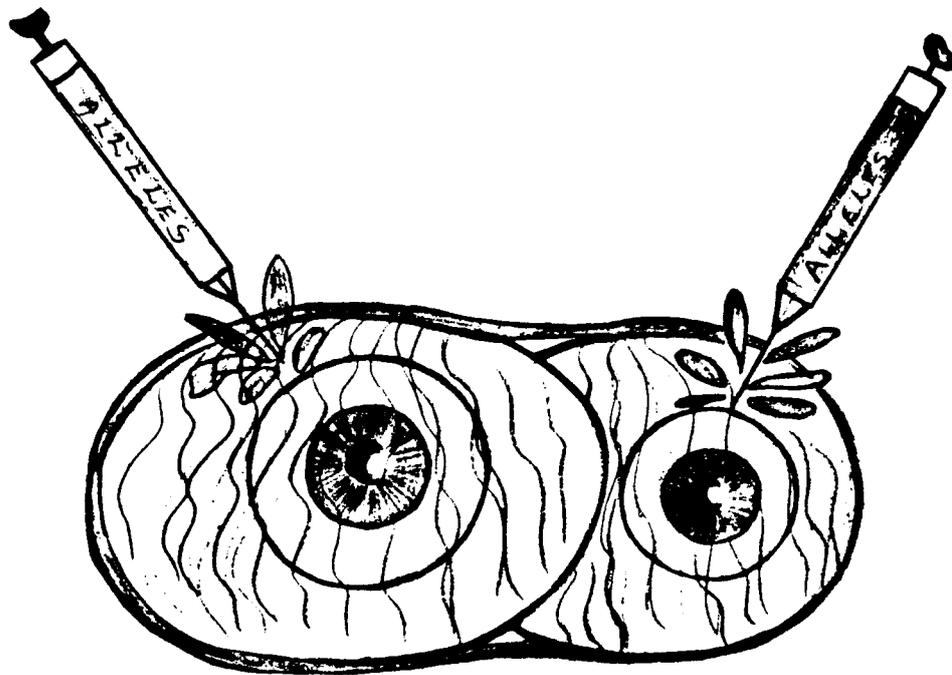


Natural selection (sometimes abbreviated as selection by hurried biologists) is the process where those individuals that are more fit (in whatever way counts) survive better and/or reproduce more than those who are less fit. Natural selection is the major process by which evolutionary innovations are incorporated in populations. Natural selection is not, however, the only process that can cause a change in allele frequency. There are four other processes that can cause evolution: random genetic drift, migration (emigration or immigration), mutation, and selective mating.

Random genetic drift is the process where allele frequencies change due to chance. Drift is much more likely in small populations because some alleles will be present in very low frequency, and will be lost because the individuals that carry them fail to pass them on to their offspring just by chance. The one person that has blue eyes is killed by a chance event, like a tree falling down. Emigration and immigration can change allele frequencies if allele frequencies differ between populations and the exchange between populations is not equal. An example occurred when Europeans started

migrating to the Americas. Before long the alleles that Europeans carried were at a much greater frequency than the Native American alleles that were originally the only alleles present. Mutation can change allele frequencies by adding new alleles, and is the only way that a new variation can be added to a population. Non-random mating can change frequencies by making certain combinations of alleles more or less likely because the carriers of these alleles preferentially mate with each other or try to avoid mating with each other.

For natural selection to work, some individuals must survive and reproduce better than others. When this happens, the alleles of those individuals that do not reproduce (or reproduce only at a very low rate) become much less frequent in the population, and the alleles of those that have many offspring become more frequent in the population. We generally call those individuals that survive and reproduce more "fit". Unfortunately, the only universal measure of fitness is to look at reproductive success which can make the whole argument circular. The characteristics which make an individual fit depend on the circumstances in which that individual finds



itself. Because of the state of medical technology today, many people are able to survive and reproduce that would not have been able to do so under more primitive conditions. These people are carrying deleterious alleles which are no longer being eliminated from the population at a very high rate. These deleterious alleles range from slightly disadvantageous, like an allele that causes nearsightedness, to completely disabling, like the alleles that cause Parkinson's disease or muscular dystrophy. The reduction in the rate at which deleterious alleles are eliminated is called relaxed selection. It occurs in organisms other than humans when individuals from wild populations are used to begin laboratory colonies. Selection is much less intense in the laboratory environment than in the wild. If deleterious alleles are not being eliminated, it will be very difficult for the human race to be improved or even changed to any great extent.

It is important to note that natural selection will act only on existing variation. Natural selection by itself cannot create a new variation. Ultimately, new variation can be traced to mutations in sequences of DNA. DNA is the basic genetic material and regulates production of proteins and development of new cells. Within a population new variation can be introduced either through mutation, a change in DNA, or through immigration. There is more variation in human populations now than several hundred years ago because of relaxed selection and because of migration among different regions of the world.

Since we currently have relaxed selection occurring in much of the human population, it is difficult to imagine how there could be much "improvement" in the human race. "Improvement" implies that there would be a change in allele frequencies, and

therefore, that there would be evolution, and this evolution would add or increase some good quality (e.g., intelligence) of humans. With relaxed selection occurring, I do not think that we could get much in the way of improvement in a characteristic like intelligence.

However, the possibility of change or improvement is not completely absent. There are two ways that science fiction authors have used to get around the problem of natural selection not cooperating: selective breeding and genetic engineering. I will discuss selective breeding first, since the reasons it is not likely to work are fairly straightforward.

The idea behind selective breeding is the same as that used in many breeding programs for domestic plants and animals which use artificial selection to increase some desirable trait. This type of selection also works only on existing variation. If I wanted to use this technique to get a breed of chickens that lays more eggs, I would take a bunch of hens and measure their egg output over some period of time, then calculate the average number of eggs laid per week for each hen. I would take the top 10% of egg-layers, breed them and raise the offspring. After measuring the egg output of this generation, I would again breed the top 10% of egg producers. If I continue this for several generations, I would eventually get chickens that will lay more eggs. There is a point, however, where this method will not work. When all of the genetic variation in the chickens is exhausted, or all of the chickens have identical alleles for egg laying, then selection on the number of eggs laid will no longer increase the number of eggs a hen lays. There will still be variation in the number of eggs that each hen lays, but none of the variation is

due to genetic difference among them.

I have seen this method proposed by some authors. It is an interesting idea. However, it is not likely to succeed. The reason is that many of the alleles that we would like to eliminate are recessive. All vertebrates (including humans) carry two copies of each gene. An allele that is recessive is masked when it occurs with a different allele.

A good example of a recessive allele is the allele that causes cystic fibrosis. There are several different alleles that can lead to cystic fibrosis, but all of them are recessive. When a child inherits a normal allele from one parent and the cystic fibrosis from the other, that child is heterozygous and will not have cystic fibrosis. When a child inherits the cystic fibrosis allele from both parents, the child is homozygous and will have cystic fibrosis. Because many of these deleterious alleles cause problems only in the homozygous form, it can be difficult to detect them, and extremely difficult to eliminate them completely from the population. Recently developed techniques allow identification of heterozygotes for some of these diseases. We cannot yet identify heterozygotes for all of these diseases, though we will probably be able to in the near future. Still, eliminating these diseases from the human population as a whole would take a rigorous selective breeding program that is unlikely in the near future, given our current social mores. As for the far future, who knows what may happen.

The other option, genetic engineering, could eventually accomplish the result much more quickly, but it requires more information than we currently possess. First, some basic information about human genetics. Humans have 46 chromosomes, of which 23 came from the mother and 23 from the father. Each set of 23 chromosomes carries the same genes, but not necessarily the same alleles. The chromosomes carry the genetic material and are made of DNA proteins, and much of the DNA codes for specific proteins that are used in building cells or to make compounds necessary for life. We have learned where the genes for some traits are on these chromosomes. For example, we know that the gene for part of the hemoglobin molecule--the molecule that carries oxygen in the blood--is on the chromosome normally designated as chromosome 11.

The principle behind genetic engineering is very simple, but we need a bit more background to discuss it. We know that DNA is made up of a sugar-phosphate chain, with nucleotide bases attached. There are four bases, and the order of these four bases (adenine, guanine, thymine and cytosine, usually abbreviated with the first letter of the base: A, G, T, C) determines what the DNA codes for. The federal government is currently funding a program to learn more about the human genome, where on the

chromosomes genes for specific things are, and determining the sequence of base pairs for some of the genes we know about. This is the sort of basic information we need before anyone could even begin to think about using genetic engineering on humans.

There are a few examples of diseases where we know exactly what causes them at the DNA level. In the case of sickle cell anemia, there has been a single substitution of one base for another in the part of the DNA that codes for part of the protein hemoglobin. Hemoglobin (the protein which carries oxygen in the blood) is made up of two pairs of chains: two alpha chains and two beta chains. These four chains are linked in the hemoglobin protein. The change in the DNA sequence leads to a change in a single amino acid in the beta chains in hemoglobin, which leads to altered binding among the four chains in the molecule. The changed hemoglobin causes the cells to sickle when they lose oxygen, and can be the difference between life and death. If we could change this base back to the base in normal hemoglobin, we could cure the disease. In practice, this change is difficult for a number of reasons.

First, it must be done in all, or nearly all, the cells that produce red blood cells, which makes it very difficult to do in an adult. If done in an embryo, it is easier to do at a very early stage when there are only a few cells, but at this stage it is difficult to detect the problem. We currently need more than one cell's worth (one copy) of DNA to detect these problems, although techniques are improving. At the rate technology is improving, we will soon be able to detect some of these diseases very easily at early stages. But we still have to be able to manipulate the DNA within the cells. While genetic engineering in bacteria has become standard and is essentially a cookbook procedure, attempts at engineering bacteria are not always successful. Sometimes it takes several tries to insert the fragment of interest. Engineering more complex organisms, like humans, is much more difficult. Current approaches use viruses which have programming (DNA codes) that insert their DNA into living cells in order to make more viruses. There have been a number of successful trials of genetic engineering in higher organisms, including some clinical trials for diseases that are well understood (see "Genetic Therapy: Rerolling the Character Die/Casting the Uncurse Spell" by Mark S. Lesney, *Analog*, February 1992). However, we often do not know enough to correct a problem.

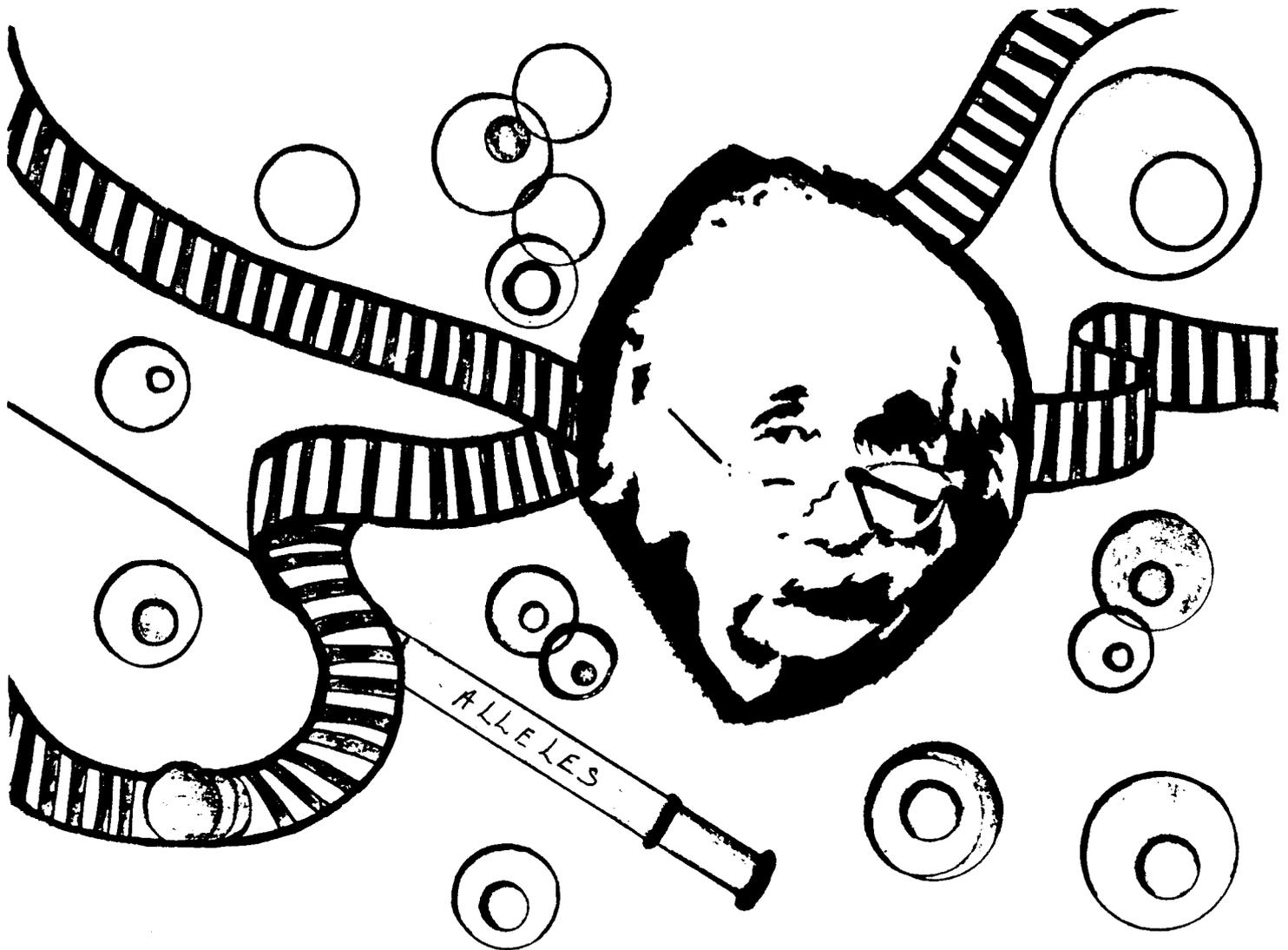
The other problem with both selective breeding and genetic engineering is the objection of many people to both techniques. Selective breeding takes away the freedom of choice in reproductive rights to which many people strenuously object. The objections raised do not mean that these changes could

not happen, but it seems unlikely that either of these techniques would be widely used in this country without some radical social changes. In the far future, when many of these stories take place, social mores and attitudes may change enough to make the use of genetic engineering or selective breeding acceptable to many people, so many of these SF stories may not be that far-fetched.

Like a lot of other medical procedures, genetic engineering is seen by some people as "playing god." We have the ability to manipulate the very stuff that makes us what we are, and to many people, meddling at this level means making decisions for others that we have no right to make. Some religions already see modern medical science as meddling more than we have a right to, and genetic engineering goes one step further than many people will accept. The idea of having children engineered to exact specifications (extremely intelligent, good at sports, etc.) frightens many people. As we become used to the new technology, and the ability to manipulate the very stuff of life, attitudes are likely to change, but probably not at a very great rate.

The other major problem with engineering humans is the question of property rights. The government has allowed the patenting of genetically engineered bacteria, and it is conceivable that in the future a corporation might try to patent an engineered human. This would most likely result in vociferous protests from the public, but that would not necessarily stop it from happening. I cannot see a corporation going to the expense of using genetic engineering to produce improvements on the human design unless they are assured that they will have some sort of patent or property rights over their creation. This issue is another example of how our increasing technological progress is causing new legal problems that we never would have dreamed of fifty or one hundred years ago.

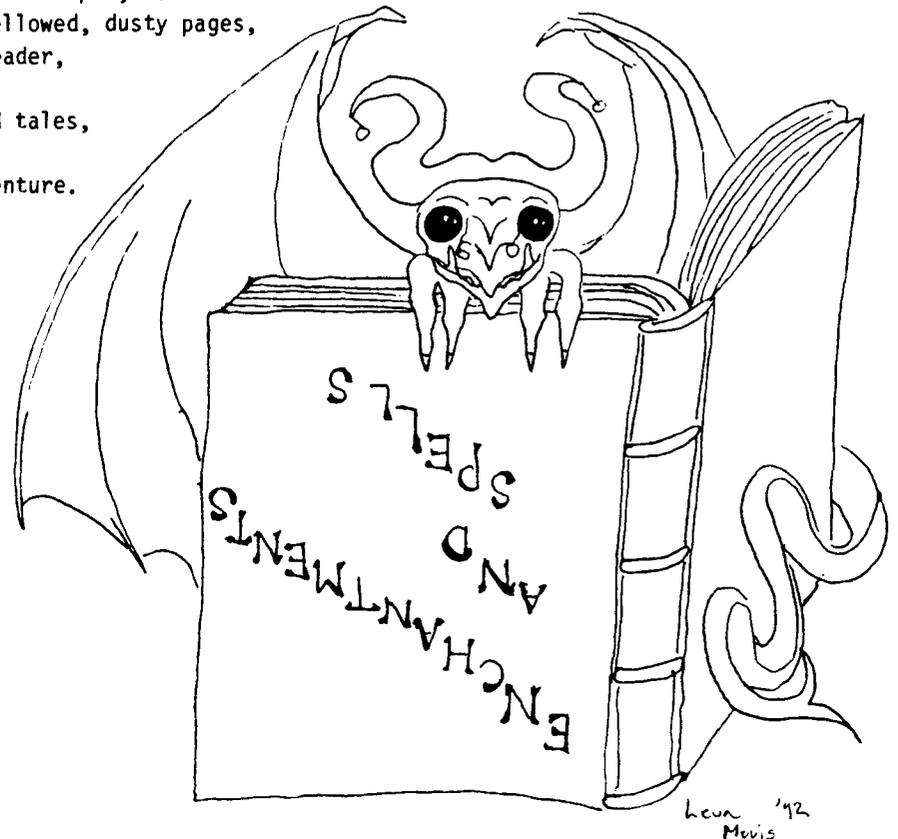
It is unlikely that a new "superhuman" race will evolve any time soon as things currently stand. Natural selection has been incredibly slowed by the intervention of medical technology. Genetic engineering could produce a new race, but given the current social mores it will not happen anytime in the near future. [*]



Ode to the Used Book Store

by Leva Joy Mevis

Gamely, proudly struggling shelves,
 Bent with worlds of dragons and elves,
 Tomes of forces, curses, and magic swords,
 Quests and trials by the crated score,
 One and two and take a third!
 Good guys, bad guys, ensnared by fate,
 Titles of gems and weapons great!
 Waiting everywhere for someone with fannish sight.
 Boxes and piles of leaning words,
 Crowding the aisles filled to two-thirds!
 Amid the exchanges and forgotten treasures,
 There must be Borrowers somewhere,
 And gnomes and talking mice there.
 The call of the the tales is irrisistable,
 The paintings of words,
 Of loyal spaceships and talking dogs,
 Of half-elven heroes and wise dragon elders,
 In the space-time fabric there's a rip!
 Here and there, bygone tales,
 Of ships from cannons and automaton's love,
 Clutched in the stooped walls of novels tall.
 In the castle with books for bricks,
 Worn covers, creased spines, thin paper,
 And words with magic in their flowing cadence.
 They wait, the books, for a finger's caress,
 A title long-sought, a rare Norton or Piper, found!
 Yes, there are treasures in the yellowed, dusty pages,
 And spells to slow the questing reader,
 There *must* be a time-warp,
 In the twisting maze of convoluted tales,
 Something I've always noticed:
 Getting out is quite the slow adventure.



BIGFOOT PREGNANT!

Giant manlike creature carrying Elvis's lovechild!

"Yes," said the huge female creature, languishing in the lounge chair near our tent, "I am pregnant with Elvis' lovechild!"

This was a strange situation to be in. I was camping with my daughters Rachel and Lynn in the mountains of Montana last summer when the "bigfoot" approached our campsite and sat down for a chat. The girls were not afraid; it seemed that the Sasquatch race is quite harmless and docile unless aroused. The eight-foot creature sat down and enfolded my daughters in her arms. They were quite content to accept her mothering; it had been several years since their mother had died, and try as I might, I was a poor substitute for mom.

Naturally I was a bit shaken, seeing the huge manlike creature with my daughters in her arms, but Rachel and Lynn looked peaceful, and the woman's voice was soothing enough that I too began to relax. But my curiosity was tweaked, and so I began to ask some questions. The story that unfolded was quite amazing, something that I figured belonged in the pages of The National Enquirer, or any number of supermarket tabloids. However, I thought I could persuade George to put it in the pages of Lan's Lantern.

"How could you be carrying Elvis' child?" I asked. "He's been dead for over fifteen years."

"Yes, I know," she replied, stroking Rachel's hair. "He impregnated me about 30 years ago, and only now has the child begun to develop. It will be born in about another 8 years. We Sasquatch have a very long life-span, and the gestation period is about 9 years."

As she talked, I found out quite a bit about the Sasquatch race, and in particular about her encounter with "The King".

Cravetch--that was her name--was wandering around Colorado at the time, and Elvis and his group were giving a concert near Denver. Afterwards they went out into the mountains to get away from the fans and relax. One night Elvis got very drunk and wandered away from the campsite. Cravetch happened upon him and he was in a rather amorous mood. She was, too, and before morning their union had been completed. Elvis, of course, remembered none of this, and even if he had, she doubted that he would have said anything.

A report by Larry Nowinski

"In our bodies the sperm does not impregnate the egg immediately," she explained. "The spermatazoa go through a series of refinements and adjustments, like genetic engineering, so to make sure all defective genes are removed, and certain traits necessary for the survival of our race are included and augmented."

"Like what?" I prompted.

She paused for a moment, weighing what she might tell me. "Well, the ability to project a peaceful calm over people with whom we come in contact. Although we are a long-lived race, we are few in number. The early members of your race nearly destroyed us before we learned how to defend ourselves in this way.

"We can also learn languages easily--I suppose you would call it telepathically. That's why we have no trouble communicating, though it is wearing on us physically to do so."

She paused to consider another trait. "We do have the ability to change size and appearance, but that takes several days to accomplish. Since I am now pregnant, I won't do that until after the child is born. I must stay in this form until then so that these and other specific traits are passed on."

"So what will you do now?" I inquired.

"Stay here in seclusion. I have my protectors, though you can't see them. They know how to remain hidden, and won't harm you unless you try to harm me, but I know that you won't do anything foolish. Besides, you almost believe what I've told you."

I had to admit that Cravetch was right. She looked physically unattractive to me, but I had talked enough with her that the appearance meant little. I knew she was an intelligent and gentle soul. I would not soon forget her or our conversation.

"One last question," I said. "When will the child be born?"

Cravetch stood up to leave, gently placing Lynn and Rachel on the ground. "On December 25, in your year 2000," she answered smiling, and sauntered off into the Montana forests. [*]

In the Land of the Pharaohs

by Ben P. Indick

Why Egypt?

My wife had decided that when I retired the time was right for a major vacation. We had none at all to speak of for several years due to operations and such inconveniences. I did not feel like going to someone else's home town so it narrowed down to Greece or Egypt, each of which has long interested us. So why Egypt? A question many of my friends asked. Because it has really held us in thrall for years and years, and the tour sounded good. Fly via Egyptair to Cairo, three days at the Hilton Ramses, a 5-star joint, then four (really 5) days on a cruise boat along the Nile. (Was it Jo Stafford who sang "See the pyramids along the Nile..." three decades ago?) We had been to Israel in 1975 and while I had always planned a return to Israel which could encompass Egypt, we did not feel like such an extended trip now. The countries do, after all, have a peace pact, so in good conscience we could sign up. I figured I was not going to see contemporary Egyptians anyway, only ancient ones. However, I ended up doing a study in anthropology of the current Egypt as well as the ancient. They turned out to be very friendly folk.

In a few words, the trip was fabulous. Mind you, if you do not care for Egyptian art, or for history, archaeology and the like, it's not for you. Nothing wrong with sitting on a beach if that's what you like; we don't. My kids always used to call us "Arduous Tours Ltd", because of the active trips we would plan. Sure, it was true. Here, however, the tour company took care of the Arduous for us, and it was! But it was great. We have long loved the Metropolitan Museum's Egyptian Wing, and own an ancient chunk of stone with a few hieroglyphs. Our piece, worn and sleight, is to the Met as the Met is to the real thing. Egypt boggles the mind, dazzles the eye; everything is larger than life, a real culture, an art form the equal if not superior of anything else in the world. To prepare you for your trip, and to remind us one day, should we forget, I shall describe ours. I shall not dwell on all the antiquities as they must seem to be even slightly understood and moved, but I shall try to capture a picture of the scene.

Cairo

The River Nile (as it is always termed) cuts across the edge of Cairo, with a few large islands filled with buildings, a broad fairly shallow river

which hardly looks like the lifeline of the country. It is. Nearly all the population of Egypt is along the Nile's banks, as it goes a South-to-North route from Central Africa pouring into the Mediterranean. The Red Sea and Suez Canal are the the east of the area, separating the rugged Sinai Peninsula from the country. Aside from a few oases, all the rest is the most arid desert imaginable, sand and limestone mountains, nothing living, not even tumbleweed. The deserts exist right to the edge of the arable areas, and sand constantly drifts into Cairo, a big, sprawling, dirty, lively, crowded city. It seems always building and always falling down, for aside from major structures like government and hotels, all buildings are built of porous-looking reinforced concrete, a sprinkling of steel rods the width of my finger, half of them apparently crumbling. Most are apartment houses, low-slung, four to six stories, flat-roofed and terraced, with the wash hanging from the terraces. (1)

Dust is ubiquitous. Autos abound, adding to the pollution. The traffic is so heavy that many roads have overpasses and elevated highways. Parking seems to be unregulated. Many car owners put covers on, and by the depth of dust on some I guess they stay where they are, not infrequently on the sidewalks.

Driving rules are weird also. Police patrol busy intersections, but others have lights which must apply to turning, inasmuch as cars buzz through red and stop at green! At night they use only dim lights or no lights at all! Allegedly a courtesy to other cars. Crossing a major street is tough! Beeping is the major driving tool. It is hardly a beautiful town, although some downtown areas seem to have nice chops.

(1) I had frequently decried on bus the poor inferior construction techniques, and the inherent short life such buildings must have. An engineer from LA told me that if an earthquake occurred, half the town would fall down. His words were tragically prophetic, for a week after we had left Egypt came the quake killing nearly 500 and injuring thousands. Buildings collapsed including a 14 story apartment house. I find it hard to believe so large a structure would be built of the same inadequate materials, but it is likely. Only foreign owned hotels and some government buildings are built to tough specifications, with strong steel skeletons. One can hope a new adherence to firm building codes will be the rule now, but in lackadaisical Egypt it seems unlikely.

As an Arab country, mosques abound and the sound of the Muezzin is frequent, five times a day, calling the faithful to prayer, although we never saw anyone kneel down to pray. Egyptians are (aside from a fundamentalist minority which is troublesome, and, we learned on the way home, had actually shot at a tourist boat on the Nile, injuring three Egyptian staff persons) not terribly religious. The women, however, nearly all wear a headdress and a long dress. In Cairo they are smart and sometimes colorful dresses with white headdresses, neatly tucked below the chin. In villages they are nearly invariably all black. Young schoolgirls wear uniforms.

We commenced our tour at the world-famous Egyptian Museum, and it lived up to its reputation, a superb collection in a hopeless plant, outdated, crowded, dingy, ill-lit, with restrooms where a woman or man sits holding out a single sheet of toilet paper for your use, for which you should give him a pound. (Approximately 30¢, usually less). The star of the museum is the Tutankhamen collection, a small part of which has toured abroad. This was found intact by a British archaeologist half a century ago, unlike most pyramids and tombs which had been looted. The country has over 87 pyramids and outlying ones are still robbed when thieves can manage.

Giza, Food, Buying, Pyramids and Sphinx

We crossed an island on which a new opera house had been built as a gift for Egypt by the Japanese to replace a burned out house (chronic to the country, waiting for others to do their work; it took foreigners to alert them to their own treasures too and to save Abu Simbel) into Giza, which often is considered a part of Cairo; it is as large and is similar to the city, except further out it is less civilized and the small town peasant style takes over. We drove to a country outdoor restaurant, long tables beneath awnings, feeding lots of tourist buses, just like the motels in America which depend on tour buses. Numerous courses were served: vegetables (Egyptians love squash, not a favorite of mine; egg plant, etc), salads, chicken shish kebab style, tahina (a sesame paste we knew from felafel days in Israel, great with pita bread), fruits, with trays of pita bread puffed with air still hot from the oven. No wonder. Two women were busy baking them, rounding out the bread, tossing it into the oven on the ground. Presumably the ground was so hot it was self sterilizing. They accompanied themselves by beating a drum and shrieking in an ululating manner. I ignored the earth stove and the music and ate heartily. However, I should add we were very cautious about food and drink. No water at all; only bottled water. No fresh salad, or veg-

etables either unless cooked. The Pharaoh's Revenge is as bad or worse than Montezuma's south of our border. Our hotel and the cruise boat offered fine cooking but even there we followed the rule. And we did escape diarrhoea. We drove to a large shop, selling mostly tourist stuff, and like all labeling itself a bazaar. (Cairo itself like most cities had a large district with numerous small shops and cubicles, a real bazaar.)

I was as yet not a good bargainer and, American-like, paid too much here. Haggling is essential in these places and is absolutely the case in dealing with the hordes of vendors at every antiquity stop. I soon learned. One adamantly refuses to accept the proffered price, usually ridiculously high to start with, or even look at the article, until the price is low, then offers a lower price in return, finally reaching a compromise. Once I was in the bus and a guy in the usual dirty kaftan (standard wear outside cities) was hawking me a stone statue of Horus, my favorite god, with the falcon face; I wanted it but kept shaking my head while he kept hollering it at me. Finally he got down to 10 pounds (from \$50) which was okay with me (about \$2.50!). I took it, but then a policeman came and apparently he was an unlicensed vendor because he took off, and so did the bus. I felt bad, didn't want to gyp him out of the 10 lbs. As we reached the end of the area he came dashing up; I threw him the ten pound note and off we went, everyone happy. Later I got a larger Horus in the Aswan bazaar, after protracted haggling, for 20 lbs, so the price would appear to have been right. I was satisfied, about \$7.50 for the two handsome sculptures. I do not know who wholesales all this stuff, often substantial and selling dirt cheap most of the time. In the old parlance, I guess they make it up in quantity.

On a number of occasions I observed what was surely a small con game, in which the vendors would hold out two American singles and request a tourist to change them into Egyptian currency. Then they would claim the change was wrong, etc. It was obviously a small time con by fast-talk artists, comparable--although it was for peanuts--to three card monte on Times Square, the pea under one of three shells--guess which shell.

Another caveat deals with the very popular papyrus art. The crackly sheets with a criss cross weave are made by laying strips from the stalk of the plant across each other and pressing them dry. On them are painted bright illuminations, usually of gods and hieroglyphs. In shops they are allegedly hand-colored and cost from \$6 up, but hawkers on the street sell them for as little as a buck each; we are told these are fake papyrus, so I shall accept their word. We bought a handful of the "real" thing. There is a different feel and look, and the cheaper ones seem to be printed and unsigned.

Still, I must admit my friends back home wouldn't know the difference and they would probably end up in the same closet.

No doubt the guides get commissions from the "honest" business; they took us also to a perfume shop, selling the pure essences of what they claimed were the bases of famous perfumes. Either dab them on or cut them with 12 parts of pure 98% grain alcohol. Ha! They don't tell the people it is impossible to buy pure grain (ethyl). As a pharmacist I can assure you. And you cannot use denatured alcohol (even if grain based it is only 70%, and isopropyl is altogether no good).

Giza backs right up to the famous pyramids and the desert begins right there. These three colossal (a word applicable, even if over-used in Egypt, but it is true) structures, make the Mexican pyramids look not only young by comparison but paltry. Thousands, maybe millions of immense stone blocks, many of them 40 tons in weight, make them up. Once they were sheathed in limestone; that has fallen away except for a few patches, but the structures are eternal. Clearly the ancients had better architects than today's Egypt. The theory here as in all temples, expounded by tolerant guides, is that the people were happy to help construct these things, convinced that it was for the glory of religion and their own souls. Maybe, but it had to be pretty difficult work, rolling the tremendously heavy blocks boated up the Nile from the quarries of limestone onto causeways leading to the sites.

Grave robbers have long ago pilfered many of the valuables, precious gold and jewels, treasures,

laid within, but a visitor can at least enter the pyramid through a long, narrow, low-ceilinged tunnel. One look at the worm-like tunnel into the Great Pyramid of Cheops and my claustrophobia rebelled. I backed out. Later, at Sakkara, I would take such a path but the tunnel was a little broader if no higher. One can climb a step-path on Cheops, through the huge blocks, and we were able to climb up a ways, but the top is a challenge to acrophobia and we got nowhere near it.

A camel-driver was here to oblige tourists with a ride on a ship of the desert. The huge beasts grunted unhappily but obeyed. One mounted the high back with some difficulty (no stool were provided) on to a platform seating two, wobbling crazily, although the camel was unbothered. Most folks got off almost at once, but we braved the twenty-five feet he took us. The camel gets up hind first then forelegs, and sits front first then back, and it was a pleasant sensation to be back on earth again.

We proceeded to the Sphinx, whose face has been mostly obliterated, some say by cannonades from uncaring invaders. The great forelegs have been restored and it sits impassively and grandly aloof. The tableaux of the three great pyramids and the sphinx, however familiar, remains impressive as an example of incredible building spirit and will, and a technique still beyond our fathoming. As I look at my photos I regret I shall not see the scene again. Something within it fulfills dreams, satisfies the soul. That night we returned to attend a Sound and Light Show here, and while it was of its nature static, it was colorful and the colored



Ben and Janet: Camel Jockeys

lights helped our imaginations fill in the lost facial features. We would see another such show later at Karnak which would utilize its site better and produce a more spectacular show, with, however, much of the same portentous, even banal, dialogue; the music needed a Verdi, but it was nice and loud. A veritable sunburst of flashbulbs popped throughout the Pyramids show, a useless exercise, but evidence of the emotions viewers felt at this fabulous tableau.

Driving back at night to the hotel we saw all the many avenues and small streets bustling with life. The shops close mid-afternoon for siesta but reopen and stay open late. Many have only roll-down gates for a front wall, but all have gates. Innumerable fruit and vegetable stores, souvenir shops and other small businesses, with the people walking or sitting, and frequently at coffee shops one could see men smoking their hookahs, water pipes. They all appeared quite content with their lives. Restaurants on riverboats cast a colorful glow on the water.

The next morning we visited the Citadel of Saladin (Salah El-Din) of Crusade fame and the large, beautiful mosque erected there by a later conqueror, Mohammed Ali (who took care of some Mameluk opponents by inviting a large number of their leaders to a meeting and then, as they walked down a narrow road, having his soldiers bushwack all but one who, legendarily, leaped onto a horse, cleared a retaining wall, which, however, was a twenty foot drop, survived the fall, which the horse didn't, and escaped).

We saw several mosques, each handsome but none equal in beauty to the magnificent Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem. Few of the mosques which abound in city and countryside are so grand, but each has a certain exotic charm. Within they are very simple, lined with rugs for the faithful to pray.

We continued on to "Old Cairo," the original city itself. I was reminded here of Sefad up in the mountains of Israel, very narrow, cobbled lanes, ancient buildings. Here we saw the simplest of people, the women all in black and we visited two religious buildings of interest. St. Sarvius' Church is Coptic, Christian, with an altar row of Byzantine iconic portraits, and many Arab qualities. Indeed, two ladies looking Arabic for all the world came in and genuflected. The church claims that Mary and the infant Jesus stopped briefly in a cave below on their flight from Bethlehen to avoid Herod's soldiers, intent on killing all first-born sons who might threaten his reign. The cave is said to have beautiful drawings but a flood some time ago filled it with water and it remains so.

Next to it is the Temple Ben Ezra, a millennium-old synagogue, oldest in Egypt, although this is one of a succession of buildings replacing each

other as each was destroyed. It is, however, more than a century old, and is being restored. It is already very handsome, and will be a gem. By happy chance, this very day was the first day of the Jewish New Year, Rosh Hashonah, so I did not miss being in a synagogue, although it is not used for worship, and with the miniscule Jewish population left in Egypt is not likely to see much use. Still, a Hebrew School which was part of it is also being restored, as well as the Mikvah, the ritual bath. Funds come from worldwide Jewish groups.

I welcomed the group with us, none of whom was Jewish, explained the significance and read some of the Hebrew engraved into a stone beneath the reader's desk. It is Sephardi in manner, the ark, with the Torah against the far wall, the bimah for the rabbi and dignitaries in the center, and the cantor or reader's desk at the other end. Women sat in a gallery upstairs. There were Stars of David in evidence, a beautiful rosette, as well as Arabic elements of design. Not to be outdone by its neighbor church, Ben Ezra has its own legend. It states that the site of the reader's desk is where the basket containing the infant Moses, floating on the Nile, which at that time reached here, where his mother had placed him hoping he might be saved, was found by the daughter of the Pharaoh! For Janet and myself, it was a moving occasion, one to which she had keenly looked forward.

After lunch at the same outdoor restaurant (the bakers still drumming and ululating), we drove to Memphis, the ancient capital, but later quite destroyed. Not much more in size than a football field now, a number of handsome sculptures, including a large sphinx of alabaster, tons heavy, have been recovered from the earth. Clearly it had fallen on one side and had lain there for millennia, for one side was badly deteriorated. Two worn colossal pharaohs are there as well. Near the adjacent tomb site, now just foundations, I found protruding from the earth the handle and shoulder of an old vase, very worn. One is not supposed to remove antiquities, but the age of this is open to question, and the object has no value except as a memory to a visitor. It is graceful and beautiful in its own right.

From Memphis we drove to Sakkara, famed for a step-pyramid rather than straight sides. The steps were once sheathed with limestone; today each step has many feet of sand on it. It is very impressive if not as high as those at Giza, and has many remains of subsidiary structures around it: a causeway and rooms for preparing the bodies, plus an extremely deep pit into which the mummified remains of rulers would be lowered for insertion into the tomb. Of primary interest here was a side tomb with numerous splendid wall paintings, all characteristically frontal plane, feet pointed in the same

A village along the Nile



sideward position, large toes on the same side of the foot, although the queen, in her own chambers, is depicted with one breast at her side despite her otherwise frontal pose. This is typical for women. The wall art was unusual because in addition to the usual stalwart portraits of rulers it depicted ordinary people in ordinary tasks: fishing, boating, farming, housekeeping, even giving birth. The colors were still fine also.

Nearby was a high pile of rubble, another pyramid which had utterly deteriorated. Probably designed by the ancestors of today's Egyptian architects.

Cruising Up the Nile

We were up early, if not bright, at 5:45 AM to catch our plane to Luxor. The traffic was still light, and through the early haze could be heard the whining call of the muezzin. The airport was a scene of utter confusion, and we had to drag our own luggage in spite of the tour's promise that it would be handled. Landing produced equal confusion. Here we were taken to our cruise ship. One cannot see "pyramids along the Nile" but one can see other cruise boats. About 200 ply the placid river, although one can see no more than one or two ahead and one or two behind at any time. The boat was very nice, several decks of cabins, all similar, with two beds and a bathroom with shower. Ours was a water level. Above was a deck with a dining room, above that the lounge and outside a covered area with chaises; above that a deck with more chaises

and a small, very cold, very welcome swimming pool plus a lukewarm jacuzzi. Tea would be served each afternoon, with cookies, at 5 PM on the lounge deck. The cover was for the sun, not for rain, as it never rains. The boat is probably rather flat-bottomed as the river is not deep, but it is very smooth, no perceptible roll at all. The cooking was basically French, but adapted to Egyptian, and it was generally good.

Water was only served on request, and only bottled. We took it every day, to drink and to have with us on travels, as the temperature would climb. The menu offered two choices, and if one was not content with them, one could request something else --in vain. The waiters were gracious and smiled a lot but understood nothing and no replacement would ever appear. We sat with the same three couples each day, lovely folks all, fellow-Americans from the mid and far west, all of whom were doing more traveling this trip--safaris, Greece, Morocco, etc. I must confess that ten days were enough for us. They were unaware of the complexities of the Middle East as it mattered to us, vis a vis Israel and the Arabs and perhaps I made our viewpoint at least better known to them. Their forte seemed to be making big money and regrettably they taught me little of that!

Each day we would visit ancient temples, usually by bus, for which we had to wake up very early, to see the sights and return by noon and avoid the heat as much as possible. The balance of the day was for relaxation, swimming, reading, schmoozing with new friends, as our boat had guests from Aus-

tralia and Germany as well. As to the Temples we would visit, remarkably, each had unique qualities; some were modest, others were overwhelming. All have suffered the ravages of time and human degradation, and have required various degrees of rebuilding and restoration, but it has been done with care. In retrospect, only a brief time afterward, the individual details fade into a homogeneous but lasting impression of dignity, grace and daring splendour, a vision of another world and of Man's place in it.

Karnak and Luxor

Two of the mightiest temple sites of ancient Egypt, even in ruins they still humble the viewer for their overarching ambition and imagination. Karnak, a maze of interior temples, colonnaded rows, statuary, obelisks and sphinxes, is considered the largest religious complex in the world. One is in constant astonishment and wonder walking through it. The Sound and Light Show seen at night takes the audience, walking, through portions of it, where superb lighting enhances the sculpture and architecture dramatically, while the narration sonorously describes its history, until at last we are seated in an amphitheater-like space on two sides of a lovely square lake for the climax.

The Temple of Luxor is far more modest than Karnak in terms of acreage, but no less grandiose in details of sculptured figures and columns. The two are close but Luxor adjoins the main city street and having gone through it we walked to the street

to wait for our bus. It was a half hour late, and we were hounded to exasperation by street urchins, children of four or five in dirty robes begging for baksheesh (money), pitiable but nevertheless annoying, for if one were to give a pound to one of them, he would be surrounded by the others. No less annoying were vendors and ancient horse-drawn cabs, decorated with designs as well as the flies which appeared to thrive in desert areas when few other life-forms did. Some of our friends took cabs which slowly ambled through the streets to the dock, while our late-arriving bus passed them.

Countryside en Route to Abydos, Dendora, and Other Smaller Temples

As we embussed for another day, there was some traffic in the port, and the urchins had adopted a technique popular in New York City: they carried rags with which to "clean" car windshields! An Egyptian car gave them a peremptory wave off and they vanished quickly. Along the route we drove through villages, often primitive, with huts looking like pueblos, of mud/straw-brick walls and roofs covered with straw and corn huskings (presumably for insulation against the sun). We saw kilns with emergent clouds of steam where the bricks were baked, architecture which would hold up reasonably well in the dry climate. Donkey carts with rubber tired wheels and people riding donkeys, often with large tied bundles of straw, quietly clopped by us. Kids and adults would smile broadly and wave at us as we passed. I was happy to see these kids living



The entrance to Karnak

The Temple of Luxor



on farms, however simple, crude and primitive, for at least they were spared the begging their city cousins endured.

We passed local markets selling all kinds of produce and also markets selling animals: donkeys, horses, cattle and water buffaloes. It was ironic to see the primitive conditions and yet see people driving pick-up trucks to carry animals for sale, or those they had purchased. Horses are far less common than the patient donkeys. The buffaloes are popular for their strength, patience, and high butter-fat milk. We would sometimes see them watering themselves and drinking in the Nile.

An anachronistic sight was the fairly frequent television antenna protruding from the mudbrick huts! Occasionally we saw camels used as beasts of burden. Cameras came out quickly for this! A frequent picture was that of the women, all in black, carrying baskets on their head; on one occasion I saw four walking abreast, baskets atop heads, in animated conversation. Beneath the black cover could be seen more brightly colored dresses or pajamas.

Corn and sugar cane were major crops, and tall date trees were common as well, the attractive orange-brown clusters of dates hanging from the branches. A railroad accompanied the road inland along the Nile, although the cars were all dirty, and sand-covered, windows all opened for air.

Heading south, one can see that the temples are sometimes influenced by such conquerors as the Greeks and Romans, and even the early Christians. Abydos has colossal pillars, exquisite wall-paint-

ings and reliefs, with some color remaining, inasmuch as all wall art originally was colored. In the courtyard before the temple, among the pebblestrewn sand, I picked up an altogether unremarkable but real antiquity, a small 3-inch square of stone with lines incised on three sides, nothing else, discarded and worth nothing except to someone who had loved seeing the site and knew this to have once been a bit of it.

Dendara is a multi-religious tomb; the Cross could be detected carved into older patterns, hidden from prying Roman ruler's eyes. Meanwhile, columns are sometimes Corinthian in manner rather than the more squat or abstracted-plant column heads of the Egyptians. A very realistic female nude is to be seen on the ceiling of one chamber here, perhaps of Cleopatra VII, the Cleopatra, who is also seen in the more traditional frieze form on the outside wall of the temple, with a husband and handmaids, brilliantly carved into the stone, the only representation of her in antique Egyptian art. Far more popular is the figure of Queen Nephretiti, wife of the revolutionary and doomed Akhnaton, who attempted, futilely, to guide Egyptian theology into a monotheistic worship of the sun. There are bucolic scenes as well as of children bathing, fishermen with nets in canoes, a fleet of possible tour boats (anticipating the future chief industry of the country). This temple, as well as many others to follow, has numerous defaced figures, their features and bodies within the outlines chiseled and gouged, probably by early Christian or Muslim reformers determined to expunge such paganism as they

thought they saw in the animal headed gods and pharoanic figures.

The Necropolis of Thebes
Valleys of Queens and Kings

The foregoing temples were all on the west bank of the Nile, parts of Thebes, of which the mortuary was on the east bank. We passed two lonely and re-constructed statues composed of enormous blocks of stone, the Colossi of Memnon, and thence to the Valley of the Queens. This was real desert and, although we had gone very early, was already over 100 degrees, climbing to 105. Goodness knows how workers ever constructed these tombs! We had our water bottles with us, for drinking and also for splashing on ourselves and into our hats and clothing. As it evaporated it brought down the body temperature, which was reaching baking. This arid terrain made the American Badlands look like goodlands!

Here Queen Hatshepsut, a woman to be reckoned with, had built for herself a tomb in an awesome setting, heroic architecture spread out against the base of a towering limestone cliff, and had found space to entomb her son who had died at age 14. The walls and columns are engraved with portraits of her triumph over Somali with numerous reliefs of animals encountered on the trip.

Adjacent is the Valley of the Kings, where the numerous tombs are all below ground. This is where the tomb of Tutankhamon was discovered, still inviolate and its incredibly magnificent horde of ob-

jects removed to the Egyptian Museum. Several years ago a selection was toured around the world, and we saw it in New York City's Metropolitan Museum. We were able to visit several tombs and marvel at the still-freshly colored wall paintings. Incredibly, a small village had been built here, in the sand and cliff, and somehow the villagers managed to grow some grass for their goats to forage! Shops selling alabaster were here, some with brightly-painted walls, for those who had completed their pilgrimage to Mecca and wished to tell about it in pictures.

Party-Time on Ship

There are several small dams across the Nile and it is necessary to use a lock to get by. This necessitated a near day-long wait and we anchored against the riverside. In no time several dozen vendors appeared from nowhere, for no town was here; they were not allowed aboard ship or even the gangplank, but they were hawking dresses and kaftans, most glittering with sequins and gilt. They would scream up to the ship: "Hey American!" or "Hey Lady!" and if anyone was interested would throw the plastic-wrapped dress up or simply roll it up and throw it across the twenty or so feet of water and mud. The recipient might buy or throw it back, but first came the haggling and this went on for hours. Another boat docked in the water alongside us and put a small gangplank across so that their passengers could come join the haggle! It was fun for a while but ultimately noisy and tiresome.

However, the garments came in handy for many, as



The Sphinx, with the Pyramid of Cheops behind

The "Mayor of Luxor" with his two wives.



that night the ship had a Fancy Dress Ball, which meant a costume party, improvised however the participant wished. I had purchased a white kaftan in Cairo (practically minded, for other use) and a kippah, a skull-cap at Temple Ben Ezra, so with sandals I had brought for the pool, I was ready. Janet wore a bathing suit festooned with scarves and colored cloths, plus some necklaces and bangles she had brought, remnants of a fling with belly-dancing. I was also assigned a pretty young woman, a Polish doctor, whose friend had remained in their cabin, and I became The Mayor of Luxor and His Two Wives. It was all a lot of fun and we pretended to do some middle eastern dancing, as did the others. It went on late into the night but we pooped out at 11:30 PM. After all, we had to be up like 4 AM the next day!

We were heading eventually for Aswan, but first had the pleasure of seeing The Temple of Horus, my favorite god, with large statues of the god before it, as well as being nearly complete within. We reached it from the dock via the hansom cabs, and characteristically the driver tried to shake us down for a few extra pounds. I sternly refused, taking the guide's admonition. One chapel was devoted to Janet's favorite, Nut, the goddess of night, usually represented by a long snakelike figure, legged and headed, surrounding the picture on three sides. The building was at least three stories tall, and holes could be seen hacked into the inner walls where floors were probably set up centuries ago for dwellings when religious or artistic

meanings were ignored. They proved handy for defacing the pagan art as well, up to the top. Interestingly, the bottom level was not defaced, indicating it had probably been covered by the drifting sands of a millennium of neglect.

We also visited Kom Ombo, again a late temple with Graeco-Roman influence, the capitals of the columns now called "composite" because they combined styles. This temple worshipped an alligator god, and mummified alligators may be seen in a covered case, still quite sound, if too tough to make good handbags. Interesting frieze details here are groups of farming and surgical devices as well as a woman in seated position about to deliver a child. The noblewoman depicted are already less of the frontal position, the body rounding more with abdomen, umbilicus, but still the breast in profile.

We returned to the ship and proceeded to Aswan, near the High Dam, where we visited a real bazaar, haggled and bought a little and prepared for a major visit to the re-situated temples of Abu Simbel.

Abu Simbel

We were supposed to take a felucca boat ride (the familiar arcing sailboats of the Nile) and see several minor but interesting places in the morning, then fly to Abu Simbel in the afternoon. The morning tour was unexpectedly cancelled, however, and perhaps just as well. Later tours were unable, due to a sandstorm, to visit Abu Simbel, and were deprived of one of the great and most awesome

sights of a lifetime. This temple was originally hewn out of a rock wall, colossal sculptures and inner temples, near Aswan. When the High Dam was constructed, Lake Nasser, filling up behind it, would have submerged the temples beneath water. A cofferdam was built to protect them, and they were cut into large blocks and transported to the plateau atop the cliff. Here they were reassembled, and, inasmuch as there was no mountain here, and artificial but rock-faced mountain was constructed into which the temple was set. Although the interior of the "mountain", a great hemisphere, gives one the feeling of a stage set, it is an amazing technological accomplishment, much of the credit for which belongs to the USA. (In return, the Egyptian government donated the small but handsome Temple of Dendur to America and it is on permanent display at the Metropolitan Museum.)

Abu Simbel itself, consisting of two temples, remains honest and real, its gold-painted wall friezes dazzling within and its immensity without, humbling the onlooker. One recalls John Keats' poem "Ozymandias", in which the boasts of a conqueror of the past are belied by the disappearance of his monuments, and then marvels that this antiquity remains alive, even distinguished by such elements as have fallen (the head of one of the four colossi at the Great Temple lies at its feet, as it did when the temple was below the cliff). Six great sculptures adorn the smaller temple, the whole dedicated to that indefatigable self-image maker, Ramesses II. From here can be seen the great sweep of the

Nile, pent up as the lake, reminiscent of America's Lake Powell, the lake formed by damming the Colorado River at Glen Canyon. One may also see the failures of the High Dam, for the green color of the water indicates the growth of algae, the failure of much-needed silt from African highlands to reach and nourish the lower Nile as it has done from time immemorial. The river no longer floods uncontrollably, but also it no longer flushes out the tributaries, where useless plant growth is clogging it up, and no longer replenishes the soil. The answer has not been found yet.

However, at Abu Simbel, one thinks only of the brilliance, the glory of the art, the eternal vision of its creators. It is symbolic of all ancient Egyptian art, this magnificent and inspiring art form whose intent actually was pragmatic, to glorify and help speed the passage of its rulers into another world. In deifying a man, however, they deified all men.

Post Script

The enthusiasm engendered by so spectacular a trip as we experienced, a voyage into an exotic and brilliantly illustrated ancient past, can only be part of the story. We live in our own times, and while our tour was, happily for us, entirely untroubled by any extraneous forces, even in the subsequent history of Egypt, some mentioned briefly in the foregoing text, have been anything but tranquil.



Abu Simbel--the large temple

One subject I have scarcely touched upon is politics. There was nothing forbidden per se about the subject, but it was not alluded to and occasional comments of mine about Israel and the late President Sadat were not touched upon. President Mubarak of Egypt is a cautious man necessarily; he treads a fine line between Israel, with whom Sadat made peace, and the powerful but splintered Arab States, in addition to the most dangerous of all, the Muslim Fundamentalists. Implacably opposed to compromise they murdered Sadat in the moment of his triumph and have constantly threatened Mubarak. Some of their most violent members have been jailed.

Our immediate tour group consisted only of some fourteen people (among the hundreds on the boat, many of other nationalities), none of whom was Jewish or from the East and, surprisingly to us, seemed disinterested in or incognizant of Middle Eastern problems. Perhaps because I am Jewish and vitally interested in the welfare of Israel, and since I live in an area which has a high Jewish population which is conversant with the situation, I am perhaps naively surprised that it is far less important to those to whom it has little personal relevance. Thus, having visited Israel in 1975, I frequently brought up points of comparison to Egypt in historical terms. However, the guides never alluded to Israel or to Sadat who, it seemed to me, despite his unexpected attack on Israeli forces in

1973, was the most progressive leader modern Egypt has seen, and had the courage to seek peace with his enemy. It was unforgivable to the Fundamentalists.

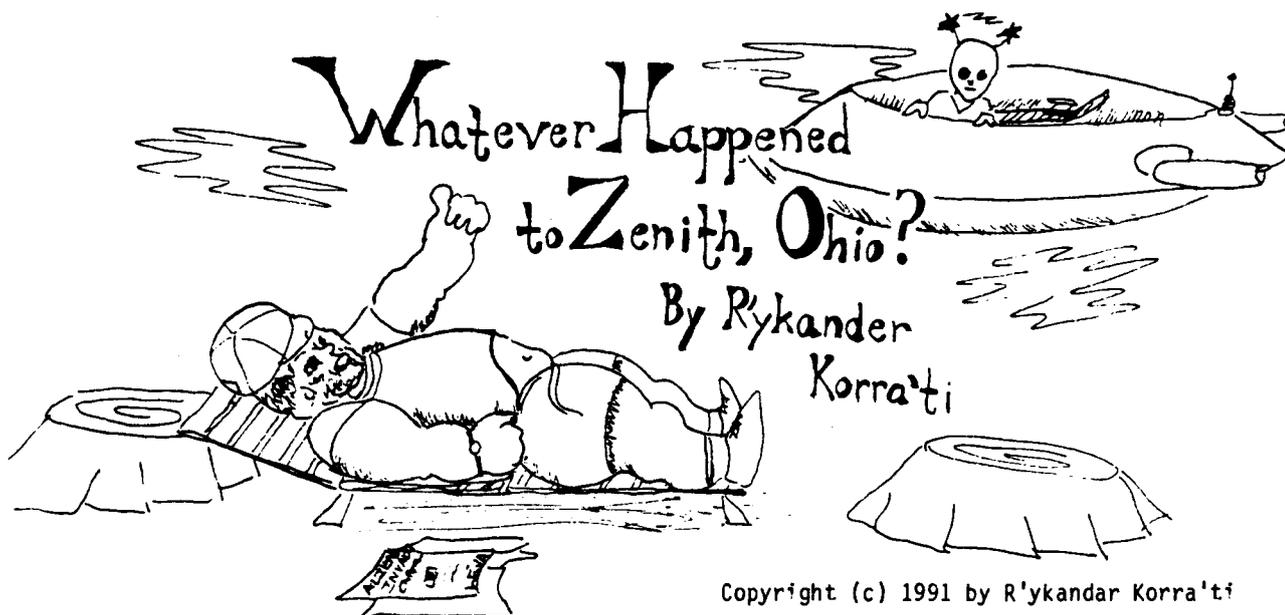
We first learned of the terrorist nature of this group on the plane going home. In a British newspaper of that date I read that a tourist boat close behind our own had been fired upon by them and that three Egyptians on it had been wounded. Janet recalled seeing in various towns Egyptians in kaftans bearing rifles. When she asked what this was about, she received answers that they were just displaying machismo rearing, that a man was not masculine without his gun; or that they were guards; or a shrug. Perhaps, she now wondered, were they fanatics who, we learned later, had vowed to rid Egypt of tourists or to kill tourists unless their own members were released from prison. As the plane approached New York we learned that a group of Egyptian dignitaries were aboard. Uncomfortably we awaited some stocking-masked characters with automatics to come spraying bullets, but secrecy had been safely maintained.

In an Egyptian English-language newspaper, meanwhile, I was chagrined to find an openly anti-Israeli political cartoon, close to anti-Semitic. President Mubarak, cautiously pontifical, mouthed pieties about the need for Israel to capitulate on all terms if it was to find peace. My euphoria was quickly evaporating.

The earthquake, wholly unexpected by any geologist, wreaked great destruction in parts of Cairo and neighboring Heliopolis, and when the government, characteristically slow to react to any situation, was hesitant about responding with help, the ultra-religious right came out with soup kitchens, exploiting a tragic situation in the name of providing help.

Since then, there have been further attacks on tourists, first on a jeep of young British tourists, killing a young woman and injuring two young men, and then, in Port Said, the knifing of three Russian tourists. The threat is that this will continue. It is impossible for the government to patrol the entire length of the Nile, or to watch an entire nation. Fanatics of any stripe will always be able to foment trouble. (At the same time, IRA bombs have exploded in London.) It is a pity. Egypt desperately needs the tourist dollars, and while we were in Cairo it was making a concerted effort to attract ASTA, the American Society of Travel Agents. It is a major industry and without it the country will be plunged into even more desperate straits. One can only hope President Mubarak will act with more forcefulness than is his wont to demonstrate the country must act within its laws. |*|





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Larry William Sheffield sat comfortably upon his plastic lawn chair, the E-Z-Boy Stretch-o-matic FormFiller (TM) adjusting to every roll of his decidedly overweight body. He had chopped down two of the trees in his back yard as part of the war effort--you never knew when the Germans would decide to bomb Zenith, Ohio, that Great Manufacturing City --because he wanted to be the first to phone the air raid warden, in case it ever happened. Of course, the war had ended without the Germans coming, but that didn't stop him from enjoying his newly cleared summer sky.

"...and the Cubs over Milwaukee, 4 to 2. Way t'go, Chicago!" blared the radio announcer.

All's right in the world, though Larry.

He had halfway closed his eyes and started thinking about napping when he realized what a great view of the flying saucers that a treeless backyard gave him. Big, round, silver things, shaped kinda like cigars, with pretty blinkin'...

"Flyin' saucers!" he shouted, throwing his newspapers to the ground. "Jesus H. Christ, it's a packa flying saucers!" He stood up and threw his hat at the hovering spaceships. "Get outa my light, you buncha lunar loonies!"

A hatch on the bottom of the largest cruiser opened, and a little green man popped out and shook his fist at Larry. "You have a problem, Earth creature?"

"Yeah, get outta the th' sun!" replied Larry. I'll show that space alien, he thought. You don't push Larry W. Sheffield around! "You're ru'nin' the lawn!"

The little green man blinked at Larry, looked amused, and blinked again. "You want light?"

"Doncha understand English, ya goof? Sunlight! Light from the sun!"

The alien grinned evilly, and popped back into the spaceship. Suddenly Larry heard a hum, and the craft rose a few feet and started to glow.

Instantly, the heat around Larry rose ten degrees, twenty degrees, then a hundred degrees in the first second; before he could leap for cover, he exploded into flames.

Inside the spaceship, the little green man leaned back in his E-Z-Thing Stretch-o-matic Form-Filler (TM) and chuckled. Then he dialed the telephone.

"Weekly World News," answered the receptionist.

"Publisher, please."

"One moment..." Muzak filled the background.

"Did you get him?" cracked the new voice on the other end of the line.

"Yeah, I got him. Send over your reporters. I'll hang around long enough to give 'em a show."

"Great!" cried the voice. "You don't know how much I appreciate this."

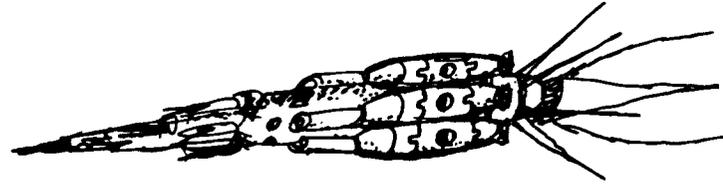


"No problem. Just keep us in your headlines, and we'll provide you with all the stories you need." He paused for a moment. "We'd better cut this short. Get your people over here; I've got an appointment with a French paper this afternoon."

"They're on their way." The receiver clicked into silence.

The little green man smiled with satisfaction as he set up some special effects for the reporters.

They'll never take UFO sightings seriously after this, he thought. Our worries are over. [*]



On a Clear Day You Can See Mars

by Ben Bova

Maybe it's because I started out in the newspaper game (it's never called a business by the workers in the field). Or maybe it's because I've spent most of my adult life working with scientists and engineers. Or maybe it's because I care about my readers too much.

Whatever the reason, I have never felt that writing should be a contest between author and reader, a battleground filled with obscurity and arcania. I don't want my readers to struggle with my prose. I don't want to impress them with how smart I am. I want them to enjoy what I'm writing and maybe think a little about what I'm trying to say.

Problem is, when you write clearly and simply, without stylistic frills or rococo embellishments, some people think that you are not a "deep" thinker or a "stylist."

Isaac Asimov ran into this predicament often. Critics could not fault Isaac on his knowledge or his success, or even his earnestness or political correctness, so they belittled his style, calling it "pedestrian" or "simplistic." Yet Isaac's style was the one thing that made him such a success, at least as far as his nonfiction work is concerned.

Other specialists knew their subjects in more depth than Isaac did. Isaac had a tremendous breadth of knowledge, but in any particular field--be it cosmology or poetry, biblical scholarship or even biochemistry--there were specialists who knew a lot more than he did.

But it was Isaac's genius to be able to take any of those specialized fields and write about them, so clearly, so naturalistically, that just about anyone who could read could learn the fundamentals of Isaac's subject. That took style, babe! And I doubt that it was totally unconscious, the work of unreflective genius. Isaac thought about what he did, every step of the way. He deliberately developed a writing style that was so deceptively unpretentious and naturalistic that critics thought what he did was easy.

In fiction, the academic disdain for straightforward, honest prose has led critics to dismiss Hemingway and praise Faulkner, although today we are seeing that Hemingway's work is standing the test of time better than his contemporaries'. Maybe Hemingway was also influenced by his early days of newspapering. But we know that he deliberately developed the lean, understated style that became his hallmark. He worked hard at it, every year of his writing life.

Lord knows that no one has accused the science fiction field of overemphasis on style. If anything, the accusations have been just the opposite, that science fiction writing is too pedestrian, too mundane. Yet we have produced some marvelous stylists: Fritz Leiber, for example. Alfred Bester. Ray Bradbury.

There is a good reason why most science fiction is written in naturalistic, realistic style. Out-of-this-world settings and incredible feats may abound in science fiction stories, yet the prose is usually unadorned and straightforward. Why? Because if you want to make the reader believe what you are saying, if you want the reader to accept those out-of-this-world backgrounds and incredible deeds, it is easier if the prose you use is as simple and realistic as you can make it.

In my own work I have tried to keep the prose clean and clear, especially when I am writing about subjects as complex as space exploration, politics, and love. Those subjects are tricky enough, without trying to write about them in convoluted sentences heavy with opaque metaphors and intricate similes.

Then, too, there is the difference between the optimists and the pessimists. Somehow, somewhere in the course of time, darkly pessimistic stories got to be considered more "literary" than brightly optimistic ones. I suspect this attitude began in academia, although it is really a rather juvenile perspective: teenagers frequently see the world they face as too big and complex, too awesome for them to fathom. Healthy adults saw off a chunk of

that world for themselves and do their best to cultivate it. That's the message of Voltaire's Candide, after all.

But even in the science fiction field, pessimistic "downbeat" stories are regarded as intrinsically more sophisticated than optimistic "upbeat" tales. I suspect this reveals a hidden yearning within the breasts of some science fiction people to be accepted by the academic/literary establishment. That's okay with me, but such yearnings should not cloud our perceptions.

It may be de rigueur in academic circles to moan about the myth of Sisyphus and the pointless futility of human existence, but such an attitude is antithetical to the principles of science fiction. Ours, after all, is a fundamentally optimistic literature. We tend to see the human race not as failed angels but as apes struggling toward godhood. Even in the darkest dystopian science fiction stories, there is hope for the future. This is the literature that can take up a situation such as the Sun blowing up and ask, "Okay, what happens next?"

(1)

Does that make science fiction silly? Or pedestrian? Or juvenile? Hell no! It's those academic thumbsuckers who are the juveniles. In science fiction we deal with the real world and try to honestly examine where in the universe we are and where we are capable of going.

In good science fiction, that is. Remember Sturgeon's Law. All that bears the title "science fiction" is not in Ted's top ten percent. But at its best, science fiction is wonderful. And it tends to be optimistic.

So--because I try to write clearly and tend to believe that the human mind can solve the problems it faces, I fear that my work is often regarded as

simplistic, or lacking style, or less "literary" than some others'.

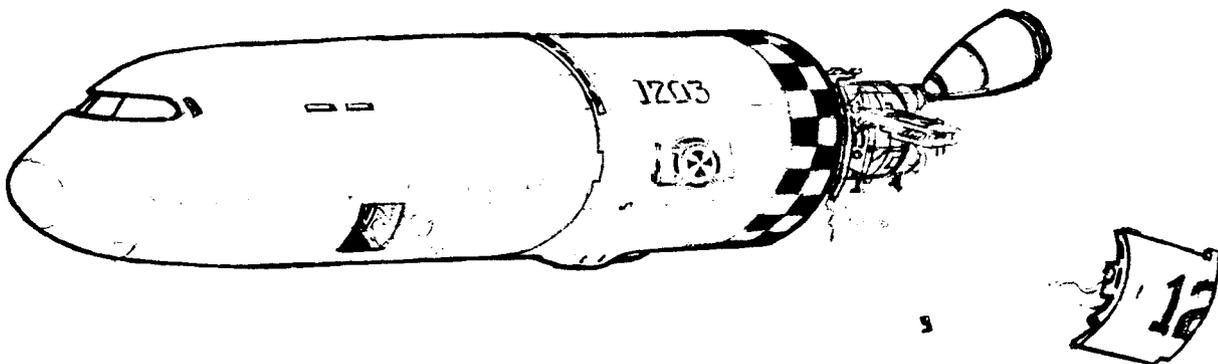
Such complaints are the price to be paid for writing simply and basing fiction on the real world and actual human behavior. With the exception of my Orion novels, which follow other interests, my fiction tends to deal with the very near future and with real people. No superheroes. No fantasies. In fact, I've been doing this long enough so that some of my science fiction can be read as historical fiction today. You can look it up, as Ol' Professor Casey Stengle used to say.

Take my latest novel, Mars, for example. It deals as realistically as possible with the first human expedition to the planet Mars. The writing style is straightforward and realistic--except for where I want to weave in portions of Navaho myth to serve as a counterpoint. Then the style is rather different.

Is the novel simplistic? It deals with several dozen characters from almost as many nations, some of them scientists, some astronauts or cosmonauts, some politicians and government bureaucrats. It deals with the way national governments handle major scientific projects, and how scientists work their inner politics. It deals with the way news media cover Big Science. Above all, it deals with a man who is torn between two worlds: the Navaho and the "Anglo," the Earth and its brotherworld Mars.

There are many levels to the novel, but I deliberately refrained from writing it in a style that called attention to this depth. I don't like watching actors who are working so hard you are aware that they are "acting." And I don't like reading novels so filled with self-conscious references and citations that you are aware of the author's presence on every page.

(1) If you don't believe me, read Larry Niven's "Inconstant Moon." Or my own Test of Fire.



DeW. Stengle '92

There are other complexities to Mars. The novel skips around in time. One "clock" is set for the actual mission on the Martian surface. In fact, the novel begins (after a brief prologue) with the first lander touching down on the rust-red sands of Mars. But there are extensive flashbacks to show the training and crew selection and political jockeying that took place before the mission left Earth. And even during the mission the scenes shift back and forth between Mars and Houston, Washington, New York, Rio de Janeiro, Moscow.

Of necessity, Mars deals with high technology. But again, I wanted the reader to live with the characters, not to be stunned by how much I know about the way a spacecraft works. So the high-tech is there as transparently as possible, just the way characters themselves would think of it. As normal as buttoning a shirt. No, "Look, Ma! I'm fradgerating the ampersand!"

Simplistic, Mars is not. Does the writing lack style? No. There is a deliberate style; in fact, a deliberate mix of styles, throughout the novel. You may not like the style. You may think the style is

poor. That is your decision to make. But to those critics who comment that there was not enough "style" in the prose I say, "Thank you! That's just what I was trying to achieve."

Is Mars "literary?" Neither I nor you can say. Not yet. Wait a generation or two, then we'll find out. Dickens was not considered literary: he was a hack grinding out potboiling chapters for newspapers. Academics still argue about Hemingway. And, for a century or so after his death, Shakespeare was regarded as not much more than a scribbler.

Frankly, I don't care if my work is considered literary or not. I won't live to see the final decision, anyway. What I want is for you to know what it's like to be among the first human beings to stand on the rusty soil of Mars. If I've done that, then I am content.

Some day you will watch the first human explorers on Mars. Some of you may even be among them. If, at that happy time, you can think back and say, "Gee, Bova's novel was kind of like the real thing," then I will be more than content. Dead or alive, I'll be smiling. [*]

EVOLUTIONIST'S HOAX REVEALED!

Reported by Timothy Nowinski

"Fossil" bird leftover Thanksgiving turkey! Radiation dating off a "few" points. Scientist, embarrassed, quits museum post.

The uproar at the Cranbrook Science Museum is finally settling down. Dr. Dennis DeWitt, now former head of the prestigious institution, admitted that he had falsified some data when writing a paper about the new species of prehistoric bird he found while excavating in Montana.

The "prehistoric" bird turned out to be a common turkey, whose bones were irradiated so they seemed to be several hundred thousand years old. The inner structures were not affected by the treatment, and that's what an independent dating test revealed. "It seems the bones came from some Thanksgiving about 20 years ago. DeWitt's dating was just a few hundred thousand years off."

"I realized that I would eventually get caught, since the dating process has become so refined and

accurate," Dr. DeWitt admitted, "but I didn't think that it would be found out so soon. I had planned to get into something more lucrative than this low-paying science job anyway, and had hoped to be gone when the hoax was discovered. Nevertheless, I will find something which will pay better, and have fewer headaches, than the Cranbrook job."

A spokesman for the Cranbrook Science Museum said that as soon as the hoax was discovered, Dr. DeWitt was confronted with the facts, and was asked for his resignation. The only reason he would give to them was: "That's the price of the 'publish or perish' game in academia; I wanted out anyway, so now I'm leaving with a bang!"

When asked what he would do next, Dr. DeWitt replied, "Open a restaurant that serves turkey!" [*]

Me and Lucifer

by Mike Resnick



Lucifer Jones was born one evening back in the late 1970s. I was trading videotapes with a number of other people--video stores hadn't started renting them yet, and this was the only way to increase your collection at anything above a snail's pace--and one of my correspondents asked for a copy of She with Ursula Andress, which happened to be playing on Cincinnati television.

I looked in my Maltin Guide and found that She ran 117 minutes. Now, this was back in the dear dead days when everyone knew that Beta was the better format, and it just so happened that the longest Beta tape in existence at the time was two hours. So I realized that I couldn't just put the tape on and record the movie, commercials and all, because the tape wasn't long enough. Therefore, like a good correspondent/trader, I sat down, controls in hand, to dub the movie (which I had never seen before) and edit out the commercials as they showed up.

About fifteen minutes into the film Carol entered the video room, absolutely certain from my peals of wild laughter that I was watching a Marx Brothers festival that I had neglected to tell her about. Wrong. I was simply watching one of the more inept films ever made.

And after it was over, I got to thinking: if they could be that funny by accident, what if somebody took those same tried-and-true pulp themes and tried to be funny on purpose?

So I went to my typewriter--this was back in the pre-computer days--and wrote down the most oft-used African stories that one was likely to find in old pulp magazines and B movies: the elephants' graveyard, Tarzan, lost races, mummies, white goddesses, slave-trading, what-have-you. When I got up to twelve, I figured I had enough for a book...but I needed a unifying factor.

Enter Lucifer Jones.

Africa today isn't so much a dark and mysterious continent as it is an impoverished and hungry one, so I decided to set the book back in the 1920s, when things were wilder and most of the romantic legends of the pulps and B movies hadn't been thoroughly disproved.

Who was the most likely kind of character to roam to all points of Africa's compass? A missionary.

What was funny about a missionary? Nothing. So Lucifer Jones became a con man who presented himself as a missionary. (As he is fond of explaining it, his religion is "a little something me and God whipped up betwixt ourselves on a Sunday afternoon.")

Now, the stories themselves were easy enough to plot: just take a traditional pulp tale and stand it on its ear. But anyone could do that: I decided to add a little texture by having Lucifer narrate the book in the first person, and to make his language a cross between the almost-poetry of Trader Horn and the fractured English of Pogo Possum, and in truth I think there is more humor imbedded in the language than in the plots.

Who but Lucifer, upon seeing Lord Carnivon's caravan bringing the contents of King Tut's 3,000-year-old tomb to Cairo, could ask, "Just settling the estate now, are they?"

Who but Lucifer could lose a sporting wager in quite this manner: "My money held out just fine un-

til I got to Durban, which had a mule track, horses being too expensive for that part of the country. I picked out a likely-looking one named Saint Andrew, placed my money down, and watched him go into the final turn leading by two lengths when a pride of lions raced out of the bush and attacked the field. The jockeys, most of whom were faster than their mounts anyway, jumped off and raced to safety, but none of the mules made it as far as the home-stretch. The track, claiming that this was an act of God, refused to refund the bets, even though I, representing God, pointed out that what is mostly was was an act of lions."

Who but Lucifer could describe the African Wilderness thus: "Well, we walked and we walked and then we walked some more. I kept assuming that Cairo or Marrakech would pop into view any second, but she assured me that we were still in South Africa, and that we weren't heading no farther than Nyasaland, which I hadn't never heard of before, and which I now began picturing as a great huge field of grass with a bunch of baby nyasas hopping around on it."

Who but Lucifer could share such incisive insights as, "As I walked along I kept getting the feeling that I was being watched by unseen eyes, which in my broad experience on the Dark Continent are the very worst kind of eyes to be watched by."

Because this was a labor of love, I also started putting in a bunch of references that would be clear only to a tiny segment of the audience. For example, in this version Tarzan is Lord Bloomstoke, the name Edgar Rice Burroughs originally chose before changing it to Lord Greystoke; every character in Casablanca is named after a car, in honor of Claude Raines (Lt. Renault) and Sydney Greenstreet (Signore Ferrari), and so on. A number of the details were historically accurate: Bousbir really was the biggest whorehouse in the world in 1925, there really was a nude painting of Nellie Willoughby hanging over the long bar in the New Stanley Hotel in the 1930s, the Mangbetu really were cannibals.

Then, since I had leaned rather heavily on the pulps for my plotlines, I started borrowing characters from the B movies: The Rodent is Peter Lorre, Major Dobbins is Sydney Greenstreet, the Dutchman is Walter Slezak, and so on; every one of my favorite scoundrels made it intact from the screen to the page.

Finally, I needed a con man who was even better at his job than Lucifer, lest the book end too soon, and so I came up with Erich von Horst, who makes very few appearances--everyone else in a Lucifer Jones book keeps showing up time and again in the oddest places--but lays a number of economic time bombs across the continent that Lucifer keeps encountering at the least opportune moments.

The most fun I ever had in my life was the two months that I sat at the typewriter working on Adventures. I've done books of more lasting import, and I've created characters of far more depth and complexity, but during that period I fell, hopelessly and eternally, in love with Lucifer Jones.

I sold the book to Signet, which was publishing all my science fiction novels at the time. They didn't quite know what to do with it, so they sat on it for a couple of years and finally released it in 1985, labelling it Science Fiction, which it most decidedly is not, and implying on the cover that the Honorable Right Reverend Doctor Lucifer Jones was just another adventurous version of Dr. Indiana Jones, which he most certainly is not.

The book came out, never found its audience, and died a silent death. Oh, a few mainstream newspapers found it--one New York reviewer called it the greatest parody of the adventure novel ever written--but for the most part it sank without a trace.

I had plotted out four more Lucifer Jones books, one on each continent (each, like Adventures, would end with the various national governments acting in concert to kick him off the continent). Exploits would take place in Asia from 1926 to 1931, and would include an Insidious Oriental Dentist, a Chinese detective with too many sons, a hidden kingdom where no one grows old, an abominable snowman, a poker game for the ownership of the Great Wall, and the like; Encounters would take place in Europe from 1931 to 1934, and would boast vampires, werewolves, the theft of the Crown Jewels, the discovery of Atlantis, the Clubfoot of Notre Dame, and similar incidents; Intrigues would take place in South America from 1934 to 1938, amid all its lost cities, tropical jungles, and strange religious rites; and Hazards would take place in the South Pacific and Australia just before--and possibly a few months after--Pearl Harbor (for which I imagine Lucifer was probably inadvertantly responsible). If I needed still more, Lucifer's grandfather, Nicodemus Jones, could have willed him a manuscript, describing his adventures in our own Wild West; and after 15 years of roaming the world, Lucifer could be forgiven for taking a second shot at making his fortune in Africa.

Oh, I had it all planned out, all right--except that Signet didn't want anything but true-blue science fiction, and at the time I had no other publishers. Over the next few years I moved over to Tor and Ace, and while I still longed to get back to Lucifer Jones, I was turning out serious, prestigious, award-quality stuff at all lengths, and it occurred to me to ask if anyone was interested in him. In point of fact, I thought I was the only person who remembered Lucifer Jones.

Until 1991, when Brian Thomsen of Warners asked me to write a book for him. I explained that I

would love to--Brian and I have been friends for years, and I'd always wanted to work with him--but I was under contract to both Tor and Ace, and between them they held options for all my science fiction.

Then I paused. "Well, I'm free to sell Lucifer Jones," I added, expecting him to ask who the hell Lucifer Jones was.

"I LOVED Adventures!" exclaimed Brian, and we were in business.

Sort of.

First, Warners decreed that for the price they were paying me, they needed more than a dozen of Lucifer's adventures. So I suggested to Brian that I give them a superthick book: I would re-write and polish the original Adventures, add Exploits and Encounters, hand in 225,000 words, and call it The Chronicles of Lucifer Jones. He cleared it with his higher-ups and the response was positive.

Then I contacted Signet, which had reverted all twelve of my serious science fiction novels to me, and asked them to revert Adventures. They refused, declaring that they planned to reprint it.

So I told Brian, okay, we'll just go with 140,000 words of all-new stuff. He went back to the contract department, explained the new scheme, and got a contract a week later.

And on the day he delivered the contract, Signet decided to revert Adventures after all.

Okay, I said, let's go back to our original concept.

I can't, said Brian. I just spent a week telling them why going with all-new material was better than going with the original idea; I can't walk right back in and tell them I've changed my mind.

And by the way, he added, we need a dragon.

A dragon? I asked.

You and I may know that Lucifer is in the spirit of the old pulps, explained Brian, but the publisher wants something fantastic on the cover. The deal only goes down if we can run an illo of a dragon.

I had my doubts, but I took a shot at it, and gave my Oriental dentist a block-long, fire-breathing dragon named Cuddles. And you know what? It didn't make a bit of difference to the flavor of the book; Lucifer is such a liar anyway that one more lie just adds flavor to the story. And if you want to believe in the dragon, more power to you.

So now I had Exploits and Encounters coming out in one volume from Warners, which would be entitled Lucifer Jones. But when we still thought that the book would include Adventures, I had sold Brian a few other reverted titles, and now he was bought up for the year, and it looked like my spruced-up, re-written Adventures would never see print--or at least, not anytime soon.

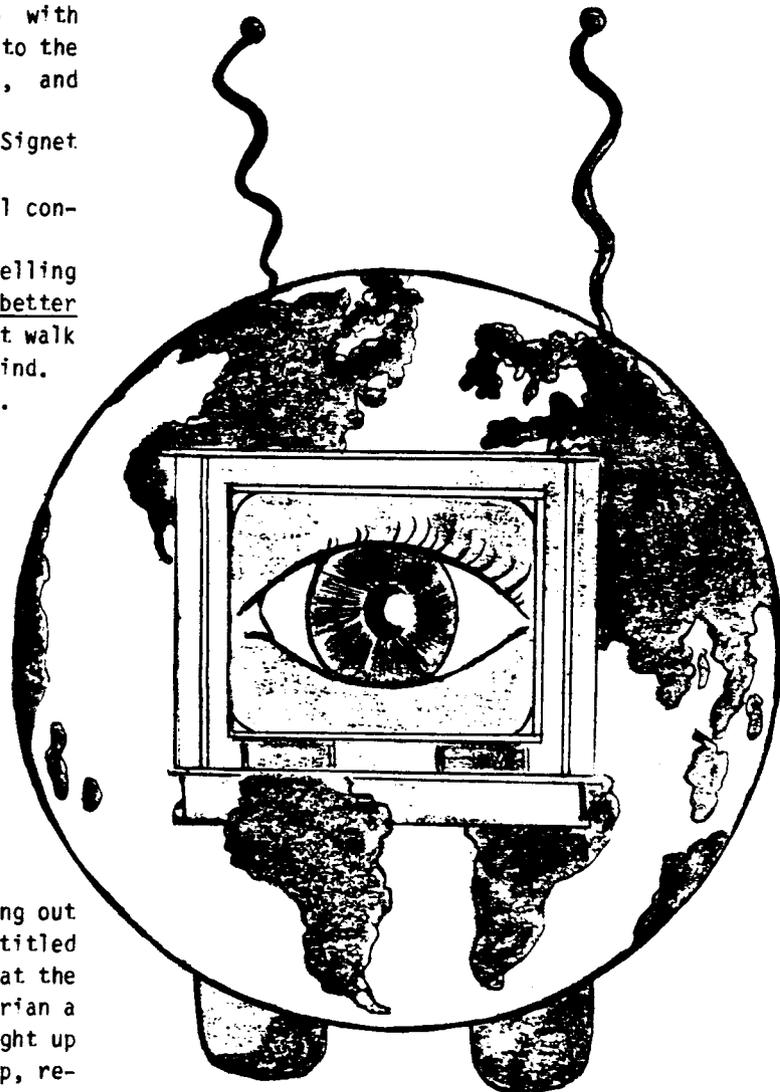
John Betancourt and Dean Wesley Smith to the rescue.

John, one of Lucifer's most fervent admirers, said he would love to publish Adventures in hard-cover for Wildside Press, and before the dust had cleared he had agreed to publishing matching editions of Exploits and Encounters as well.

As for Dean, he had asked to serialize The Oracle Trilogy when he began Pulphouse Weekly...but as time dragged on and it became Pulphouse Monthly, he missed one deadline after another for beating the book versions out. Finally he asked if I had anything I could substitute for them. I suggested that every one of Lucifer's chapters would make a stand-alone short story, found that Dean was another die-hard Lucifer fan, and gave him his choice of which ones he cared to print over the next year.

So there you have it. Lucifer's first three books are now in press--and I promise that the gap between them and the next is going to be one hell of a lot shorter than the last one.

He's just too damned much fun. [*]



I'm still not certain if this a legitimate trip, or something from the mind of a strange fan. On the other hand, it could be both....

Illustrated by
Diana Harlan Stefn

A Visit to Grundtharian Fandom

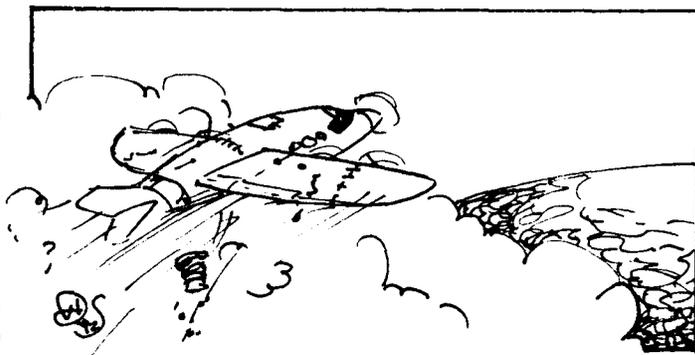
by E. B. Frohvet

Being something of a Big Name Fan (at least so far as the eastern European emigre community in south Florida branch of fandom is concerned), I recently was flattered to receive an invitation from the Grundtharian Science Fiction Association. In the interests of international amity among fans, I share my experiences with you.

Even in this day and age, Grundtharia is not the easiest destination to reach. Fortunately my travel agent is a resourceful person. Therefore I flew from Fort Lauderdale to New York via Delta, from New York to London via PanAm, and thence to Athens via Lufthansa. PanAm had the best food. In Athens I transferred to an Abuela-Fokker commuter jet which carried me to Montefiosco, the capital of Crealia. From there, wearied but in good spirits, I set out on the last leg of my journey aboard an Ilyushni-29 turboprop owned by Grundflegt, the Grundtharian national airline.

Unlike many other eastern European countries, Grundtharia still maintains a somewhat oldfashioned (i.e. Stalinist) sense of priorities. I first encountered this when a number of passengers on my Grundflegt flight were summarily evicted in favor of half a platoon or so of Grundtharian militia paratroopers in full regalia. These worthy fellows spent the early moments of the flight scowling at me, groping the stewardess, and sharpening bayonets. However, being an experienced traveller, I had prudently prepared for such eventualities by consulting my trusty Grundtharian phrasebook. Turning a firm but friendly smile on the soldiers, I greet them with the traditional, "Slomste au Slovenski eegenfrauen." ("Death to pigfucking Slovenians.") After that we got along splendidly. In fact, before flight's end, they voted me an honorary member of the "Greeglethock ing jongjauw Slovenski eegenfrauen fleester". ("The heroic defenders of the Homeland against pigfucking Slovenians regiment.")

We therefore arrived in Schoove, the capital of Grundtharia, to the strains of a jolly soldiers song, and I bid farewell to my soldier friends. (The stewardess was allso sorry to part from me, but this may have been due partly to the fact that



I helped her dissuade the paratroopers from barbequing a goat in the lavatory, always a risky business, especially in a Soviet-made aircraft.) Gathering my modest possessions, I proceeded to Grundtharian customs. Truth to tell, these fellows are not so outgoing as their military comrades, nor as polite as British customs. Still, being an experienced traveller, I had prudently consulted my phrasebook, and offered the diplomatic greeting, "Zomm au jongjauw yonch. Sealgasse Grundtharski sneeble-tweezle." ("All hail the glorious Homeland. My grandmother was Grundtharian.")

While this last may have been technically a minor fib, it did lighten the mood somewhat; and in a mere hour and a half, having had my luggage searched only twice and explaining a trifling seven times that I was a tourist, I was granted entry to the country, with only the minor loss of a package of day-glo-green condoms which had somehow found their way into my bag. As the customs agents explained to me politely yet firmly, "Stengewow Grundtharski yengyong indigo Americanski au piro-po." (Hmm. Come to think of it, that cannot possibly mean what my phrasebook seems to imply...)

In the waiting room of the airport (those who say all airport waiting rooms look alike have clearly never visited Schoove), I was met by my hosts, Pavel Vasilievich and Gregor Ptnzkrlzng, the "secretary general" and "ideological commissar" respectively of the Grundtharian Science Fiction Association. Pavel is a friendly fellow of about my own age whose most salient feature is a beard which



gives the appearance of having been grazed by generations of rabid moths. Given a better grasp of English, he would fit in comfortably at any science fiction convention in the United States. Gregor, by an odd coincidence, bears a striking resemblance to John Kessel. Being an experienced fan, I greeted my sponsors pleasantly with, "Robert Silvergerbski au phleb." ("Long live Robert Silverberg.") They returned this salutation with true fannish aplomb, though I later discovered that neither were quite sure who Mr. Silverberg is.

Pavel and Gregor were all for taking me on an immediate tour of Schoove, but having been traveling continuously for thirty-six hours, I begged that I might be allowed some sleep first. My new friends took me to my hotel, the "Comrade Iosif Vissarionovich", an imposing structure, the lobby of which is graced with an heroic bronze bust of its namesake (no doubt one of the last such in existence). On Gregor's vouching for me as "kleef curdle Americanski" (my phrasebook whimsically renders this as "visiting American conrade"), the hotel provided me with a room which, the desk clerk proudly assured me, had once been occupied by Leon Trotsky. No one seemed to find this incongruous and, being an experienced traveller, I elected not to comment on it. The quarters provided were to be honest rather spare, but if Mr. Trotsky slept as well as I, no doubt he was satisfied with his visit.

Bright and early in the morning, Gregor and Pavel arrived for the promised tour. In the opinion of this fan much the highlight of the day was a visit to the Fifteenth Century ducal castle which overlooks the old city. The castle is of course mostly in ruins and is occupied only by vermin. However, it being an overcast day, the scene was wonderfully morbid and I chanced to remark to Pavel that it would make a perfect setting for a dark fantasy story. His face lit up in smiles, and nothing would do but that he press on me as a gift the second draft of his original story, "Erki Pukka Desgaste Cascabel" ("The Goat-Monster Strikes Back"), which by happy chance was set in the very spot whereon we stood. Not to get ahead of my tale, since my return to America I am working on a translation of this fine work, and any editor interested in the North American rights may contact me. It is, however, slow going, since one must convey the many subtle shades of meaning evoked by the numerous diacritical marks used in written Grundtharian.

The ducal castle would have been sufficient thrill for me, but Gregor in particular insisted that I see more of Schoove. I must say that as a mere private citizen I was honored to sit in the visitor's balcony of the People's Parliament and observe the deliberations of that august body. However, though I would not for the world give offense to my Grundtharian friends, the fact is that Schoove is a singularly unattractive city. Those of you who have been to Chattanooga, Tennessee, will know whereof I speak. Even the sun coming out could not enliven hectare after hectare of drab gray concrete; and to deal with you honestly, I would just as soon have been spared the visit to the Comrade Friedrich Engels Sewage Treatment Plant. Still, my hosts seemed proud to show off their home town; and I daresay the people who live in Chattanooga find some modest virtues in that dismal community also.

When I expressed that I was hungry, our grand tour concluded with a visit to a charming Schoovian restaurant. My hosts recommended that I order the Grundtharian national dishes, "vashti" (barbequed goat) and "palomilla" (a dish consisting chiefly of mashed chickpeas and heroic quantities of garlic, very similar to the Middle-Eastern dish "hummus" which, being an experienced traveller, I had encountered before). This pleasant repast was washed down with a sprightly vintage from Comrade Francois Fourier People's Collective Winery. Of course, it is a universally accepted custom that the only true fannish cuisine is Armenian cooking, to which Grundtharian cuisine is similar. (To those few barbarians who insist that the correct fannish cuisine is Cantonese, I cannot improve on the reply of Mr. Dickens: "Bah! Humbug!")

Following dinner, I had the honor of being named a "Special Guest" at the bimonthly meeting of the Grundtharian Science Fiction Association. That this consisted of no more than thirty persons must be viewed in light of the (by American standards) lamentable state of public transit in Grundtharia, and particularly the collapse of the Hoobhood Valley railway bridge on the line connecting Schoove with Ascutney, Grundtharia's second largest city. I was informed that save for this inconvenience the





Ascutneyan branch of the G.S.F.A. would have come to meet me also. Gregor assures me that the bridge will be repaired soon, though I confess I am not certain how to reconcile this with the Grundtharian proverb, which I heard a dozen times during my brief visit, "Zleet eegenflaugen glob-glob prudenko." (Literally, "When the bridge is fixed": in context this appears to connote, "At some time in the distant future.") But I digress.

The meeting of the G.S.F.A. began with those parliamentary maneuverings so dear to the hearts of trufans everywhere. My friend Gregor seemed particularly adept in this area: every motion he proposed passed without dissent. It was suggested that the reading of the minutes be suspended in honor of my visit, but I insisted they carry on as usual. In fact, the proceedings made me feel nostalgic for my hometown club, of which I have the honor to be Corresponding Secretary; and any trufan would have felt a lump in his throat as Pavel read, in rolling Grundtharian polysyllables, the lost of those who were delinquent with their dues.

Following the business meeting I was introduced, and I must confess that the enthusiasm of the members caused me to depart an unseemly number of times from my prepared text, "Contributions of Eastern Europeans to Science Fiction" (which of course drew largely on the inestimable record of Dr. Asimov). After the formal talk there was a friendly question-and-answer session, in which I trust I clarified for my listeners certain aspects of American fandom which they had heretofore found puzzling. Finally I presented the Association with an autographed first edition of Sheri Tepper's The Gate to Women's Country; and while I suspect some of these fans were a trifle vague as to who Ms. Tepper was, the gift was accepted with true fannish graciousness. In return Pavel presented me with a certificate proclaiming, in Grundtharian and somewhat idiosyncratic English, "Eternal Socialist Friendship" between the Grundtharian Science Fiction Association and the Fort Lauderdale Science Fiction, Model Rocketry and Armenian Food Club. Caught up in the spirit of the moment I spontaneously invited the GSFA to send a representative to

the 1992 World Science Fiction Convention in Orlando, Florida; and while there was some muttering about "exit visas," in general this idea was well received. The evening then concluded with the traditional showing of the dubbed version of Journey to the Center of the Earth. You have not lived until you have heard Pat Boone yodel in Grundtharian. Happily, being an experience fan, I was able to help my new friends understand certain aspects of the film. Evidently the official interpreters at Grundfilm had missed some subtleties of the English text. For instance, I don't recall any reference to the Central Intelligence Agency in the original....

After the adjournment of the meeting, I returned to the "Comrade Iosif Vissarionovich", and again slept comfortably in Mr. Tritsky's bed, secure in the knowledge of the international amity of fandom. Gregor, who had kindly offered to see me to the airport, joined me for breakfast in the morning. He was able to explain that the rumbling noises that disturbed my sleep at 3:00 AM, and which seemed to involve armored vehicles, had merely been units of the People's Militia taking advantage of the light traffic at that hour to take a shortcut. It had not seemed to me that traffic was especially heavy at any hour by American rush-hour standards, but it seemed indiscreet to inquire about troop movements.

Even during my brief visit I had become fond of my Grundtharian hosts, so it was with a sad heart that I parted from Gregor at the Schoove airport. However, as Mr. Franklin so wisely said, "Fish and guests stink after three days," and I had no wish to overstay my welcome. Besides, I had been informed that the Grundflegt pilots are even more zealous than their American counterparts about leaving without one if one is even triflingly late. I therefore was in good time to wend my way home, with a brief layover in Montefiosco.

Of course, being an experienced traveller, I did stop off for a week or so in the Greek islands on the way home. However, trufans would of course not be interested in hearing about a midnight debauch on the beach at Santorini, involving olive oil, barbecued goat, and several exceedingly friendly Swedish girls. After all, what does that have to do



with science fiction? However, it was with a renewed faith in international youth that I boarded an Air France flight in Athens, bound for Paris, New York, and eventually home to Fort Lauderdale.

Although my visit to Grundtharia was brief, it affirms the essential unity of fandom; and I hope some day to see my Grundtharian friends here in the United States. If you should be at a convention, and you should encounter a shaggy-bearded fellow

muttering to himself in a thick accent and wearing the customary purple-and-green sweater of the GSFA, go up to him with open arms and say, "Slomste au Slovenski eegenfrauen." He will greet you as a long-lost sibling.

(Of course, if he happens to be of Slovenian extraction and the color of his sweater is mere coincidence, he will probably punch you in the nose; but then, no one ever said fandom was safe.) [!]



Still Learning

by Jeanne Mealy

There are languages I wish to learn...

...the meaning of a cat's tail as it waves and strokes the air, the words spelled out by a bright green garden hose, lying looped in curves against rich, dark-green grass --

-- and what is the wind saying? It ruffles trees and bushes, also sweeping the grass so that it waves, lies flat, alternating wildly between the two. What do the clouds say. I can almost see letters, concepts... almost.

Could it be that these languages are not comprised of syllables, letters or anything I can study in books?

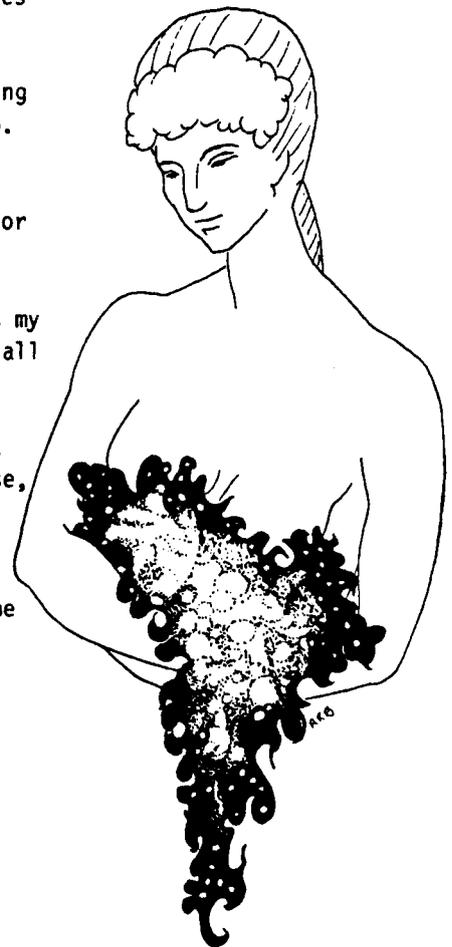
Maybe I need to watch and listen. Feel the air as it talks to me, ruffles my hair, gently stoking my skin. Let my mind mysteriously make sense of it all without knowing how.

Gently closing the noisy parts of my mind, I find myself on the edge of a basic awareness. So simple, yet crowded out by everyday elements of noise, needs work, and all the rest. To learn requires listening with senses I can't name, which violates the very human need to label.

What can I learn, once I can understand the meaning of a thunderstorm, the ripples on a lake, the pattern of sunbeams through clouds at sunset?

The sense of wonder is strong as I ponder this alien view, torn between wanting to KNOW and fearing a little where it may lead me.

I have much to learn...



An Annotated Filmography of Ray Harryhausen

by Mark R. Leeper

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From 1958 to 1977 Ray Harryhausen was Hollywood's king of film special effects. For putting fantasy images on film there was nobody else anywhere near his class. He may have been the only single technician in cinema history to have had his own large and active fan following. For a while there was even a semi-professional magazine, FXRH, devoted to how he created the effects he did. While he had a wide range of effects--many his own inventions--he is best known for three-dimensional animation, generally called stop-motion animation, though he calls his brand "Dynamation" or "Super-Dynamation." As a boy he was fascinated by King Kong and became a staunch fan of its animator Willis O'Brien, whom he later worked with. He grew up a close friend by Ray Bradbury and each influenced the other.

Here is a list of his films with commentary.

Mighty Joe Young (1949)

Apprenticed to Willis O'Brien, Harryhausen helped to animate the title gorilla. The film itself is a rather mundane children's film in the tradition of the Lassie films. It did, however, win an Oscar for its special effects, probably a much-belated tribute to King Kong.

Beast from 20,000 Fathoms (1952)

This was Harryhausen's first solo feature film. It tells the story of a dinosaur released by an atomic blast who makes his way to New York City. He wreaks havoc and is killed at Coney Island. Not badly scripted and it gave Harryhausen a chance to do dinosaurs on film. It also started Harryhausen's long relationship with Columbia pictures.

Beast from 20,000 Fathoms spawned many giant monster films in the 1950s and was also the inspiration for the first Godzilla film. Beast from 20,000 Fathoms was based, but not very much, on "The Foghorn" by Ray Bradbury.

It Came from Beneath the Sea (1955)

In spite of the importance of Beast from 20,000 Fathoms, it did not convince Columbia that Harryhausen was an importance force. This film had a lower budget and was aimed at a young audience. A giant octopus from the deep sea trenches comes to the surface and menaces San Francisco. Years later Harryhausen revealed that his offer to Columbia was based on the number of tentacles they wanted and they settled for six!

Earth vs. the Flying Saucers (1956)

Low-budget again, but you would not know it to look at the film. The saucers were his first attempt at flying effects. The film climaxes with an impressive battle in Washington D.C.

The Animal World (1956)

Harryhausen was lent to Warner Brothers to do the dinosaur effect for a semi-documentary about the evolution of animal life. He worked with O'Brien. (I do not remember the film well and it has not appeared anywhere in many years.)

Twenty Million Miles to Earth (1957)

Harryhausen's next entry was another film targeted for Saturday matinee crowds. It opens with a spectacular scene of a spaceship crashing nose-first into the coastal waters off Sicily. The centerpiece of this film is a creature hatched from an egg brought from Venus by the spaceship. The Ymir, as Harryhausen called it, looked like a cross between a man and a dinosaur. The birth of the Ymir is a really nice piece of animation. The film could have had a better story but it is still an enjoyable monster film.

The Seventh Voyage of Sinbad (1958)

Harryhausen wanted to try doing animation in color and chose to do an Arabian Night's fantasy that would have real monsters. Somewhat to Harryhausen's surprise, the choosy Bernard Hermann not only agreed to score the the film but was really enthusiastic about the project. Harryhausen packed the film with wonders such as cyclopes, a dragon, and a monstrous two-headed bird. Columbia, who had only meager expectations for the movie, found it to be one of their best-grossing films that year. From this point on Harryhausen would aim at more adult audiences and have bigger budgets to do it with. Harryhausen fans gennerally agree this to be his best film.

The Three Worlds of Gulliver (1960)

On the face of it one would expect Swift's satiric fantasy to be a perfect project for Harryhausen. Unfortunately, the script was just not very good. It tried too hard to be charming even to the point of throwing in a song or two. Some nice effects work, including a fight scene with an alligator, but generally this was not much fun.

Mysterious Island (1961)

Jules Vern's story is pretty much straight adventure until the science fiction elements enter toward the end. Not content with that, the producers plastered on a number of mosters to liven things up and Harryhausen created the monsters. Included were giant bees and a giant crab. It had a good score by Bernard Hermann.

Jason and the Argonauts (1963)

Harryhausen fans generally consider this a classic second only to The Seventh Voyage of Sinbad among his films. It is probably the best scripted for any of his films and, while generally accurate to the myth, it gave Harryhausen lots of room to do the type of effects he does best. There is an army of skeletons (well, perhaps only a platoon), the multi-headed hydra, and flying Harpies. But the best effects are a huge Poseidon coming out of the sea and the great bronze giant Talos.

First Men in the Moon (1964)

This film is only marginally more faithful to its source than was Mysterious Island. The screenplay is by the excellent Nigel Kneale, though it is not one of his best efforts. Kneale's best touch in the film is the first few minutes. Harryhausen's effects too start out good but become humdrum once



the explorers set off for the moon. The effect of the sphere breaking loose of its greenhouse and flying skyward makes one wish Wells were around to see it. What we see of the Lunar world is adequate, but not really imaginative.

One Million Years B.C. (1966)

On this go-around, Harryhausen was working for Hammer films. It was about as good as you could make a film about dinosaurs and prehistoric people living together. Harryhausen's dinosaurs were done as well as he ever had done them, but they could not overcome the premise. More attention was given to Raquel Welch in her first sexy role. Somebody decided to use a photographically enlarged lizard as a dinosaur on one scene, but it is hard to believe it would have been Harryhausen.

The Valley of the Gwangi (1969)

Willis O'Brien always wanted to do a film with cowboys against dinosaurs. O'Brien wanted to call the film Gwangi. He wrote the story for Beast of Hollow Mountain but it fell short of his vision. After his death, Harryhausen decided to make the film and he put in his best dinosaur animation ever. The story takes place in Mexico in cowboy times but the story is still strongly reminiscent

of King Kong. As a western it is not very good but the dinosaurs are great. There are convincing scenes of live-action cowboys roping stop-motion dinosaurs. I have never figured out how he integrated the two and had the ropes connect them.

The Golden Voyage of Sinbad (1974)

After a hiatus Harryhausen returned to the screen with the second of his Sinbad films. It includes a fantastic creatures from many mythologies but its high point is a six-armed Kali with all six arms moving at once. For the first time in a while the story was decent (with a notable exception in how the villain--played by Tom Baker--was finally dispatched). Harryhausen unfortunately put too many of his effects in scenes too dark to make out detail. It had a good score by Miklos Rosza.

Sinbad and the Eye of the Tiger (1977)

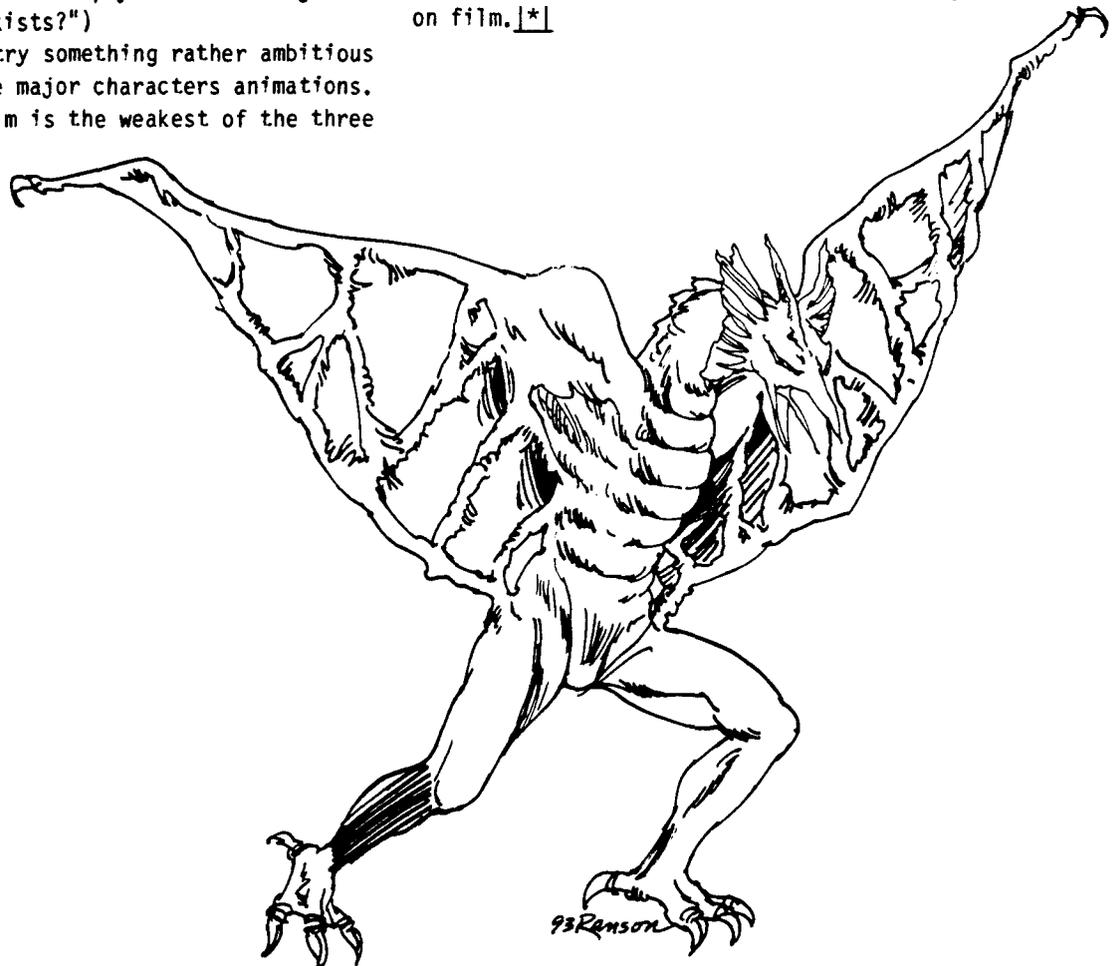
The most recent of Harryhausen's Sinbad films was released the same weekend as Star Wars. It had some nice creations, such as an intelligent baboon and a troglodyte, but there was also some sloppiness with overly obvious matte lines. But its worst feature was a script in which both the good guys and the bad guys kept making unrealistically stupid blunders. ("Is this the map you are looking for? How did you know it exists?")

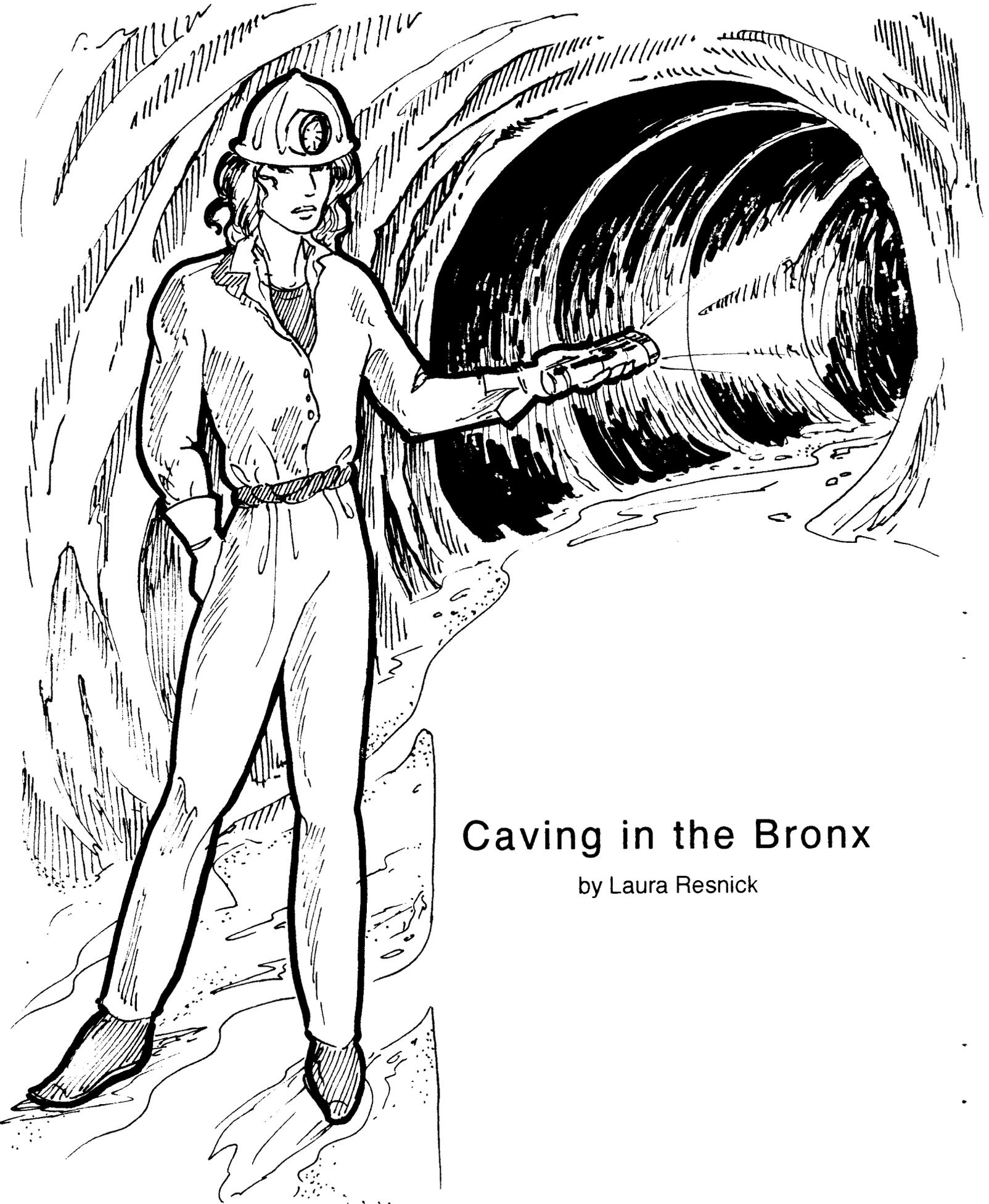
Harryhausen did try something rather ambitious by making some of the major characters animations. But still, this film is the weakest of the three Sinbads. (Sinbad always gets the girl at the end and is unattached at the beginning of the next film. It is unclear what he is doing with those women.)

Clash of the Titans (1981)

Harryhausen's most recent film was for MGM rather than his usual Columbia. This was to be everything Jason and the Argonauts was, plus having big-budget actors such as Burgess Meredith, Laurence Olivier, Maggie Smith, Clair Bloom, and Ursula Andress. It was popular with audiences for a summer but it lacked finesse. Harryhausen did some amazing animation, including an excellent flying horse and a spectacular scene of a city engulfed by water, but some of the ideas (such as having a cute mechanical owl) were simply misfires. Harry Hamlin was just not a very engaging actor as Perseus. The film ended up ponderous and dull.

Harryhausen has not made a film since 1981. Stop-motion effects are now very common in films and their novelty has worn off. Harryhausen mastered them just early enough that he could build a career on them and become known. His apprentices, people such as Jim Danforth and Dave Allen, will probably never be as well-known as their mentor was. These days stop-motion effects compete with computerized visual effects, often gory make-up/prosthetic effects, and rubberized monsters. There are more special effects but less sense of wonder. But there are a lot of fans grateful to Harryhausen for showing Hollywood what could be done in putting fantasy on film. [*]





Caving in the Bronx

by Laura Resnick

I thought we were going out for dinner.

Admittedly, Roberta's phone call had been a little confusing. A friend of her cousin's had invited her to accompany him and a few of his friends, and did I want to go along? The nature of the adventure wasn't quite clear--something to do with looking at an old tunnel beneath the city. But dinner in the Village was definitely part of the game plan, and eating always gets my vote.

I was spending the summer in New York, subletting an old friend's tiny, stuffy, noisy studio apartment on East 90th. Roberta's summary of our proposed evening led me to assume that we would go down to Greenwich Village for a delicious, ethnic meal in a restaurant that our companions--resident New Yorkers--had discovered, then finish the evening by briefly looking at some old derelict subway station with nice mosaics or something.

Never assume anything.

A car honked beneath my window, and I triple-locked the apartment before going downstairs to find Roberta and a blond, hairy guy called Mike waiting for me in a fancy jeep. Mike talked non-stop in a manner that few fans could compete with. It was as if he had conquered the need to breathe. He looked at Roberta and me a great deal while he spoke, only occasionally glancing at Second Avenue, which he drove down at a speed that very nearly broke the sound barrier. Even in Manhattan, where getting into a car is an accepted form of suicide, Mike's driving terrified other motorists and caused me to cling to my seat in petrified silence.

We arrived quickly at the downtown restaurant, whereupon I stumbled out of the jeep and leaned against a wall, my limbs too spaghetti-like to support me, until we met Mike's friends, Michael and John. Michael writes for various magazines and John is a cameraman for one of the networks.

I was starving. The restaurant, however, achieved a feat I had previously thought impossible--one whiff of stale beans and some outhouse-like odor, combined with the racket of a hundred NYU students and a view of the grubby interior managed to destroy my appetite. The three guys adored this place and came here often. It was one of the best restaurants in New York, they assured me.

I prayed that there would be no tables available, that there would be a fifty minute waiting list, a food shortage, a bomb scare, anything. However, we were seated immediately. Having made our selections from the grim menu, we were promptly served food that clearly elucidated (as if that were necessary) why this place was so cheap.

After a serious discussion among the men about where to buy the best pizza in New York (good pizza, they insisted, was only available in the Bowery, Harlem, or the Bronx), the conversation turned to caving. They were dedicated cavers, and the

length of time they spent in dark, wet holes, as well as how deep they went into these holes, was a matter of some importance. I asked a lot of questions, rather interested and completely unsuspecting.

I had a chill moment when, as we left the restaurant, one of them asked what I had brought to wear, and upon hearing that I'd brought sweats and Nikes, said with concern that that wouldn't do me any good.

"Where is this tunnel?" I asked Mike as Roberta and I reluctantly climbed back into his jeep. "I thought it would be around here."

Wrong again. We were now headed, I learned, to the North Bronx where Bob, the apparent guru of the local caving society, would be our host for the evening's festivities.

My psyche has mercifully blocked out the memory of the drive from the Village to the North Bronx in Mike's jeep, though I do recall him enthusiastically extolling the virtues of Israeli folk dancing on the West Side Highway.

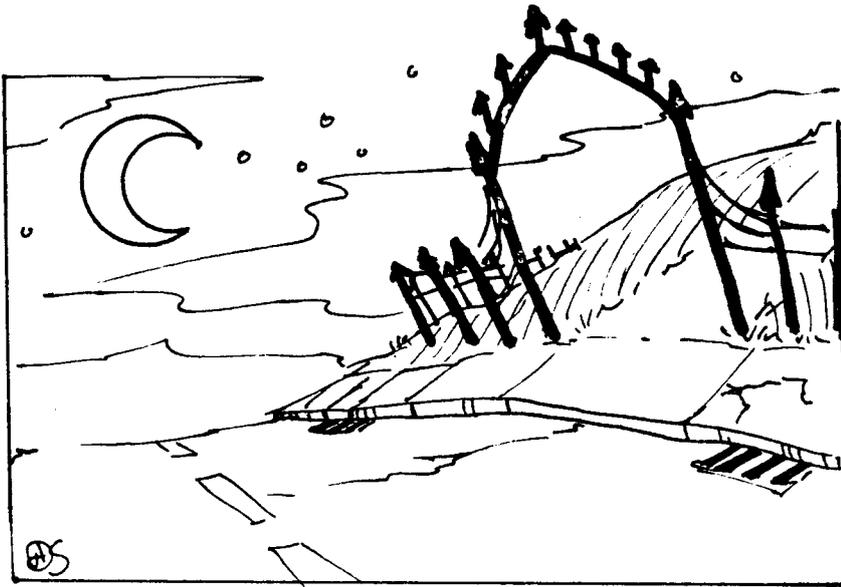
I guess it was when I met Bob that I really started to panic. Not because of Bob himself, mind you. Quite the contrary. He was a dark-haired, dark-eyed, bearded guy with a calm, gentle, reassuring manner who seemed, I'm sorry to say, rather surprised to find the five of us on his doorstep. No, what panicked me was the way Bob immediately set about finding hard-hats, flashlights, and body stockings (in June, we're talking) for me and Roberta.

"Maybe someone should tell me a little about where we're going," I suggested as casually as possible when Bob handed me thick woolen gloves to protect my hands not only from the cold (it was 90 degrees out, for God's sake) but also from cuts, scrapes, and rust.

The guys, who were all enthusiastic cavers who couldn't get away from New York nearly as often as they'd like, discovered underground tunnels a few years ago. Bob, who had lived in this neighborhood all his life, had known since childhood that the tunnels supposedly existed and had often searched for an entrance. It wasn't until he joined up with other cavers that he met someone else equally interested in finding the entrance to the abandoned tunnels beneath the Bronx.

We were going to enter the tunnels, they said, through the historic entrance. I guess I pictured something with a little visitors' center, restrooms, and a color-coded map. Outfitted with gear that made me feel like a coal miner, I joined Roberta in following the guys out the door and into the now dark night.

I felt some hesitation about walking around the Bronx after dark, but there were six of us, after all. My hesitation turned to anxiety, however, when



we entered Van Cortlandt Park, a place one seldom goes by day and never goes by night. But, hell, there were six of us, right?

Anxiety gave way to nervousness when we cut through a broken fence, climbed up and down a series of crumbling, decrepit stairs, and left public lighting behind us for good. Nervousness yielded to sheer terror when, in the midst of trees and shadows and shrubbery, we stumbled upon an abandoned car whose windshield had apparently been blown out by a sawed-off shotgun.

We're going to find a body, I thought. I'm going to spend the rest of the night giving statements to the police, who will wonder what I'm doing wearing wool gloves and long underwear in the middle of a heat wave, not to mention the hardhat with a light on it, while wandering around the bowels of a park at ten o'clock at night.

The car, however, was empty except for a few springs and a lot of broken glass. My suggestion that we consider turning back was good-naturedly shouted down by the guys, who assured me that the experience of a lifetime awaited me. It seemed we walked forever, using flashlights to find our way, through narrow, overgrown paths in a dense forest that I had never thought to find in the Bronx. Finally, we reached the historic entrance, at which point I learned that the guys called it that because it was the spot at which they first discovered an entrance to the tunnels.

There was a crumbling old brick building. It had been some kind of station house to control the flow of water--for these tunnels had been built prior to the Civil War to carry fresh water from Westchester into Manhattan, which had only a brackish and unreliable water supply until then. The guys had researched the tunnels and learned that they represented an astonishing feat of engineering. The main tunnel was forty miles long, and since the source of the water was significantly higher than its destination in Manhattan, the tunnel had been con-

structed so that it descended one foot every mile. A decade in the making, it had provided fresh water to the city for about a century, before new tunnels were constructed and it was closed up, eventually to be forgotten.

Interested now, despite my apprehension, my awful dinner, and my long hike, I asked how to get in. I was hoping for a doorway in the depths of the forlorn brick building, I suppose. Instead, Bob uncovered a little manhole in the dirt and indicated some ancient, rusty rungs cemented into the earth. Undoubtedly taking pity on my obvious dismay (I'm not exactly butch), he went first, then helped me down once he had lit the underground area with his lantern. The others followed after me. Encouraged by the guys, Roberta climbed around the interior of the stone building, into whose guts we had crawled, so to speak. Mike, who seemed to have an extensive knowledge of engineering, explained how some of the rusted, dusty, mysterious equipment would have functioned a century ago.

I noticed, however, that we appeared to be cornered. I didn't see a tunnel, or anything like an entrance. Just dark, dank walls, the manhole I had climbed down, and a massive, rusty, solid wall, about eight feet high and curved at the top. Bob explained that the rusty wall I was looking at was actually a gate used to seal up the tunnel when it had finally been abandoned.

"To keep people like us out," I observed.

It was clear there were others who needed to be kept out, as well. The grim little area I was in also contained used syringes and various other kinds of really depressing garbage.

"How do we get into the tunnel itself?" I asked.

Bob, who obviously wasn't squeamish, pushed some garbage away from the rusted gate. Upon discovering the gate originally, the guys had forced it up just enough to squeeze underneath and see what was on the other side. This was so arduous and risky a task that they now kept the gate permanently prop-

ped up, with a generous covering of garbage to hide the entrance from junkies, vagrants, and other folks who just happened to climb down the manhole in this isolated section of Van Cortlandt Park.

The hole through which I was meant to slide had a number of distinct disadvantages. It was exceedingly small, and I am not. Roberta, who eats right and works out, would probably get through there with a little effort, but I doubted that I would manage it under any conditions. I also noticed that a little river of water was running through the hole, making it impossible to stay dry while wriggling through.

"Where's all that water coming from?" I asked nervously. "I thought you said these tunnels had been sealed off."

Bob assured me that the water was just runoff from rainstorms. There was, he added, about six inches of water in the tunnel at all times. No wonder they had all thought by gym shoes would be inadequate footwear, I thought glumly.

"Why didn't you tell me I'd have to squirm through this hole?" I demanded crossly.

"We thought you might not come if we told you." They were very eager to share the wonders of the tunnel. They were also, I must admit, very tolerant of my complaints as I desperately wriggled my way through that small, doubtful, wet, garbage-cluttered hole and entered the tunnel.

It was pretty incredible, and the guys had explored it often and thoroughly enough to point out its most interesting features: such excellent masonry that it's probably unparalleled in this century; places where workers carved their names and the date into the brick; spots where vines and roots had started to grow through the thick, stony walls; sections where people, perhaps more than a century ago, had drilled holes in order to illegally tap the water supply. In one such spot, there was also a petrified broom handle which some water official had apparently used to stop up one of

these holes. The guys showed it to us, then reverently put it back; they explored the tunnel often, but were careful to disturb nothing.

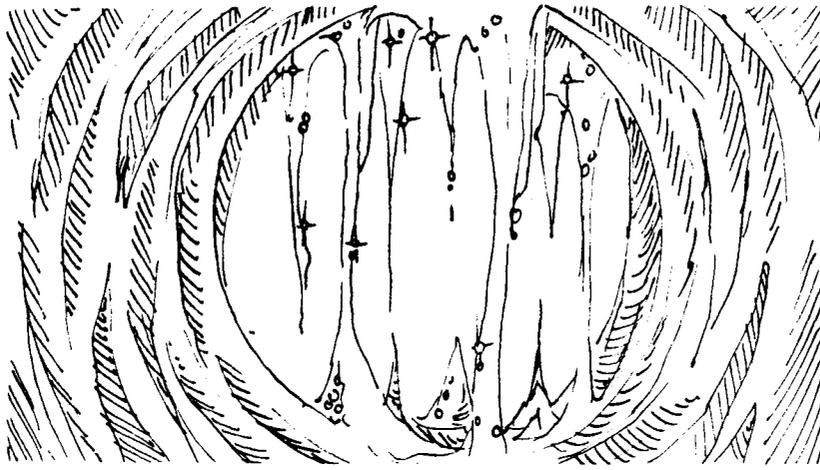
The tunnel was perfectly cylindrical, so we were walking through a circle--round roof, round walls, round floor beneath our feet. Since the bottom of the tunnel did indeed have at least six inches of water at all times, I spent the entire journey sloshing through it, hoping it was just rainwater, unwilling to think about what Bronx rainwater probably had floating in it. The curvature of the floor made walking out of the water impractical, unless we braced our arms against each other. Even then, it would only be fifty yards or so before I would lose traction on the slippery, sloping surface and plunge back into the water, so I resigned myself to sloshing.

And we sloshed for miles, or so it seemed. I was now glad of the warm clothes Bob had insisted on lending me. In addition to being wet down there, it was also only about 50 degrees. The temperature, they said, remained fairly constant all year round. It was, needless to say, exceedingly dark, too, and we each kept our hatlights on most of the time. I also stayed close to Bob, who had a lantern, or Mike, who had a flashlight.

Our ultimate goal was a section of the tunnels with fabulous formations. Years ago, apparently, this portion of the tunnel had started to leak. As I understand it, the city quickly plastered the inside of this area with a layer of cement. After abandonment, water had leaked through, picking up calcium deposits, and created long, delicate, glowing white stalactites such as one very seldom has the opportunity to see. According to Mike, you could cave devotedly for a dozen years before seeing the kind of formations he and the guys showed to us that night in the tunnel.

We took photos, but they do no justice to what we saw down there, and I had to admit that the sight was worth that unnerving trek through the





park and the long hike through the watery, chilly tunnel. Some of the formations were three and four feet long, but as slender as a pencil. Some twined around each other, and others formed fabulous, lustrous, sparkling lumps that looked like fairytale castles. Some were so delicate that just talking too loud could shatter them.

I enjoyed the formations, but the guys, who really know that kind of stuff, were ecstatic, so enthusiastic that no one in their company could fail to be enthused, too. Continuing on, we came to a vast chamber with ceilings as high as a cathedral. The central area was so deeply under water that I didn't venture into it, but we did wander about the perimeter, knee deep in water that was growing increasingly cold. There were a number of high, arched doorways, vast walls, and entrances to other tunnels, all of it eerily lit by our flashlights and lanterns. This was the central control station from which the flow of the water was regulated, not only to Manhattan, but to several other destinations, too, including a prison.

We started singing, just crooning random tones and listening to them bounce off the walls, mixing, mingling, echoing, and harmonizing. After about five minutes of this, a manhole opened at the very top of the vaulted ceiling, and a jean-clad leg swung through it. I paused, staring in astonishment. The others all went silent, too, and the guys drew me and Roberta into the shadows, back against the dank walls, and turned off all our lights.

The leg stayed where it was, and I could hear voices from above. They sounded so panic-stricken and hysterical that it struck me as funny. We remained silent in the dark, and finally, after an-

other minute, the leg withdrew above us and the manhole closed again. Turning on his light, Bob gestured for silence and led us all out of the chamber. Once again in the tunnel, he explained.

Their caving society didn't actually have any right to be down there at all. Since they had always kept it a secret, showing it only to friends, the authorities didn't know they were exploring the tunnels and, consequently, had never forbidden them to go down there. If, however, they were discovered there, they were fairly certain they would be told not to go down there again, and the thought of that was unbearable to them. When I wondered how it could possibly be such a secret, they gave me the impression that the city and the water authorities appear to have actually forgotten that the tunnels existed. The men above, who had heard us singing in the main chamber, worked the night shift at some modern city reservoir, and probably had no idea what was directly below them. Imagine their shock, then, to hear disordered chanting ringing out from the ground beneath them in the middle of the night. They probably thought the reservoir was haunted by the spirits of some demented monks.

As we approached an exit from the tunnels, the guys explained that there was much more to see, though we wouldn't have a chance that night. They had already extensively explored sections under Harlem, part of the tunnel leading to the prison, and some area they called the Mudslide, and they knew of numerous entrances and exits besides the ones they showed us that night.

No secret lasts forever, and the guys knew they couldn't keep theirs much longer. Sooner or later, someone else was going to find out about the tun-



nels. Their solution, therefore, was to expose it themselves, in a time and manner that would help protect the formations down there. Michael and John told me a little about their plans to, respectively, publish an article about the tunnels and then do a news segment about them. It's only because, as I understood it, they plan to call public attention to the tunnels this year that I felt I could write this down and expose some of their secret--though I couldn't find the tunnel again myself if my life depended on it.

The exit from the tunnel was as intimidating as the entrance. Apparently there's just no easy way to do these things. Showing considerable strength and tolerance, Mike and Bob helped me scale a wall taller than myself, climb up on some rusty bars about fifteen feet above the floor of the tunnel, walk across them to some rusty rungs built into the rocks, and pull myself out of a manhole and up into

Van Cortlandt Park some time after midnight.

My wooly gloves were a little the worse for the wear, and I was grateful for them, thinking of what my unprotected hands would have looked like by now without them. We hiked back more than a mile to Bob's apartment, and I noticed that, rather than threatening us, everyone we saw skittered away from us. All mudstained and most peculiarly dressed, we probably looked like we'd just performed a ritual sacrifice and burial.

Longing for a shower and my own bed, I changed into my dinner clothes back at Bob's and insisted we leave immediately. To my enormous relief, Roberta decided I'd had enough adventures for one night; she took Mike's keys away and drove us back to the city herself. As we passed the George Washington Bridge, Mike suggested that it would be really fun to climb it in the dark sometime. [*]

BALLADE OF JOE HALDEMAN

by John DeChancie

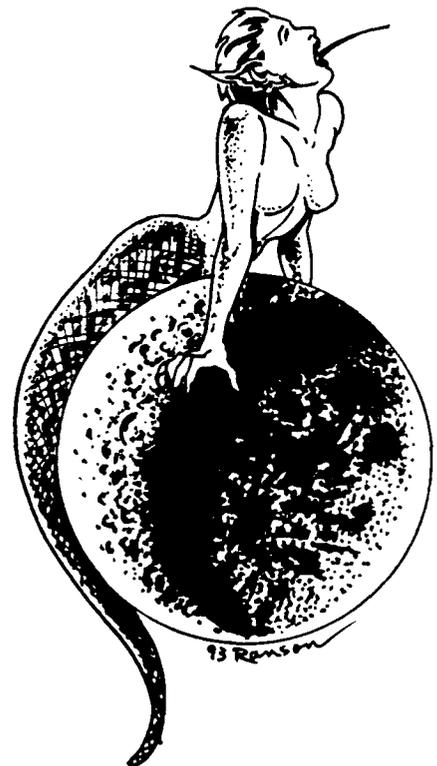
A string of duty is a war forever;
They stole Papa's bundle!--though it could be a hoax.
(He'll deal you a future; endlessly clever,
He'll serve it up cold with a side-dish of jokes.)
The Tricentennial is canceled, folks;
There'll be no foofaraw at the square.
L-Fivers took off with the ship--those gay blokes!--
As Haldeman grins, grins in his lair.

The mind is a bridge to Never-Never
And summer's lease can extend, he invokes;
A modest proposal proposed to whomever
Can beguile that which war revokes.
No castles; sorry, no swords, no strokes,
No frangible unicorn or Renaissance Fair.
This is the hard stuff, so take deep tokes
As Haldeman grins, grins in his lair.

Infinite dreams--forever and ever;
A man with a mind of his own, he pokes
Holes in space to watch it dissever,
Unravel -- the cosmic egg has several yokes.
"My djinns all remembered!" he slyly provokes.
But, Willy Mandella, ye look so quare!
A year of war is hard on most folks --
As Haldeman grins, grins in his lair.

(L'Envoi)

Worlds without end, worlds for whatever
Your purpose may be -- And, if you dare,
Un!tangling webs is heady endeavor --
As haldeman spins, spins in his lair.



Return to Paradise

by Mike Resnick

Illustrated by
Diana Harlan Stein

Except for a two-day stopover on the way to Tanzania, I hadn't been to Kenya since 1987 -- yet Kenya was the country I had become most associated with through my writings. My allegorical history of it, *PARADISE*, had appeared in 1989, and my Kirinyaga stories, based on Kenya's Kikuyu people, had begun appearing in 1988 and had won me a pair of Hugos and a batch of Hugo and Nebula nominations. So, in 1992, it seemed to me that it was time to return to Kenya once again, since it had proven the most fertile source of story ideas for me.

Once again we made arrangements to go with our private guide, former white hunter Perry Mason, who over the years had become a close friend, and Pat and Roger Sims, who had accompanied us to Egypt and Tanzania, decided to come along as well.

Thursday, September 17: We took off on Wednesday night and landed in London Thursday morning. Since Carol and Pat both suffer from jet lag, we decided to spend a day in London letting them move their internal clocks ahead. As readers of these safari diaries know by now, we do not fare very well in a) London airport hotels, or b) bathrooms. The Skyline Sheraton was no exception. The moment we were shown to our room, Carol entered the bathroom to wash her hands and face...and found that though the latch worked, there was no handle, and hence no way to open the door. So she called through the door and asked me to open it from my side -- which was when I found that there was no handle or knob on my side of the door either. I called the front desk, they scouted around for a maintenance man, he came up and disassembled the door, and we moved to a new room. It later occurred to me that had a single party taken the room, s/he might well have had to wait for the maid to come by the next morning before getting released.

An inauspicious, if typical, beginning.

September 18: We hung around the hotel until midafternoon, then went over to Heathrow to catch our 5:00 PM flight.

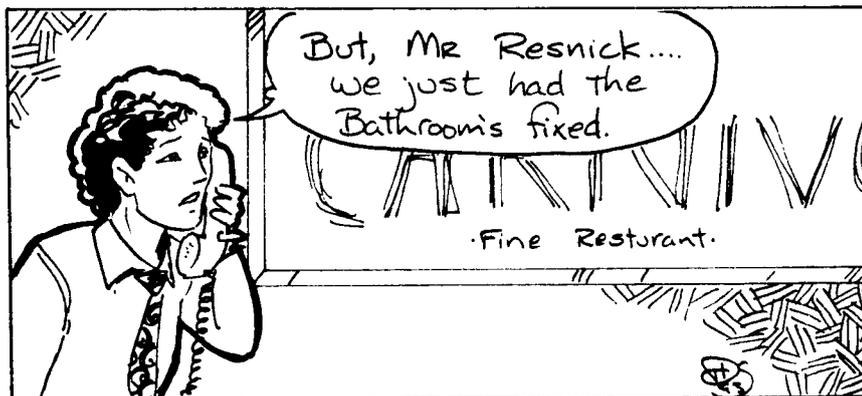
September 19: British Airways, in its infinite wisdom, has revamped its schedule, and for reasons best known to itself now releases 500 tourists and businessmen in Nairobi at 3:30 AM every morning. Carol, Pat and Roger were exhausted; I felt fine. (I am so big and airplane seats are so small and uncomfortable that my consciousness invariably says, "No way am I putting up with this; I'll see you when we land," and I'm usually asleep before the plane takes off and Carol wakes me when we touch down.

Perry, poor soul, was there to meet us and take us to the Norfolk, where we had reserved a two-bedroom cottage which had been home to Kermit Roosevelt, Bror Blixen and Robert Ruark, among others. Everyone else went right to sleep, and I wandered around looking for people with stories to tell. (You'd be surprised how rare they are at 4:45 AM on a Saturday morning.)

Perry had just bought a lovely house in the Ngong Hills on the aptly-named Windy Ridge Road, and he and his Significant Other, Vivian Prince, author of *Kenya: The Years of Change*, invited the four of us out to lunch there. It's a beautiful piece of property, with gorgeous gardens, and enough room for them to keep their horses, and except for occasional evening visits by the local leopard, it is in every way idyllic.

In the afternoon we drove by Karen Blixen's house, and then about a mile down the road to her first home, Sweda House, which was eventually used to house her farm managers. Since Pat had an upset stomach, we cancelled our dinner reservations at the Carnivore and instead ordered about a trillion appetizers from the Ibis Grill, which was perhaps 75 feet from the door of our cottage, and had them delivered to our veranda. Except for the lack of booze, Hemingway would have been proud.

September 20: We breakfasted early and drove north to Thika, where we stopped at the historic Blue Posts Hotel. I am a waterfall junkie, and on my last trip to Kenya, I had seen the Chania Falls there (if you remember the old Tarzan television



series, this was the waterfall Ron Ely swung across every week during the title credits). I had since found out that there was a second waterfall there, totally hidden from view...and sure enough, after tramping through a forest and climbing down a couple of hundred winding stone stairs, I came to it. Absolutely beautiful, an experience spoiled only by the fact that I then had to climb up a couple of hundred winding stone stairs.

After we left Thika we drove into the Aberdares National Park, and unpacked the box lunches the Norfolk had prepared for us when we found a lovely site at about 11,000 feet, overlooking a lush green valley. While we were eating a small herd of elephants began crossing the valley -- eight or nine matronly sorts with their teenagers and their babies. And then Jumbo appeared. He stood a good three feet higher at the shoulder than any of the others, and was carrying the most magnificent ivory I've ever seen on a living elephant. Perry estimated it at 80 to 100 pounds a side. How he managed to stay unpoached long enough to grow those molars is a mystery, but manage he did. He made a striking picture, towering above all the others as he grazed his way across the valley. I could have captured him on videotape with my telephoto lens, but I decided not to. If no one else sees that ivory and no one can tell from the picture's background where to find him, maybe he'll still be around on my next trip to Kenya.

We left the park in midafternoon and drove a few miles over to Sangare Ranch, which is owned by Mike and Jane Prettijon. They have a truly luxurious home situated on some two thousand acres, and Mike raises prize cattle while Jane (who also runs the gift shop at the Aberdares Country Club) has imported a son of Olden Times, a fine racehorse who won stakes races here from 6 to 14 furlongs, and breeds both flat racers and steeplchasers. (And occasionally things that don't race at all, such as the zebroid we saw that was sired by her stallion out of a Grevy's zebra. I learned another fascinating and useless fact that afternoon: a Grevy's zebra -- that's the pin-striped variety -- can conceive when bred to a horse, but not when bred to a Burchell's, or common, zebra. Go mull on that one for awhile.)

After we had been given a tour of the immediate grounds and enjoyed tea on the house's hundred-foot-long veranda, we climbed back into the car and drove another couple of miles to a totally private, secluded lake that the Prettijons own. They had built a two-bedroom cottage there (which we shared with Pat and Roger, while Perry slept in a nearby tent). There is also a kitchen/dining cabin, and they graciously allow their old friends (of whom Perry is one) to stay there while on safari. Jane also loaned us her chef, and somehow or other, with no electrical power, so far from the nearest human beings that if you were to fire a shotgun no one would hear it, we ate an exquisite dinner topped off with individual chocolate souffles. Not bad fare for the bush, and it more than made up for the fact that about a thousand sacred ibis living on the lake screamed all night long.

September 21: This morning we went to another private ranch that is not open to tourists, but where Perry was able to call upon some old friendships to get us in: the Solio Ranch, which along with raising cattle has a 15,000-acre game reserve in which they raise rhinos for eventual release in the game parks. They've been doing it for about 15 years, since the rhino crisis reached critical levels, and haven't lost a single rhino to poachers yet, probably because they hired a dozen of the most notorious poachers in the country and paid them to guard the reserve.

(When Perry tried to impress the owner by stating one of his clients was a writer, he almost blew it. The last writer they allowed in was a journalist who caused them untold problems. It seems that the day before he arrived, one of the rhinos got into a huge battle with a hippo and wound up drowning. The morning the writer showed up they had just pulled the rhino's corpse out of the pond and removed his horn, which would be sold to China to help pay for the reserve's upkeep. The writer took one look at the dead, hornless rhino and reported that Solio was poaching its own rhinos.)

Anyway, we took a three-hour game run through Solio, saw ten rhinos and hundreds of other animals, then drove to Thomsen's Falls and had a box lunch that the Sangare chef had prepared. After that we drove down into the Rift Valley to Lake Baringo, a bird-watcher's paradise, where we checked in at the very upscale Lake Baringo Club.

September 22: We had breakfast with Hillary Garland, an old friend of Perry's, who is the club's resident ornithologist and leads daily bird walks. She told us that she had spotted more than 400 different species so far this month, and the migratory birds hadn't started arriving yet.

Immediately after breakfast we drove to Lake Bogoria, about 30 miles away. It is the smallest, and probably the most unique, of the Rift Lakes, riddled with a number of hot-water geysers that spout up from beneath the surface, and home to a sizeable number of flamingoes.

After lunch, we took a boat trip around Lake Baringo, which is loaded not only with birds but with hippos and crocodiles as well. Carol, the bird-watcher in the family, was in seventh heaven. (For those who are not as involved in birding, the Club also offers camel safaris; they didn't look any more comfortable here than they did in Egypt, and I elected not to take one.)

For dinner we were joined by David Markham, a great-nephew of Beryl Markham's, who would be accompanying us for the next few days in Perry's other safari vehicle, since I had insisted on going to the newly-opened Matthews Range, more than a hundred miles from the nearest source of auto parts, and Perry, who had seen the roads up there, felt there was a fifty-fifty chance we'd blow a couple of tires or break an axle and fully expected one vehicle to wind up towing the other.

September 23: The first leg of the journey to the Matthews Range took us through Samburu territory to the little



frontier town of Marallel, where we stopped at the Marallel Safari Lodge, much upgraded since I was last there in 1986. We each had a two-story wooden chalet overlooking a private park/preserve that was filled with zebra, impala, eland, and warthog. One of the zebras was limping, and we noticed she had managed to step into a tin can, which she then could not remove from her foot; one of the waiters told us that she'd been wearing it for two months, and it hadn't stopped her from eating or getting pregnant.

Roger was becoming interested in spotting birds, but was still having so much trouble with his "o'clocks" that I thought Carol might kill him. ("Bird," Roger would say. "Where?" Carol would ask. "Three o'clock," he would say. She would look to her right. "There's nothing there," she would answer. "Nine o'clock," Roger would amend. She would look to her left. "There's nothing there, either," she would say; "point to it." Roger would point straight ahead. "That's twelve o'clock," she would explain; "now, where is the bird?" "It flew away," Roger would answer, never realizing how close to death he had just come.)

(Roger, despite being the 1959 worldcon chairman and the 1988 worldcon Fan Guest of Honor, has certain problems in the areas of math and spontaneity. Once, a few years back, at a Windycon, Lynne Aronson was explaining some mathematical trick whereby you did a lot of things to a number -- multiplied it by such-and-so, subtracted such-and-so, etc. -- and no matter what number you chose, when you finished the process you always came up with the same total. Roger wanted to try it, so Lynne told him to choose a number between one and ten to work with. Roger spent about half a minute considering his selection; when he still hadn't come up with a number, I explained to him that this was the easy part.)

Perry was worried about running out of fuel in the trackless wastes of the Matthews Range, so he and David drove into Marallel in the afternoon to top off the vehicles -- and found that there was no deisel fuel to be had. Ever resourceful, he discovered that the Lodge had a private cache of 30 gallons, and managed to buy it before anyone else knew it was there.

September 24: Perry had written me that the last part of the journey to Kitich Camp in the Matthews Range was "adventure motoring", but I don't think I truly understood what he meant. When we left Marallel at eight in the morning (he took Pat and Roger, while Carol and I followed

with David), he estimated that we'd get there at about noon. At 10:30, we came to a sign saying that we were only 29 kilometers (about 20 miles) from the camp, and David suggested that Perry had been overly cautious in his estimate and that we'd be in camp by eleven.

We got there at 12:40, after going up and down a bunch of the worst luggas (dry river beds) I'd ever seen on a winding mountain path that was a road by definition only. Toby, the camp manager, was a few hours late greeting us; he had gone to (relatively) nearby Wamba for supplies and had -six- blow-outs on the way back.

Still, once we were there, we had to admit it was worth the effort. Or at least Carol and I had to; Pat and Roger aren't as heavily into what can best be termed Primitive Camping. Just beyond the back of our tent was a bucket shower; it consisted of a canvas bag that could be filled with hot water. The procedure was this: you stepped under it, pulled a cord that started the water coming down, got wet, pulled another cord that shut off the flow of water, soaped yourself down, then pulled the first cord and rinsed yourself off with the remaining water.

The toilet was just as primitive and just as efficient. It consisted on a modern toilet seat atop a wooden box that was perhaps two feet high and 30 inches on a side. When you opened it, you looked down a thirty-foot pit. (Yes, water is at a premium in the Matthews Range.)

The tents -- there were ten of them -- were situated on the bank of a river, though since this was the dry season the river had become a swamp. Nonetheless, there was still water there, and an endless string of buffalo, waterbuck and elephant came by to drink. And every evening, regular as clockwork, a leopard came by at 7:00 to feed on the bait that had been tied to a tree just across the river. Our dinner was never served until he was through with his.

September 25: One of the problems with a newly-established camp in a newly-opened territory is that there isn't much to do. Although the area was filled with game -- we heard lions coughing all night long -- there were no tracks the cars could follow for a game run. So what Kitich did was offer three different walks, all escorted by Samburu warriors armed with spears. The tough one was a 6-hour walk up the entire mountain. The intermediate one was a four-hour walk straight up to something called Baboon Rock, which we could see hovering a few thousand forested feet above us. The easy one, so



they said, was an hour's hike to a secret swimming hole in the depths of the forest. Since Carol, still a couple of months away from 50, was the youngest and fittest of our little party, we chose the easy one.

We were victims of false doctrine. It should have been called the Minimally Less Excruciating One.

We started walking in the heat of the day -- and despite being at altitude, it was hot -- and followed this two-foot-wide winding path that was studded with unseen tree roots, up and down very steep hills, through thornbush that seemed to have a taste for human flesh, jumping over the first column of safari ants ("marabunta", for you Lynengen fans) I'd ever seen, at just enough altitude that oxygen was difficult to come by. Perry, who used to scamper up and down mountains in pursuit of game without drawing a deep breath, had broken his pelvis a couple of years ago, and was in as much discomfort as the rest of us, as was David, who was just along to help out his friend.

After an hour and a half, we finally reached the old swimming hole (after passing four others of almost identical proportions). No one swam. Mostly what we did was lean against some near perpendicular rocks (there was no place to sit), tried not to fall in, and spent the next thirty minutes trying to catch our breaths and rub a little life back into our legs. (Well, I shouldn't say that no one swam; our two Samburu guides, who assured us they had slowed the pace down to half their normal speed, frolocked like a couple of dolphins.)

The walk back was even worse. I kept watching Pat and Perry, and saying to myself that I wouldn't collapse first, but the second they did, the shortest measurable segment of time would be the interval between that and my collapsing on top of them. (They later told me that they were waiting for me to sit down first, after which they would have gone on strike and joined me.) We staggered into camp (everyone but Carol, who takes 15 hours of aerobics and power walks every week; in other words, she cheats), emptied the bar of warm beer, and trudged off to our tents, where we all slept the afternoon away. Toby, the camp manager, upon seeing our condition, thoughtfully had one of the Samburu fill all the shower bags with hot water; by the time I woke up and took mine, it was night in the mountains and ice wouldn't have melted in that damned bag. I stepped under it, immediately hit J above high Q, and scared off all the lions.

September 26: We left Kitich right after an early breakfast, sped through the first 20 miles in a mere 90 minutes, and drove two more hours to Buffalo Springs, Carol's favorite African location, where we transferred ourselves and our luggage back into Perry's safari car and bid David farewell.

The camp hadn't changed much since our last visit there in 1987, except that a number of the tents had been replaced by more permanent bandas (primitive cottages). Carol prefers tents, so while Perry and the Simses moved into bandas, we were given a tent. Unfortunately, it was right next to the open-air dining room, and some wildlife society was holding a banquet there, and it was so loud that we decided to move farther away into a banda as well.

We'd been out of touch with the world for a few days, and we started catching up on news. Though Ross Perot's re-entry into the presidential race hadn't made the Kenya papers, we did find out that the Cincinnati Reds' outfielder Bip Roberts had tied a record by getting ten hits in a row, which will give you some notion of Perot's appeal outside the borders of the United States. We also found that Robin Hurt, a friend of Perry's who I had met in 1989, had been pretty badly ripped up going into the Tanzanian bush after a leopard one of his clients had wounded. (Robin is the star of *In The Blood*, the wonderful documentary film about the recent safari taken by Theodore Roosevelt IV and V.)

We took an afternoon game run through Buffalo Springs, but while we saw Reticulated giraffe, Grevy's zebra, gerunuk, and a number of the animals common to the Northern Frontier, there wasn't much quantity. Most of them were by the Oaso Nyiro in the adjacent Samburu reserve, and we decided to go there in the morning.

September 27: This morning we took the best game run we've ever had in the Buffalo Springs/Samburu reserves. We saw a few small herds of elephant, a lot of oryx, Grevy's zebra, giraffe, impala, warthogs, Grant's gazelles, even a pair of Greater Kudu, plus crocs, hippos, and a truly enormous monitor lizard.

Roger had his usual problems with avian identification. (Roger: "Look over there!" Mike: "Where?" Roger: "There. It's got a yellow bottom." Mike: "Let's start with the basics. Is it a bird?") We stopped for fuel at the Samburu Lodge, and then Perry drove us over to Kenya's premiere tented camp, Larsen's, on the banks of the Oaso Nyiro.



It's a beautiful place, on a lawn that looks rolled, and the tents are so luxurious that your first inclination is to ask where the private jacuzzi is -- but Carol remains adamant: she loves the stark scenery at Buffalo Springs, and we'll be staying there again on our next Kenyan safari.

Since the morning game run ran well over four hours, we took a much briefer one in the afternoon, again sticking close to the river. In between them, Roger and I stopped by to watch some Samburu dancers strut their stuff, and visited the garbage dump about half a mile from our camp, where we found some 200 baboons busy making a living off our leavings.

September 28: We drove to Mount Kenya, where we checked in at Adnan Khoshoggi's former estate, Ol Pejata (which means "The Meeting Place" in Maa, the language of the Maasai.) Talk about luxurious! He had a bed that would comfortably fit ten people, a pair of swimming pools, an exercise room, a bathtub you could practically swim in, and about two million dollars in exquisite furnishings. We shared a two-bedroom guest cottage with Pat and Roger; it was furnished identically to the main house, had a fireplace, and private verandas off each bedroom.

Ol Pejata is a 110,000-acre estate, of which 75,000 acres are ranched, and 35,000 acres are a private reserve filled with game, quite large enough for Khoshoggi to blow away all the animals he wanted. (Hunting is illegal in Kenya, but anyone can hunt on his own property). We took a game run in the afternoon and saw literally thousands of animals, including some rare bushbucks. There are 17 rhino on the place; 16 are wild, and have enough brains not to show their horns to strangers...but the 17th, named Morani, is tame, and poses for photos with visitors. He also eats hard candies, with a tongue that could take the skin off your hand.

On the road to Ol Petaja, we had passed perhaps 75 relief trucks going north to Somalia. One of their last stops in Kenya is the outpost town of Wajir. To show you how Africa works, there was an item in the paper about Wajir, to the effect that a dead camel was floating in the dam at Wajir and poisoning the water supply.

What's unusual about that? Nothing... except that he'd been poisoning it for nine days, and no one had yet thought to remove the body.

September 29: After breakfast and a brief game run, we drove an hour around the mountain and checked in at the Mt. Kenya

Safari Club. (About a mile from the entrance, we passed the uniquely-named Our Lady of Mount Kenya church.) The club is under new ownership -- Lonrho Corporation (for "London and Rhodesia) had bought it, as well as Ol Pejata and the Norfolk, making them Kenya's most upscale hotelier -- and they had poured about three million dollars' worth of improvements into the place since we'd been there last. We checked into a private two-bedroom cottage and went over for lunch, which was the usual buffet spread over eight long tables with enough selections to put you on tilt.

They've started an art gallery there, and I fell in love with a bronze elephant herd rendered by former white hunter Tony Matthews, which was going for a mere \$55,000. Perry, who is a friend of Tony's, told me if I really wanted it, he'd introduce me to Tony, who would probably be happy to knock \$5,000 off the price. Perry thinks all American writers are in Stephen King's income bracket; it broke my heart, but I had to enlighten him.

Perry is also a member of the Safari Club, so while 95% of the guests went into the main dining room for the usual 5-star meal, we accompanied him to the private Member's Dining Room for a ten-course feast that began with spring rolls, then a fish appetizer, then Eggs Florentine, then a salad, worked its way through sliced duck in fruit sauce, and wound up with a pair of desserts. I sure do like roughing it in Africa.

September 30: I have never been even mildly a sick a day on safari, but I woke up at about 4:30 in the morning, totally nauseous, with severe pains in my stomach. When I didn't feel any better after half an hour, I phoned the doctor (the club has one on call), an Indian who told me that it sounded like a mild case of food poisoning and he would send a nurse over with some pills at 9:00. I was too sick to argue that I wanted them now.

So sure enough, at 9:00, in walks the nurse, and gives me a packet of pills and tells me to take one every three hours. I took one, and then next thing I knew, Carol was shaking me awake at noon to give me another. I took it, promptly fell asleep again, and was awakened at 3:00 for a third pill.

I don't remember a thing after that, but at 6:00 in the evening Carol decided not to give me any more pills, since I was just about comatose, and she made up her mind to find out what was in them. Turns out that it was belladonna and hydrogen chloride -- exactly what you use for a Mickey Finn.



Seems the doctor figured my stomach was going to hurt for a day no matter what he gave me, so he simply knocked me out until my system had righted itself.

Problem is, I don't react well to drugs -- or, put a different way, I over-react to them. A coedine pill is enough to knock me out for 24 hours; I'd be a cheap date for a junkie. So, after she made me drink a bowl of soup, I went back to sleep for another 14 hours. It became my Lost Safari Day.

October 1: Carol shook me awake at 9:00 and declared that I should get dressed, walk around, and try to shake the effects of my three Mickeys. I was too sleepy to curse her and too weak to take a swing at her, so I did what she ordered.

We had planned to visit Lewa Downs, another private ranch specializing in rhinos and some of the rarer antelopes, this day, but it looked like it was going to rain, and it was a two-hour drive each way, and I still needed some dust jacket photos of me with the peak of Kirinyaga (Mt. Kenya) in the background, so we decided to drive up the mountain instead.

We never did get the photos. The mountain was covered in clouds and fog, and before we hit 12,000 feet in altitude it started pouring, which gave us a slow but inadvertently exciting ride back down the dirt track to the Club, which is at 7,000 feet. Once there I promptly fell asleep again for the rest of the afternoon.

I didn't really feel like getting dressed up and eating in the Member's Dining Room -- for one thing, I couldn't face another 10-course meal so soon -- so I opted for room service. Since it was cold and raining, Carol, Pat and Roger did the same, leaving Perry to dine in private splendor while we had Alfonse (yes, he's Kikuyu, and yes, that's his real name) light a blaze in our fireplace and bring us our dinner. (My only memory of it is that I skipped the appetizers and main course, and had three bowls of chocolate ice cream.)

Oh, yes -- one other thing. The doors expanded slightly due to all the moisture in the air, and Carol, at whose consistency I marvel, managed to trap herself in the bathroom again.

October 2: I was finally feeling undrugged again, and we drove south to Nairobi, where Vivian took us to lunch at the elegant Horseman restaurant in Karen, while Perry tended to his vehicles. Then we drove to little Wilson Airport, hopped into a plane, and flew out to the Maasai Mara game reserve.

The migration had been exceptionally good this year, and some 1.5 million

wildebeest and half a million zebra were still there, prior to returning to Serengeti when the rains came. On the way from the landing strip to our camp, we passed close to a dozen very fat lions, a couple of herds of elephant, and perhaps 100,000 wildebeest, easily the stupidest, ugliest, and most successful animal in East Africa.

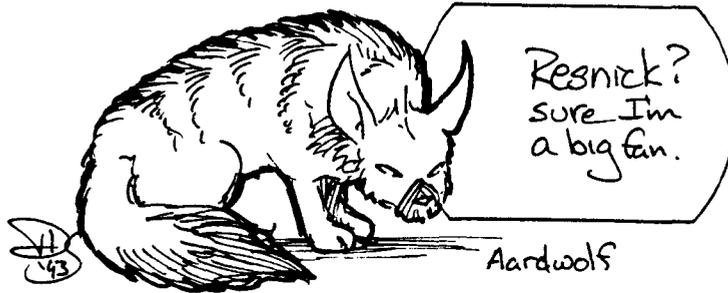
We love the Mara, but we hadn't been enamoured of the previous camps we had stayed at. Cotter's, at the other end of the reserve, had delightfully idiosyncratic guests, but was too far from the game. Governor's was right next to the game, but too damned large and impersonal. We had looked in on a couple of others, including the luxurious Keekorok Lodge, and none of them had appealed to us. But this time we found a camp we loved, Little Governor's, about three miles up the Mara River from the larger Governor's. We had to take a boat across the river to get there, but there were only 15 tents, the food was excellent, and there was game literally in front of our tent flaps. In fact, at one point we had to make a dignified retreat from our breakfast table when an elephant, smelling the citrus drinks, nosed over for a taste; and on another occasion, when crossing the river on the way back from a game run, we had to stay in a little banda on the shore, which had been built for just this purpose, until they cleared the buffalo from the path to the tents.

October 3: We had a pair of fabulous game runs, and saw all of the Big Five (elephant, leopard, lion, rhino, and buffalo.) I got some wonderful footage of all of them, plus a trio of lion cubs playing (and a fat, dozing Papa Lion reprimanding one of them for jumping on his stomach). I also photographed a line of milling wildebeest that we estimated, conservatively, to be more than two miles long; in fact, even with binoculars, we never did see the end of it.) It was a beautiful day, with game everywhere, and Perry able to find every last bit of it.

It clouded up and started raining this evening, which didn't bode well for the next couple of days -- the rains aren't due until late October -- but nothing could spoil the memories of those two game runs.

This was also the day I learned that if you want your waiter to take your not-quite-empty plate away, you place your knife and fork, parallel to each other, on the plate. Took me fifty years to learn that one.

October 4: We went out after a mild rain and managed to get some footage of the rarest of African mammals, the aardwolf, a totally-nocturnal insectivore who looks like



a smallish striped hyena and had been fooled by the cloud cover into thinking it was still night out. (I have more than a thousand volumes in my African library, many of them heavily illustrated; there are a grand total of two photographs of aardwolves.) I also turned animal pornographer and got some excellent footage of lions mating. On the way back to camp for lunch, we passed a number of stranded minibuses bogged down in the mud, all of them filled with rather unhappy-looking package tourists -- one more reason why we always go in a four-wheel-drive Land Cruiser.

It began raining in earnest right after lunch, and turned quite chilly. Carol feels the cold more than I do, and elected to skip the afternoon game run, and Roger had an upset stomach, so our noble little group got a bit nobler and a bit littler, and only Pat and I went out on the afternoon game run. A big storm was coming from the west, so we tried to outrun it in the hope it might veer off. It caught us 18 miles out from camp and practically drowned us, but while the tracks were so submerged that you literally couldn't see them, our Land Cruiser negotiated the terrain with no (well, very little) difficulty.

Most of the carnivores had the brains to find shelter, but not the grass-eaters, and especially not the wildebeest. We came to one spot I've dubbed Wildebeest Valley, where literally half a million of them were mulling about, looking wet and miserable, but not making the slightest effort to stand under trees. The only animals who looked happy were a family of bat-eared foxes, who thrive on the flying ants that get flooded out of their nests in the rain, and were catching up on their calories. A herd of buffalo was waiting for us upon our return to camp, which necessitated our circling them on a little-used path that bogged us down ankle-deep in mud. Still, it was an interesting experience, taking a game run in a tropical downpour; I wouldn't want to make a habit of it, but I'm glad I did it once.

October 5: We took an early-morning game run before breakfast, and I taped a fabulous little family drama. We saw a trio

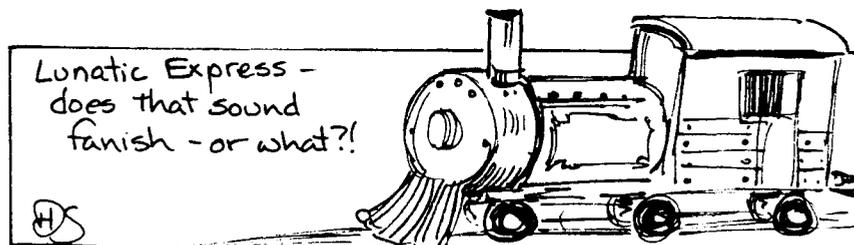
of hyenas harrassing a quintet of warthogs. They didn't want to eat them, but they seemed bound and determined to drive them away, even to the point of using themselves as bait to elicit charges. As the enraged and frustrated warthogs moved a couple of hundred yards away, still chasing the hyenas, we pulled a little closer and saw that the warthogs had been rooting around just a few yards from the hyenas' den, which housed four cubs. Still, the den seemed secure, and we couldn't figure out why the hyenas were risking injury just to move the warthogs away -- and then, coming from another direction, we saw a very pregnant hyena herding a fifth cub back to the den. Evidently he had wandered out, where he was fair game for lions, leopards, cheetahs, and some of the larger raptors, and the hyenas realized that they couldn't safely bring him back to the den until the warthogs were in a position where they couldn't see him.

We ate breakfast, flew to Nairobi, and were turned over to Vivian's care while Perry drove on to Mombasa, where he would meet us the next morning. We had opted to take the Lunatic Express (the Mombasa-Uganda train, so-called because it cost a thousand pounds a mile to build it back in 1901, and as a member of Parliament complained, only a lunatic would spend that much money to build a railroad to nowhere). The train is a vital part of Kenya's history -- there is a famous photo of Teddy Roosevelt and F. C. Selous sitting above the cow-catcher on Roosevelt's 1909 safari, and it is also the line that attracted the famous Man-Eaters of Tsavo -- and it would be going through both the Nairobi Game Park and Tsavo West National Park before dark. I'd been looking forward to riding it for years, so we reserved a pair of sleeping compartments and, after eating lunch at the Norfolk's Delamere Terrace and doing a little shopping, we showed up at the station, prepared for a new and wonderful experience.

Well, it was a new experience, anyway.

First of all, the compartments weren't the Pullman compartments we all remembered from taking trains in our youth. They were approximately three by six feet each, connected to each other by a door.

The car we were assigned to hadn't been



washed, or even dusted, since Teddy Roosevelt's safari. There were ten compartments; ours were the only ones in which the seats weren't ripped. There was one toilet per car; you took one look into it and prayed for constipation.

Our particular compartments were not without their problems either. Each had an upper and a lower berth. The second I sat down, the upper berth fell onto my head. The door between our compartment and the Sims' was stuck. Carol checked out the sink: it looked like an entire regiment of coal miners had washed in it earlier in the day; the Sims' sink looked much the same, except that their drain didn't work and it was filled with filthy water.

Carol gave me a look that said: This was all your idea; do something or you are going to suffer the tortures of the damned for the next 25 years, give or take an hour.

So I had Vivian get someone in authority, who then sent for a repairman who looked at the door and the bed and said, yeah, you sure do seem to have a problem here, and promptly vanished. It was now 40 minutes before the train was due to begin its leisurely 15-hour journey to Mombasa, and about five minutes later another repairman came and tried to fix the door. No one had given him any tools, so he attempted to disassemble the door with his keys. They didn't work, and he went off to find a screwdriver.

He came back about 10 minutes later, fixed the door, and screwed the upper berth back into place, explaining that when it was time to go to sleep all we had to do was find him somewhere on the train and he would happily unscrew it for us. He then went off to find a plumber -- and as he did so, the seat collapsed beneath us.

"That's it," announced Carol, getting to her feet. "You do what you want. I'm going to the Norfolk and flying to Mombasa in the morning."

That sounded like a pretty good idea to the rest of us, so we left the train and had Vivian try to get us on a morning flight. Unfortunately, both morning flights were sold out, but she managed to book us four seats on the plane that was leaving in four hours. I volunteered to pay for all the tickets, since I was the one who had put the train ride on our itinerary, and at 10:00 that evening we piled into the Nyali Beach Hotel, turned on the air-conditioning, ordered meals from room service (the restaurant had already closed), and went to bed, while Vivian, back in Nairobi, was trying to figure out where Perry would stop for dinner or to spend the night so she could tell him not to meet us at the train station.

That's another thing I like about private safaris: they're flexible. Try hopping off the train and booking a plane if you're with a package tour and see what happens.

On the other hand, what package tour would book you on the Lunatic Express?

October 6: The message got through, and Perry got to the Nyali Beach Hotel just as we were finishing breakfast. (He mentioned that he hadn't seen any sign of the train on

his way in through Tsavo, which meant that it was its usual six hours late. Just as well we didn't stay on it; had we done so, I figure the divorce papers would be arriving just about the time I type this paragraph.)

We got into the safari car and drove an hour and a half south to the Shimba Hills Reserve, physically the loveliest of the Kenya parks, set into some very impressive forested hills at enough altitude so you could see the Indian Ocean thirty miles away.

The lodge there is built on stilts, not unlike Treetops but much more modern and luxurious, and overlooks a large water hole. The rooms are adequate, each with its own private balcony overlooking the water, but without private bathrooms. There is one huge bathroom, with shower stalls, for each sex on each of the lodge's three levels.

They bait leopards in a tree across the water hole, and they bait a few other animals as well, including a bull elephant with a sweet tooth for whom they leave pieces of raw sugar cane. We took a game run in the afternoon, found a herd of some 40 sable antelope (while they are common in Zimbabwe, this is the only herd of sable in all of Kenya), got back in time to watch a few dozen elephants coming down to drink (and one teenager splash and swim like there was no tomorrow), and hand-fed a bushbaby who visited our table. Later I photographed a marsh mongoose swiping the leopard bait. No one else had seen it except Roger and I, so while the rest of the lodge waited up and watched the leopard tree for hours, we went to bed, secure in the knowledge that the leopard wouldn't be coming by to dine that evening.

October 7: We drove back to the Nyali Beach Hotel and checked in for the next couple of days, then spent a few hours touring the magnificently-landscaped grounds. The hotel, a 5-star hostelry, was overflowing with American servicemen, who were stationed in Mombasa to load our planes with food for Somalia, and spent their spare time playing water polo in the Nyali Beach's Olympic-sized swimming pool.

After lunch we went into Mombasa, where we drove through the Old Town, stopped by Fort Jesus, found that our favorite huckster, Big-Hearted Ali, had sold out and that his store now just carried typical tourist junk instead of beautiful hand-carved trunks and the like, and visited the Shree Cutch Satang Swami Naroyan Temple, an Indian house of worship that is an art gallery in itself.

In the evening we went to the best seafood restaurant in Africa, the Tamarind, which is housed in an old Zanzibar sultan's harem building, had a couple of cold drinks, and then went onto their elegant dhow for dinner. You have not experienced Romance until you have danced to "Perfidia" and "The Blue Tango" on a dhow on the Indian Ocean.

October 8: After breakfast we drove to the Bambouri Nature Trail, a wonderful experiment in ecology. The Bambouri Cement Company had raped about 40 acres of land outside Mombasa. Instead of leaving it exposed, they not only put it back the way

they had found it; they actually improved it, putting in ponds, trees, and stocking it with animals. It's reached the point now where it has not only paid off its costs but shows an annual profit. They charge tourists a modest fee to walk through it, and they've also begun commercially breeding crocodiles for their skins and a hybrid tilapia for the coastal restaurants. (There was one croc in isolation from all the others. When we asked why, it turned out that he was of a romantic nature and was thrashing the hell out of all his masculine competition. They had named him "Saddam".)

After that, we went to Jumba La Mtwana, some seven-century-old Arabic ruins about 15 miles north of Mombasa. In the afternoon, we loafed around the pool, the first stage of a five-day unwinding exercise.

October 9: We had breakfast and drove north to Watamu, about three-quarters of the way to Malindi, where we spent an hour or so looking at the Gedi Ruins (the best-preserved ruins in Kenya, covering a good 300 acres, which were deserted before Columbus discovered America) and touring a Giriama village, then checked into the Ocean Sports Lodge. Ocean Sports is rather small, with 20 cottages, most of which could use a little modernizing...but it was totally filled, mostly with Kenyans, while the new, modern, elegant Hemingway's Lodge right next door was almost empty. We couldn't figure out why until we sat down to eat, and realized what the Kenyans already knew: that in a country of superb chefs, Ocean Sports had the best of them. I had a whole cold lobster for lunch, lobster thermidore for dinner, a chocolate mousse that surpasses any served up by Lutece or La Caravelle, and repeated the whole thing again the next day, while Carol's choice of dishes made a serious dent in Watamu's crab population.

In the afternoon we took a glass-bottom boat out to the Watamu Marine National Park, fed bread crumbs to a few million zebra and Maasai fish, and watched through the glass while the boat's "skipper" went underwater and played with them.

October 10: After breakfast we drove over to Mida Creek, another bird-watcher's paradise, and hired a motorized dhow to take us around for a few hours. The first thing it did was get two miles from the dock; the second thing it did was get stuck on a sandbar. Perry and the crew got out and pushed and pulled while we and the Simses rocked it from side to side, and after about 20 minutes we were finally floating in the water again.

After lunch we decided to find Hell's Kitchen, the natural formation that we had searched for fruitlessly in 1987. This time we knew that it was half a mile out of Marafa, so all we had to do was follow the road signs to Marafa, a tiny village about 20 miles inland.

Simple, right?

Well, it gets a lot less simple when the road sign to Marafa is now the roof or wall of some hut.

We drove, and we drove, and we drove some more. Hopelessly mired in the back country, we pulled up to some local's hut to ask directions. His whole family came out to stare at us like we were Martians; most of them had never seen a white face. Before he was through telling us where Marafa was, the whole damned neighborhood (in this case, the occupants of two other huts) had come over to gape at the aliens. I think we gave them a whole winter's worth of things to talk about.

Well, to make the story a few hours shorter than the drive, we finally found Hell's Kitchen, which is a mini-Grand Canyon, perhaps a mile on each side and a few of hundred feet deep. A beautiful sight. Was it worth all the effort? As canyons go, no; as five-year quests go, absolutely.

October 11: Equator Airlines, a small private carrier that flies from Malindi to Lamu (there are no roads), doesn't have much of a reputation. In fact, readers of these diaries will remember that the last time we were on an Equator plane, the window blew out. So Perry, who was driving back to Nairobi while the four of us went on to Lamu, decided to charter us a 5-seater, just to make sure nothing went wrong.

And nothing did, until we landed on the pothole-filled runway of Manda Island. (There are no runways on Lamu Island, across the channel. In fact, there are no cars on Lamu; the widest street there won't accomodate one.) Anyway, we touched down, felt a bump, and the pilot immediately pulled the plane off the runway with a totally flat tire. So we unloaded our baggage and walked the final mile of the runway to the deserted airport (deserted because the next scheduled plane, as opposed to chartered, wasn't due in for hours; airport because they had to call the tiny building something), found no one there, and walked another quarter mile to the pier. The dhow that was supposed to be waiting for us to ferry us to Peponi Hotel on Lamu had decided we weren't coming and gone home. (It takes quite a while to walk a mile in coastal heat while carrying your luggage.)



We hunted a couple of local lads in colorful shirts who obligingly stood at the end of the pier and waved their shirts over their heads for about 20 minutes until some dhow pilot in Lamu Harbor, perhaps a mile away, saw them and came across the channel for us.

Tiny Peponi Hotel ("peponi" means "paradise" in Swahili) was ranked among the world top 300 hotels back in 1987, and since then they have doubled their size, adding eleven brand-new rooms, all overlooking the bay. Ours (Room 25 if you ever go there) was absolutely beautiful, brand spanking new, with elegant coastal furniture, a king-sized bed with the only mosquito netting I've ever encountered which neither feels constricting nor prevents the breeze from coming through, and a private balcony, big enough to accommodate two chairs, a table, and a chaise lounge, literally hanging out over the water. It was so much like paradise that we cancelled all plans for the afternoon and just loafed for the rest of the day.

October 12: We spent the morning walking up Peponi's eight miles of untouched white beach, doing a little swimming, gaping (well, I gaped, anyway) at some nude lady sunbathers, and talking with some of the locals. Then, after lunch, I hunted up my old friend Omar Sultan (he and his brothers Ali, Mohammed, Achmed, Hamed and Hassim are in the dhow biz; they owned five until Christmas, when one capsized) and made arrangements for him to take us over to the Takwa Ruins on Manda Island.

The ruins are about three centuries old. When the fresh water in the cisterns turned salty, the whole village moved across the bay and founded the little town of Shela, which is situated directly behind Peponi's. We timed the trip so that we would return right at sunset. Usually in Africa the sun doesn't just set; it plummets. But on the coast, and especially at Lamu, it sets a little more leisurely, and turns the whole sky a brilliant red. Quite a memorable sight.

October 13: After breakfast Omar and some of his brethren took us into Lamu Town, most of which has been standing since the 14th century (and some since the 10th), though they've only had electricity since 1972. We visited a dhow-building plant, the Lamu Museum, and a number of Omar's relations in the retail sector. It's still a tremendously exotic city, with narrow twisting streets and ancient buildings, and

Addendum #1:

Okay, birding fans. For the first time in five safaris, Carol kept a list of those birds she saw. Here it is:

Long-tailed Cormorant
African Darter
White-Necked Cormorant
Little Grebe
Night Heron
Squacco Heron
Green-Backed Heron
Little Egret
Yellow-billed Egret
Cattle Egret
Hammerkop
Goliath Heron

Black-headed Heron
Grey Heron
Purple Heron
Sacred Ibis
Hadada Ibis
Yellow-billed Stork
African Spoonbill
Greater Flamingo
Lesser Flamingo
Abdim's Stork
Marabou Stork
Saddlebill Stork

unlike our last trip there in 1987, it no longer smells like an open sewer. Everyone there seems to be working, two new banks are being built, and the continent-wide economic woes seem to have bypassed sleepy little Lamu Town.

We flew back to Nairobi in the afternoon and checked into a cottage at the Norfolk, where I bumped into one of my heroes, James Earl Jones, who was there to make a documentary film for Dr. Richard Leakey. I introduced myself, we talked a bit, and it turns out that he loves science fiction and has read a couple of my books. I promised to send him more, and told him that I had insisted my producers offer him the role of Father William when Santiago finally starts shooting. (Not that writers have any clout in Hollywood.) Anyway, if he gets it, I'll remind him that I first told him about it half a world away.

We treated Perry and David Markham and their ladies to a fabulous dinner at the Carnivore, where I had eland, hartebeest, and Thomson gazelle while managing to say No to crocodile, and then went back to the Norfolk. It was my last night in Africa, and as with all my previous safaris, I found myself missing it already.

October 14: Perry took us to the airport, saw us through customs, and departed. As always, I gave him my extra shillings (you can't take more than 200 out of the country) as a down payment for our next safari. It came to \$12.50.

On the plane home, they showed one of the more embarrassingly bad big-budget films of recent years, "Far and Away", in which Tom Cruise, sporting an Irish accent, gets beat upon with depressing regularity until he triumphs, primarily by not dying, in the last 30 seconds.

October 15: After spending the night at the Gatwick Hilton, we hopped a plane to Cincinnati for the final leg of our journey. Guess what 140-minute turkey we got to watch? Right: "Far and Away".

We got home to the usual 7-foot stack of mail. In it was an offer for the kennel that I think we're going to accept; if we do, it will make me a full-time free-lancer again for the first time in 16 years. Since 1986 I have sold 18 novels, 5 collections, 14 anthologies, 53 short stories, 11 articles, and a movie script, to say nothing of 5 safari diaries. Think of what I can do as a full-timer! [*]

Secretary Bird
Tawny Eagle
African Fish Eagle
Augur Buzzard
Battleur Eagle
Long-Crested Eagle
Black Kite
Black-Shouldered Kite
Wahlberg's Eagle
Harrier Hawk
Black-Chested Harrier
Eagle

Openbill Stork
Cape Teal
Maccoa Duck
African Pochard
Red-billed Duck
Yellow-billed Duck
Egyptian Goose
White-backed Vulture
White-headed Vulture
Ruppell's Vulture
Egyptian Vulture
Nubian Vulture

Pigmy Falcon
 Dark Chanting Goshawk
 Pale Chanting Goshawk
 Red-Necked Falcon
 Grey Kestrel
 Crested Francolin
 Yellow-necked Spurfwl
 Red-necked Spurfwl
 Blue Quail
 Vulturine Guineafowl
 Helmeted Guineafowl
 Purple Gallinule
 Moorhen
 Black Crake
 Red-knobbed Coot
 Black-bellied Bustard
 White-bellied Bustard
 Kori Bustard
 Crowned Crane
 Spur-winged Plover
 Kittlitz's Plover
 Three-banded Plover
 Black-winged Plover
 Senegal Plover
 Crowned Plover
 Crab Plover
 Black-winged Stilt
 Avocet
 African Snipe
 African Jacana
 White-winged Black Tern
 Whiskered Tern
 Grey-headed Gull
 Sooty Gull
 African Skimmer
 Chesnut-bellied Sandgrouse
 Yellow-throated Sandgrouse
 Namaqua Dove
 Morning Dove
 Red-eyed Dove
 Dusky Turtle Dove
 Speckled Pigeon
 White-browed Coucal
 African Hoopoe
 Speckled Mousebird
 African Scimitarbill
 White-bellied Go-Away Bird
 Hartlaub's Turaco
 Fischer's Turaco
 Ross's Turaco
 Brown Parrot
 Lilac-breasted Roller
 Giant Kingfisher
 Pied Kingfisher
 Malachite Kingfisher
 Dwarf Kingfisher
 Cinnamon-chested Bee-Eater
 Little Bee-Eater
 Silvery-cheeked Hornbill
 Red-billed Hornbill
 Yellow-billed Hornbill
 Crowned Hornbill
 Ground hornbill
 Abyssinian Ground Hornbill
 White-eared Barbet
 Golden Pippit
 Wells' Wagtail
 African Pied Wagtail
 Yellow-throated Longclaw
 Stonechat
 Olive Thrush
 White-browed Robin Chat
 Robin Chat
 Spotted Morning Warbler
 Paradise Flycatcher
 White-eyed Slaty Flycatcher

Straight-crested Helmet Shrike Addendum #2:

White-crowned Shrike
 Fiscal Shrike
 Long-tailed Fiscal
 Tropical Boubou
 Black-fronted Bush Shrike
 Hunter's Sunbird
 Amethyst Sunbird
 Variable Sunbird
 Copper Sunbird
 Golden-Winged Sunbird
 Bronze Sunbird
 Collared Sunbird
 Tacazze Sunbird
 Streaky Seedeater
 Brimstone Canary
 Spotted Creeper
 Bronze Mannikin
 African Firefinch
 Blue Capped Cordon-Bleu
 Pin-Tailed Whydah
 Indigo Bird
 Common Waxbill
 Grosbeak Weaver
 Golden Weaver
 Reichenow's Weaver
 Taveta Golden Weaver
 Golden Palm Weaver
 Vitelline Masked Weaver
 Layard's Black-headed Weaver
 Black-headed Weaver
 Red Bishop
 Yellow Bishop
 White-browed Sparrow Weaver
 Red-billed Buffalo Weaver
 White-headed Buffalo Weaver
 Rufous Sparrow
 Grey-headed Sparrow
 Drongo
 Red-billed Oxpecker
 Yellow-billed Oxpecker
 Golden-breasted Starling
 Superb Starling
 Magpie Starling
 Hildebrandt's Starling
 Fischer's Starling
 Wattled Starling
 Ruppell's Long-tailed Starling
 Blue-eared Glossy Starling
 Indian House Crow
 Cape Rook
 Fan-Tailed Raven
 Pied Crow
 White-necked Raven
 Golden-breasted Bunting
 Maasai Ostrich
 Somali Ostrich

Not to be outdone, I kept a list of animals seen, which follows:

Aardwolf
 Spectacled Elephant Shrew
 Bushbaby
 Vervet Monkey
 Sykes Monkey
 Colobus Monkey
 Olive Baboon
 Black-backed Jackal
 Side-striped Jackal
 Bat-eared Fox
 African Civet Cat
 Small-spotted Genet Cat
 Banded Mongoose
 Marsh Mongoose
 Spotted Hyena
 Serval Cat
 Lion
 Leopard
 Rock Hyrax
 Elephant
 Black Rhinoceros
 White Rhinoceros
 Hoppopotamus
 Warthog
 Bush Pig
 Cape Buffalo
 Maasai Giraffe
 Reticulated Giraffe
 Gerenuk
 Wildebeest
 Hartebeest
 Topi
 Dik-Dik
 Defassa Waterbuck
 Common Waterbuck
 Grant's Gazelle
 Thomson's Gazelle
 Sable Antelope
 Greater Kudu
 Lesser Kudu
 Eland
 Striped Ground Squirrel
 Spring Hare
 Impala
 Bongo
 Burchell's Zebra
 Grevy's Zebra
 Bushbuck
 Beisa Oryx
 Fringe-eared Oryx
 Crocodile
 Monitor Lizard
 Rock Python
 Gecko Lizard
 Ugama Lizard



Fanzines

by Lan

It has been exactly two years since I last put this column together (if I go by the number of monthly NASFA Shuttles or De Profundi, or bi-monthly Reluctant Famuli I have in the pile). As before, I kept the fanzines that arrived in one place, first a single pile, then two when one became too shaky to maintain equilibrium, then three. I sorted them several times with the intention of reading and reviewing them, but did not get around to it. I also did some loocing, but with the shuffling around and trying to keep them in alphabetical order, I have probably misplaced some. Now I am scrambling to list them and make some comments. Don't expect much, but I'll do do what I can, and I may merely give basic information. All are available for the usual unless otherwise noted. Please make checks out to the editor, not the name of the zine. (Finished 3 June 93)

After the Flood #26. Edited by David Griffin, Mubarsstigen 7, 196 31 Kungsangen SWEDEN. Beautifully produced zine from David, with clean illustrations and text. Unfortunately for me it is in Swedish. Still, it is nice to look at, and occasionally I can understand enough of the words to know what the reviews are saying.

American Journal of Psychoscamology, vol 4, #5. Elliot "Elst" Weinstein, 11850 Mt. Harvard Ct., Alta Loma, CA 91737 USA. The usual or even \$2. A hilarious look at fannish hieroglyphics, along with a mock history of them and ancient fandom.

Andruschak-zines. Harry Andruschak, PO Box 5309, Torrance, CA 90510-5309 USA. Harry sends several zines from his apa output which chronice his life from the end of September 1990 up to July, 1991. Included in these are also trip logs to the Worldcon in Holland and travels in Europe, a vacation to Chile, trips to Norman, Oklahoma, and other activities. He also includes comments on various books and zines he has read. The big news is that on July 6, 1991 he was informed of his promotion in the Postal Service. That means more money, and a change of position. // In his most recent ones, he talks of his fifth trip hiking and camping in the Grand Canyon, his international chess correspondence, and his trip to BOUCHERCON..

Ansible, #55-60. Dave Langford, 94 London Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 5AU, ENGLAND. This Hugo Award-winning fanzine is resurrected by its creator, and once again launches into news, views and reviews of fans, pros, fandom and books. Delightful reading.

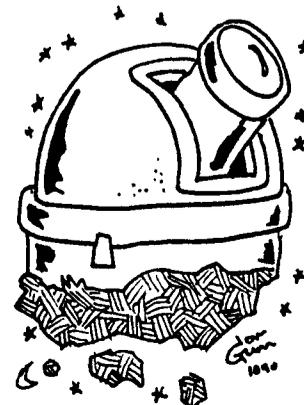
Anvil #53, 54, 55. ANVIL, Charlotte Proctor, 8325 7th Avenue So., Birmingham, AL 35206. The usual or \$6 per year. The usual pleasant issue of writing by Buck Coulson, Charlotte herself, and a host of others. One of the highlights in #53 is

an overview of some of Mike Resnick's novels by Patrick J. Gribbs, Anvil's Critic in Residence. And there is the usual lively Anvil Chorus, the lettercol. #55 is of particulr interest for fans of Roger Weddell and DUFF. Since Roger died before he could publish his trip report, his friends did one for him, and it is published here.

Artifact. Tundra Publishing LTD., 320 Riverside Drive, Northampton, MA 01060. A catalogue of contemporary graphic publications and artwork.

Asian Trash Cinema, Vol 1: #1-2. Craig Ledbetter, Box 5367, Kingwood, TX 77325 USA. Quarterly, \$15/year. Craig does for the Asian scene what he has been doing for Europe in European Trash Cinema: excellent coverage of Grade-B foreign horror films and videos. I am amazed that there is so much material available in this subgenre of the horror film.

Astromancer Quarterly, May, Nov 1992. Joe Maraglino, editor, PO Box 500, Bridge Station, Niagara Falls, NY 14305 USA. \$2/issue. A very slick zine with color artwork, a fanzine and art-in-fanzines review columns, humorous poetry and/or asparagus poetry, con reports, movie and books reviews, Murphy's Laws for fans, and lots more. Very interesting. In the November issue, there is a photo-log by Jay Kay Klein.



BBB #1. Editors Joyce Worley Katz, Laurie Yates, Aileen Forman, 330 S. Decatur Blvd, Suite 152, Las Vegas, NV 89107 USA. The three editors mostly introduce themselves, and give some interesting information. The second issue should be most interesting.

The Beer Snob #2. An informationzine from Hawk, 926-C Waverly Way NE, Atlanta, GA 30307-2551. He includes some strange news articles which refer to beer and alcoholic beverages.



Ben's Beat. Ben Indick, 428 Sagamore Avenue, Teaneck, NY 07666 USA. This is Ben's FAPAzine which includes his Theatre Beat and book reviews. Good, interesting stuff. #28 contains updates on his life, operations, a compressed report on Ben and Janet's trip to Egypt (printed in full here on pages 11-21), and a tribute to his buddy Gerry de la Ree who recently died.

Bozophobia, #3, #5. A personalzine of Hawk, 926-C Waverly Way NE, Atlanta, GA 30307-2551. His interests include vegetarian cooking, off-the-wall humor, and strange headlines.

The Black Hole #31 & 32. c/o Leeds University Union, PO Box 157, Leeds, LS1 1UH, UNITED KINGDOM. The clubzine of the Leeds University SF group. High production values, lovely covers and artwork, and decent contents.

Y Camamseriad #1. Heather Rose Jones, 5838 Fremont St #8, Oakland, CA 94608 USA. \$15. This enormous volume contains a huge amount of information about the Welsh culture, history and language. This is an invaluable sourcebook for SCA people who have Welsh personas.

The Centaur Gatherum Newsletter #23-26. Ed Pegg, Jr., POB 10216, Colorado Springs, CO 80932, USA. \$2/issue. A fanzine/newsletter about centaurs-- art, stories, et al. I picked up the earlier issues from Dave Alway for the art. Some very nice stuff.

Chris Drumm Books, Book catalogues #54-65. PO Box 445, Polk City, IA 50226, USA. Catalogues, obviously; Chris also puts out his own line of little books which are well worth looking at. He has been putting out the definitive works of R.A. Lafferty, the unpublished works of James Gunn, and has several other projects going. If you are a collector, contact him.

Cleveland Ansible. #11-20. Julie E. Washington, editor and staff. PO Box 14841, Cleveland, OH 44114. This fanzine gives news about Cleveland SF & F fandom. Lots of interesting reading. There are frequent interviews with authors and the ST: TNG stars, reviews, conreports, etc.

CONTRACT Voume 3 #3-5. John Mansfield, 30 Ellice Ave, Winnipeg, MB R3C E6 CANADA. Free to all Canadian concons who are still putting on conventions. Subscription rate 6/7.00. Convention listings for the Canadian conventions and Worldcons. Also has con reports, and helpful hints about running conventions.

Convention Log #61-62. R Laurraine Tutihasi, Katnip Manor, 5876 Bowcroft Street #4, Los Angeles, CA 90016, USA. Whim. Laurraine's diary/personalazine; has some reviews and conreports, locs; summarizes her life and feelings.

Critical Wave #21-29. Steve Green & Martin Tudor, co-editors, 33 Sott Rd., Olton, Solihull. B92 7LQ. American subscriptions (\$15/year) payable to Mary Burns, 23 Kensington Court, Hampstead, NY 11550 USA. Bimonthly. This is a fanzine of European SF news. As with many fanzines recently, money problems have caused the bimonthly schedule to become sporadic. These nine issues have some excellent stuff.

Cube #47-50. Produced by Steve Swartz, Box 1624, Madison, WI 53701-1624. Available for the price of an SF3 membership. Its new editor wants feedback, articles, the usual.

Daisnaid #7. D. West, 17 Carlisle Street, Keighly, W. Yorks BD21 4PX UNITED KINGDOM. D West returns to fanzine publishing after a 13 year hiatus.

Dalmation Alley #3. Kenneth C. Forman, 7215 Nordic Lights Drive, Las Vegas, NV 89119-0035. A personalzine.

De Profundis #231-252. Los Angeles Science Fiction Society, 11513 Burbank Blvd., North Hollywood, CA 91601. The official newsletter of LASFS, filled with con and fan information, reviews, minutes, etc.

The Dog Factory #1. Les Escott, 84 Ivy Avenue, Bath Avon, BA2 1AN UNITED KINGDOM, & Dave Wood, 1 Friary Close, Marine Hill, Clevedon Avon, BS21 7QA UNITED KINGDOM. Very interesting sercon zine.

Doodlebug #1. Laurie Yates, 805 Spyglass Lane, Las Vegas, NV 89107 USA. Done for fun and diversion. Fun reading.

Eldritch Science, Spring 1991, Summer 1992. George Phillies, editor. 87-6 Park Avenue, Worcester, MA 01605 USA. Published semiannually, \$10/4 issues. A zine with tales of SF & Fantasy, poems and excellent art. Good, interesting reading. The Summer issue was the last one.

8½ X 11 Zine, #6.9. Teddy Harvia, PO Box 905, Euless, TX 76039 USA. This personalzine is available for the usual. Teddy describes his experiences at Worldcon and winning his Hugo for Best Fan Artist.

Erg, #114-121. Terry Jeeves, 56 Red Scar Drive, Scarborough YO12 5RQ, E. Yorkshire UNITED KINGDOM. LOC, \$1/issue in US bills (not check--costs too much to process). Erg is in its 34th year of publication. Terry continues to produce these zines (which are very interesting) with extreme regularity. They are filled with his personal life and thoughts, evocative essays, short book reviews, and his wonderful art. His trip reports to the US are very interesting. #118 features a checklist of the writings of E.E. "Doc" Smith. Highly recommended

ESFandom News, Vol.3, #3. The Newsletter of the Evansville Science Fiction Association. Jeff Lockbridge, editor, PO Box 3892, Evansville, IN 47737-3892 USA. Usual newszine; the main feature is a tribute to Isaac Asimov.

Ethel the Aardvark #40, 44-46. Melbourne SF Club, PO Box 212, World Trade Center, Melbourne, 3005, Victoria AUSTRALIA. Nice clubzine with news, reviews, and the usual stuff. #40 has a nice long

analysis of McCaffrey's Dragonrider books which I found interesting (since I have only read two of the 11 books).

European Trash Cinema, Vol 2: #3-6. Craig Ledbetter, Box 5367, Kingwood, TX 77325 USA. Quarterly, \$15/year. Craig continues his excellent coverage of Grade-B foreign horror films and videos, and asking for such material. There is no dearth of people interested in this subgenre of the horror film.

Eyeballs in the Sky #6, #7. Tony Berry, 55 Seymour Road, Oldbury, West Midlands, B69 4EP, UNITED KINGDOM.



Fantastic Collectibles Magazine, #102, 105-109, 111-115. Ray F. Bowman, PO Box 167, Carmel, IN 46032. \$10/year, \$17.50/2 years. This was formerly The Fantastic Catalogue, but Ray has expanded it to include advertizing from other dealers/collectors, as well as publishing some fiction. Mostly, he lists books and magazines available for purchase.

Fantasy Collector, The, #225, 239-244. Camille "Caz" Cazedessus, Jr., 7080 Highland Road/ Bayou Fontaine, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70808 USA. \$18/year (12 issues). If you are interested in pulps, get this fanzine. It has articles and ads, and nicely reproduced pulp covers and stories.

Fantasy Commentator #43. A. Langely Searles, 48

Highland Circle, Bronxville, NY 10708-5909 USA. This issue contains articles and reviews about fantasy, and has some poetry. \$5/copy, 6-issue sub/\$25.

The fillos in #1 were computer generated, but by #4 fan-artists took pity on him and gave him art (much the same fans did for me back when I started). Benoit wants submissions.

Fantasy-Scope, vol. 2, #1. Roger Sims, 34 Creekwood Square, Cincinnati, OH 45246 USA. I thought I had trouble keeping to a schedule until Lee Hoffman's zine came in on a five year interval, but Roger's takes the cake. Fantasy-Scope #1 was done in 1950. This is #2. A 42 year gap is awesome. (Imagine how large LL would have to be for me to catch up on 42 years worth of activities!) Anyway, this is a wonderful issue with lots of interesting information about the Simses, Detroit fandom, and some silly stuff. For travel fans, Mike Resnick has put together the trip itinerary he, Carol, Roger, Pat, and their guide Perry Mason will take (have taken?) in September, including some letter exchanges. Highly recommended.

Gaijin #1, 2. Steve Green, 33 Scott Road, Olton Solihull, B92 7LQ, ENGLAND. A personalzine available for the usual. Very pleasant writing.

Gasbag #178-187. The Gilbert and Sullivan Boys and Girls newsletter, funded and published by FUMGASS (Friends of the University of Michigan Gilbert and Sullivan Society). Jean Lynn Barnard, 1810 Charlton Ave., Ann Arbor, MI 48103. Membership in FUMGASS range from \$10-\$50 per year, and Gasbag comes with membership. Lots of interesting tidbits about G&S.

FILE:770, #89-97. Mike Glycer, 5828 Woodman Ave., #2, Van Nuys, CA 91401, USA. 5/\$8 The premiere fannish newsletter. Lots of interesting writing and lots of events slanted from Mike's very unique point of view.

Gegenschein #60-66. Eric Lindsey, 7 Nicoll Avenue, Ryde, NSW 2112, AUSTRALIA. Irregular, but interesting commentary about life, books, and fandom by Eric. #63 and #64 have two parts (of who-knows-how-many parts) of Eric's most recent trip to the States, with part 3 picked up in #66.

Filking Times, The #26-35. Rick & Deborah Weiss, editors, 13261 Donegal Drive, Garden Grove, CA 92644-2304. A very chatty newszine about filking; has interviews, news, reviews. Rick and Deborah keep looking for material, so, filkers, send news and information to them. \$7.50/12 issues.

Generic Fandom News #22-23. Brian Youmans, 27R Albion St., #2, Somerville, MA 02143, USA. This is filled with all the sorts of things: fannish news, reviews, conreports, and Brian's personal journal. Quite interesting. Unfortunately, Brian has ceased publication.

Firebird Arts & Music, Summer 1991, Einter 1991-92. PO Box 14785, Portland, OR 97214. A catalogue of various tapes, art, music books and records in the filk and folk vein. Haven't seen any 1993 catalogue yet.

Gradient #4-7. Robert Sabella, 2 Natalie Drive, Budd Lake, NJ 07828. This little fanzine is a collection of essays and commentary that Bob has written about SF literature. He has a good grasp on what he likes and the ability to write clearly about his opinions. I don't agree with everything he says, but he says it well. His essays on "forgotten authors" are wonderful.

Folly #7-18. Arnie Katz, 330 S. Decatur, Suite 152, Las Vegas, NV 89107. The Usual. Arnie continues to produce some very interesting and silly stuff. #9 is a Faan Fiction story by Arnie about Walt Willis entitled "Willis Plays Vegas". #13 is more faanfic, entitled "Luck of the Fannish".

Great 1973 Leech Lake Bozo Massacre, The. SF3, Box 1624, Madison WI 53701-1624. A One-Shot done at MINICON, 1991, by Andy Hooper, Jeff Schalles, Karen Babbich, Nevenah Smith, and Garth Danielson.

Fosfax #155-164. Timothy Lane & Janice Moore, editors; Fosfa, PO Box 37281, Louisville, KY 40233-7281, USA. A fairly large, consistently produced bimonthly clubzine filled with reviews, commentary and locs. The lettercolumn is lively with many authors participating.

Groggy, #33 & 34. Eric Mayer and Mary Long, Box 17143, Rochester, NY 14617. A semi-personalzine from Eric, which has now expanded to include Mary Long. #34 has an interesting tidbit about Eric's vasectomy, and I cringed in sympathy, remembering mine (almost 10 years ago).

Frozen Frog, The, #1, 4-6. Benoit Girard, 1016 Guillaume-Boisset, Cap-Rouge Quebec G1Y 1Y9 CANADA. A semi-personal fanzine with reviews, a conreport on CHICON IV (Benoit's first convention), comments on gaming and the environment.

Hardwired Hinterland #8. Richard Jervis, PO Box 743, Notre Dame, IN 46556 USA. News and reviews of SF, some fiction and poetry.

The Hickman Zines. Lynn Hickman, 413 Ottokee

Street, Wauseon, OH 43567-1133 USA. A collection of zines from Lynn's various publications in apas and such. They give a nice summary of what he's been doing and has done in his fannish life.

Imagination #6, 7. Ian Murphy, 63 Beeches Crescent, Southgate, Crawley, W. Sussex, RH10 6BU UNITED KINGDOM. Mostly information about gaming, but SF creeps in in the form of reviews and interviews. Has some fun and interesting things in it.

Interdimensional Journal, Vol IX, #3. The Newsletter of the SF & F Special Interest Group (SIG). PJ Southam, editor, PO Box 1706, Kent, OH 44240. Articles about, and book/film reviews of SF & F.

It Goes on the Shelf, #8 & 9. Ned Brooks, Sign of the Purple Mouth, 713 Paul Street, Newport News, VA 23605. Interesting zine mixing book reviews with letters received. Ned continues to request strong line art that will xerox/thermofax well.

It's My Dance, #14-16, #21. Joel Zakem, 2127 Eastern Parkway Apt. #2, Louisville, KY 40204 USA. Joel's zine for ALPS. Joel gives these to me in trade, and they are rather interesting. I have an interest in music, so I am happy to get the information about recordings and concerts from him.

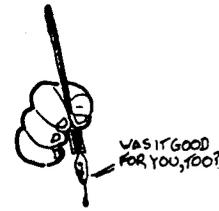
Joe Wesson Magazine -- several issues (not numbered, but dated). Joe Wesson, 1605 Valley Rd #1, Pullman, WA 99163 USA. A personalzine about Joe's life and happenings; an active lettercol. I've been meaning to write Joe for some time. Maybe I will...now.

Knarley Knews, The, #27-39. Henry L Welch, 5538 N. Shasta Dr., Glendale, WI 53209 USA. Henry Welch (aka Knarley) has put together a little zine which is mostly a personalzine, although he welcomes contributions. The 1991 Christmas Issue (#32) was fun reading.

The Last Resort #1-2. Steve George, 642 Ingersoll Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3G 2J7 CANADA. Steve returns to the fanzine publishing field with a couple of small issues full of good writing and insightful comments.

Let's Fanac, #1 - 3. Barnaby Rapoport, PO Box 565, Storrs, CT 06268 USA. A more personalzine for Barnaby than Sadie Mae Glutz. Has some interesting items, in particular, his experiences as Goh at CORFLU #7, and his speech, in LF #2.

Lofgeornost #26-#30. Fred Lerner, 5 Worcester Ave, White River Junction, Vermont 05001 USA. Fred's FAPAzine sent in as trade for LL. He has written some interesting tidbits about books, SF related



items, and himself--#28 relates his trip to West Texas and Southern New Mexico.

Low Orbit #46, 47. R'ykandar Korra'ti, editor, 5206 20th Avenue NE, Seattle, WA 98105-3313 USA. An excellently produced zine. There is a good mix of different types of articles, features, locs and reviews.

Mainstream #14-15. Jerry Kaufman & Suzanne Tompkins, 8618 Linden Avenue North, Seattle WA 98103 USA. \$2/issue or the usual.

Marktime #18. A personalzine of Mark Strickert, 8765 W. Higgins Rd., Chicago, IL 60631 USA, which talks about his views and hobbies.

Mentor, The, #70-77. Ron Clarke, 6 Bellevue Road, Faulconbridge, NSW 2776, AUSTRALIA. A mixture of articles, locs and fiction. Good, pleasant reading, with a variety of articles (one by Buck Coulson), reviews, a short stories, poetry and locs. Some excellent art by a variety of artists, and the covers are in color--beautifully produced. NOMINATE THIS ONE FOR A HUGO!!!

Metaphysical Review, The, #15/16/17, 18. Bruce Gillespie, GPO Box 5195AA, Melbourne, Victoria 3001 AUSTRALIA. As usual, an excellent grouping of articles and comments about SF and related fields.

The Metcalf Zines. Norm Metcalf, PO Box 1368, Boulder Colorado 80306 USA. A collection of various zines Norm produces for apas, sent in exchange for LL. They are filled with interesting commentary about books and people in the SF field.

Mimosa #10-13. Dick & Nicki Lynch, PO Box 1350, Germantown, MD 20874 USA. An excellent genzine, with lots of different articles to appeal to most people's tastes. Some very good artwork, especially the stuff by Steve Stiles, Sharon Farber, Diana Harlan Stein, Charlie Williams, and others. The Lynch's report on the Hugo Ceremonies Mix-up is among the best I've read. And I still say they deserved the Hugo!

Munich Round Up #160 & 162. Waldemar Kummig, Engadiner Str. 24/II, D 8000 Munchen 71, GERMANY.

US agent is Andy Porter, PO Box 2730, Brooklyn, NY 112020056 USA. (\$1.75/issue, \$5/3 issues.) Contains conreports, fiction, reviews, etc.

NASFA Shuttle (May 1990-April 1993). NASFA, PO Box 4857, Huntsville, AL 35815-4857, USA. Current Editor: Nelda Kathleen Kennedy, 7907 Charlotte Drive SW, Huntsville, AL 35802 USA. The newsletter of the North Alabama Science Fiction Association. Locs, reviews, meeting & club news, etc. It continues to be interesting, and downright frustrating because it comes out monthly on schedule (like the now bi-monthly FOSFAX and The Reluctant Famulus).

Neology Vol. 16 #2, Vol. 17, #1. Catherine Girzyc ESFACAS Box 4071 PSSE, Edmonton, Alberta T6E 4S8. \$12/year, quarterly. The Edmonton Science Fiction And Comic Arts Society clubzine. Some good articles and reviews, active loccol, and club news. Superb artwork.

Neophyte vol 1 #4-6, vol 2 #1. Jeff Behrnes, 11220 Hooper Rd., Baton Rouge, LA 70818 USA. A zine for fiction writers--contains tips, reviews, and stories.

Niekas #43a. Edmund R. Meskys, RFD 2, Box 63, Center Harbor, NH 03226-9729 USA. A nicely put together fanzine full of excellent commentary and reviews. This issue is entitled After All These Years... which is devoted to Sam Moskowitz and his career in SF (8-1/2 by 11 folded lengthwise).

No Award. Marty Cantor, 11825 Gilmore St. #105, North Hollywood, CA 91606-2844. A personalzine with occasional articles by others; Available through editorial whim only.

Nova Express, Vol. III, #4. Dwight Brown, ed., PO Box 27231, Austin, TX 78755-2231 USA. \$10/year inside USA, other rates apply. Nice layout and production values abound in this fanzine. These issues have some good articles. This one has a Joe Lansdale interview and a bibliography of his works.

OASFIS Event Horizon #53-56, 61,64. Louise M. Kleba ed., PO Box 940992, Maitland, FL 32794-0992. A clubzine with reviews, fiction and local/fannish news.

Opuntia #1-10.5a. Dale Speirs, Box 6830, Calgary Alberta, T2P 2E7 CANADA. An irregularly produced personalzine, but very entertaining and lots of replies to Dale's comments. From March 1991, when the first one came out, until September 1992, when #10.5a came out, Dale has produced a lot of words, and thus is more regular than many other

fanzine editors. The work is very good and very interesting. (And I don't loc it as nearly enough as I should.)

OtheRealms #30-31. Chuq Von Rospach, 1072 Saratoga-Sunnyvale Rd, Bldg A107-503, San Jose, CA 95129 USA. Still one of the best reviewzines around, with an active lettercol. #30 is a parody issue (with some truly funny stuff), and #31 has a long catch-up of what Chuq and Laurie have been doing for the past couple of years.

Our Toxic Times Vol 4, #2. Cynthia Wilson, editor, Chemical Injury Information Network, PO Box 301, White Sulphur Springs, Montana 59645 USA. A monthly publication which collects information about toxic chemicals and injuries related to them. Donations are needed to keep the publication afloat. If interested, or if you have information to share, contact Cynthia Wilson.

Outworlds #60-65. Bill Bowers, PO Box 58174, Cincinnati, OH 45258-0174. An intensely personal and highly fan-interactive fanzine. #65 has a long article about London fan and writer Frank Arnold (who died in 1987) by David Rowe.

Paperback Parade #31-32. Gary Lovisi, PO Box 209, Brooklyn, NY 11228-0209 USA. \$6/copy. A compendium of articles about paperbacks, collecting, interviews, etc. Wonderfully put together with color covers reprinting some collectible paperback books.

Paper Life #1. Laurie Mann, 12 Shady Lane Ave., Northboro, MA 01532 USA. An intensely personal zine from Laurie who is setting it up as a place for fans who were abused as children and survived can discuss the issues, offer support, etc.

P.A.R.S.E.C. #1&2. 180 Rita Drive, Brownsville, PA 15417 USA. A fiction zine of the Pittsburgh Area SF club. \$10.00/year.

Penguin Dip #44-62. Stephen H. Dorneman, 53 Hill Rd #705, Belmont, MA 02178 USA. \$15/year (10 issues). Various articles about SF, zine reviews, comics, and gaming. Nice writing by Lawrence Watt-Evans on Comics, and an active lettercol. Steve has some beautiful covers by a variety of artists. Steve is scheduling a shutdown of production of PD ending with issue #70.

Peripheral Visions #7, 10-12. Rob Sommers, 926-C Waverly Way NE, Atlanta GA 30307-2551. An interesting zine with a variety of articles and the potential to become a sounding board for some controversial issues. #12 deals with censorship.

Poor Impulse Control #1-3. Brian Youmans, 911 Constant Ave, Peekskill, NY 10566 USA. A personalzine with comments and thoughts of Brian's life and musings. He includes some reviews and commentaries. Interesting.

PhantasMAGoria. Derek and Mavis Pickles, 41 Compton Street, Dudley Hill, Bradford, Yorkshire ENGLAND. I am confused somewhat by this one. It contains reprints from an older zine of the same name, but has a newer look of photocopy. Derek is returning to fandom and hopes to be welcome as he was before. The older writing is very good, and I do hope that Derek gets some response.

Probe #82-86. Neil van Niekerk, SFSA, PO Box 2538, Primrose 1416 UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA. A clubzine of SFSA, filled with various stories, poetry, reviews and locs. Interesting perspective. The general layout has improved, and the writing along with it.

Proper Boskonian, #29. Nesfa, Box G, MIT Branch PO, Cambridge, MA 02139. Semiannual. Well-produced clubzine--articles about cons, reviews, letter-column, etc. Some excellent art.

Pulsar #17-18. A. E. Ubelhor, PO Box 886, Evansville, IN 47706-0886 USA. \$16/4 issues. A magazine size fanzine, filled with reviews, locs, articles, and fiction.

Q36J, June 1990. Marc Ortlieb, PO Box 215, Forest Hill, Victoria 3131 AUSTRALIA. A personalzine by Marc.

Quintessential Space Debris. K.Gallagher, PO Box 42, Worthington, OH 43085. The usual. A light-hearted zine with laghter as a primary component.

Radio Free Thulcandra, #25-31. Marty Helgesen, 11 Lawrence Avenue, Malverne, NY 11565-1406. A fanzine of Christian fandom, which is "an interdenominational fellowship of Christians and Science Fiction Fans interested in the corteous and accurate representation of Christian viewpoints in the fannish community." Lively discussions, though not quite my interest. I have not read this closely, so I have not participated in any of the discussions.

Reluctant Famulus, The. #16-27. Tom Sadler, 422 W. Maple Ave., Adrian, MI 49221. Bimonthly. A fanzine with some reviews, but mostly personal observations on SF, fandom and conventions. More than very pleasant reading. TRF is becoming an excellent personalzine, with some features of genzines that I enjoy reading. Tom is looking for submissions of art, articles and reviews. He is

in the middle of his third year of publishing, and is continuing with a regular schedule that very few fans have equalled.

Resnick at Zenith, Vol I, #2-4. Doug Roemer, 674 Newbridge Ct., Arnold MD 21012 USA. If you want to know anything about what is going on with the publishing works of Mike Resnick, this is the fanzine to get. I enjoy each issue, though I have been remiss on getting submissions to it. I hope to correct that soon.

Robots and RoadRunners, Vol. 6, #2-4. Lynn Garcia, URSA MAJOR, PO Box 691448, San Antonio, TX 78629-1448 USA. \$1.50/ issue, quarterly. The clubzine/ newszine of Ursa Major, the San Antonio SF Club. Some enlightening articles about club members, some good book and fanzine reviews, and even an interesting piece of fiction or two.

Rune, Vol 14, #1-4. Minn-StF, PO Box 8297, Lake Street Station, Minneapolis, MN 55408 USA. The fanzine of the Minn-StF organization which puts on MINICON each year. The editors have been rotating, so each issue is different, but always interesting to read.

SF Commentary, #71/72. Bruce Gillespie, GPO 5195AA, Melbourne, Victoria, 3001 AUSTRALIA. US\$30/5 issues. Some very detailed and excellent reviews and insights on books from the Australian viewpoint. Of interest to readers of SF.

Samizdat, #19. Philippe Gauthier, 197 Du Bearn, Saint-Lambert, Quebec J4S 1L2 CANADA, and Claude J. Pelletier, 20 Chemin du Mistral, Iles Laval, Laval, Quebec H7Y 1S1. \$3/issue. A genzine for French-Canadian fans, written in French. It has cartoons, pro and fan reviews, interviews, locs, etc.

Science Fiction 5-Yearly. Lee Hoffman, 401 Sunrise Trail NW, Port Charlotte, FL 33952 USA. "The fanzine worth waiting for" certainly is. Lee's writing, and the writing of the people she enlists to contribute, are well worth reading. Highly recommended.



Scopus: 3007, #1-3. Alexander Bouchard, PO Box 573, Hazel Park, MI 48030-0573 USA. Al's foray into the fanzine field has started out fine. He needs contributions, so if you want a forum for your writing--nonfiction and fiction--send him something.

Seldon's Plan, #50. Seldon's Plan, PO Box 441822, Detroit, MI 48224-1822. Bill Waldroop and Cy Chauvin, co-editors. A continued attempt to revive the Wayne Third Foundation clubzine. The letter-response has been good, but Cy and Bill need more material.

Semi-Circular of Janus, The, July 1992. Greg & Linda Dunn, PO Box 19776, Indianapolis, IN 46219 USA. A clubzine for the Circle of Janus (which puts on INCONJUNCTION every year). Has the usual club stuff, but lots of interesting material--interview with Lois McMaster Bujold, an article concentrating on science fiction of Fred Pohl, and some fiction.

SGLODIAN, #3. David Langford, 94 London Rd, Reading, Berkshire, ENGLAND, RG1 5AU. A very humorous look at some serious issues in SF. Dave's wry and dry wit tickles my funnybone.

Shangri L'Affaires. Charles Lee Jackson II, Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, 11513 Burbank Boulevard, No Hollywood, CA 91601 USA. Nice article about books to films, and the on-going project for compiling a list of Children's SF literature.

Shipyard Blues, #6-7. John D. Owen, 4 Highfield Close, Newport Pagnell, Bucks., MK16 9AZ UNITED KINGDOM. A beautifully produced zine with a focus on fun and more timely articles. The reproduction is excellent, and the artwork impeccable. Great reading and response.

Shrdlu, #1. Bob Snare, 1864 Ferrell Drive, Williamsburg, VA 23185 USA. A comics fanzine, with discussion about the worlds of superheroes.



Shuttle, The SFSFS, #90-97. PO Box 70143, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33307 USA. "Official Newszine of the South Florida SF Society." Typical clubzine with news and reviews.

SIGMA #68-89. PARSEC, PO Box 3681, Pittsburgh, PA 15230-3681. The monthly newsletter of the Pittsburgh Area Scienc-fiction Enthusiasts Club. Lots of reviews, and some club business.

Smart-Ash #49. Tom Feller, editor, Chimneyville Fantasy & Science Fiction Society, Box 13626, Jackson MS 39236 USA. Quarterly, \$5/year. A clubzine, with multiple write-ups of the 1991 Worldcon in Chicago.

Snarkin' Surfari #1-3. Barnaby Rapoport, PO Box 565, Storrs, CT 06268 USA. Interesting and strange musings from the mind of a somewhat original thinker; Barnaby does make me smile with his writing.

Solaris #95-104. Luc Pomerleau, Case Postale 25, Succursale A, Hull, Quebec, J8Y 6M7 CANADA. \$3.50/issue. This is the semiprozine of French-speaking Canada. This is a nicely produced zine with reviews, stories, interviews, and lavish illustrations. Since it is written in French, I have trouble reading it, though I have made some progress based on my Latin background. Mafa can make some of it out and says it's nicely done. The French teachers at school continue to marvel at its quality.

Spektra, After the Alfa. Lars-Arne Karlsson, Ekas Gallared, 310 60 Ullared, SWEDEN. This zine devoted to analyses of the Nebula nominees. Sent in trade for LL.

Spent Brass, #5-19. Carrie Root & Andy Hooper, 4228 Francis Ave. N. #103, Seattle WA 98103 USA. \$1/2 issues. A small genzine/personalzine with interesting commentary on life and things fannish.

SpinDizzy #1. Joyce Worley Katz, 330 S. Decatur, Ste. #152, Las Vegas, NV 89107 USA. Fannish newsletter for the Las Vegas area.

Spud #1. Gary Deindorfer, 447 Bellvue Ave, #9-B, Trenton NJ 08618 USA. Whim & the usual. Gary is attempting to fill the fanzine void in New Jersey, as well as establish himself once again in the fanzine publishing field. A good start.

Starward Bound 1992. Fiction and poetry zine from Starward Bound Inc., PO Box 20064, Dayton, OH 45420 USA. The club is based in the Dayton area, and most of the writers help with their annual

convention Millennium. Some of the stories tend to be short--outlines for longer pieces is what strikes me.

SIET #2-7. Leah Zeldes Smith, 17 Kerry Lane, Wheeling, IL 60090-6415. A personalzine from Leah, and her husband Dick, though they expanded rapidly with articles and letters about the current state of fandom.

SUMMA NULLA, #2. Tony Ubelhor, PO Box 886, Evansville, IN 47706-0886. Tony continues to put this together as a joke to show "Trufen" that he can produce a fanzine like theirs, but he does better. This is a class act. The material is good, and the repro surpasses what such "Trufen" would do with their mimeographs. Good job, Tony!

Texas SF Inquirer #38-48B. Alexander R. Slate, 8603 Shallow Ridge, San Antonio, TX 78239 USA, and Dale Denton, 2016 Ravinia Circle, Arlington, TX 76012. The newszine and magazine of Central Texas. Typical clubzine, but it has some good articles, interviews and reviews.

Thingumbob #1-6. Chuck Conner, Sildan House, Chedistan Road, Wissett near Halesworth, Suffolk, IP19 ONF, ENGLAND. A fanzine about fanzines and fandom, particularly in England. It also contains some personal stuff.

Thyme #82. LynC, PO Box 4024, University of Melbourne, Victoria 3052 AUSTRALIA. Another news magazine of Australian Fandom and SF. Has some convention reports, reviews, and news.

Trapdoor, #11 & 12. Robert Lichtman, PO Box 30, Glen Ellen, CA 95442. One of the best little fanzines around. Robert gets a lot of nice interesting articles. This is a perennial Hugo nominee for me.

Uncle Hugo's SF Bookstore / Uncle Edgar's Mystery Bookstore. Newsletter #9-15. A newsletter (obviously) of books published, received and for sale at these two stores owned by Don Blyly. There are some reviews included, both short and a little longer.

Wail Songs, Mid-year 1991, and 1992 Catalogues. Wail Songs, PO Box 29888, Oakland, CA 94604, USA. A catalogue for filk tapes produced by Wail Songs. Prices for tapes range from \$8-\$12 and filk books are also available.

Weber Woman's Wrevenge, Vol 7, #1-4. Jean Weber, 6 Hillcrest Avenue, Faulconbridge, NSW 2776, Australia. Wonderfully written, feminist oriented (though not exclusively) fanzine. I enjoy it im-

mensely. In #1 Milton and Carolyn Weber write of their trip to the Soviet Union. #2 has Jean's Winter (our Summer) trip to North America. In #3 she talks about her visit to Lyn McConchie's farm in New Zealand, while Lynn writes up her trip report to North America and the United Kingdom. #4 contains a long article by Lyn about living in New Zealand. All are well worth reading and very interesting.

Whole Fanzine Catalogue, The #30--in two forms: folded 8½ by 14, and folded 5½ by 8½. Brian Earl Brown, 11675 Beaconsfield, Detroit MI 48224 USA. \$1 or trade. Has reviews of lots and lots of fanzines. This is what you get if you want to know about the different zines in SF fandom.

X-illo #1. William Levy, 3017 Dogwood Drive, Louisville, KY 40220 USA. X-rated cartoon strips and subject matter. Rather interesting, if you like that sort of thing. Artwork is nice.

YHOS #51-52. Art Widner, 231 Courtney Lane, Orinda, CA 94563, USA. As Art's FAPAzine, he does a remarkable fanzine. The articles are interesting and thoughtful, and not just by him. He has an irregular column by rich brown, and presents fan news and gossip on all fronts.

Zylax #1. Helen E. Davis, 2327 Shroyer Rd., Oakwood, OH 45419 USA. A collection of Zylax stories written by Helen in the years 1987-1990. These are mostly humorous stories, and some have been published by Tom Sadler in The Reluctant Famulus.



Listening for New Life and Civilizations

by William Wilson Goodson , Jr.

At 3:00 PM on October 12, Columbus Day, astronomer Jill Tarter will flick a switch in Puerto Rico to begin humanity's most extensive search for intelligent life off the planet Earth. She is project scientist for the Microwave Observing Project, a NASA program to listen to the microwaves constantly bombarding the Earth from space, and try to identify any produced by intelligent life rather than nature.

The project is in two parts. Sky Survey will use antennas from NASA's Deep Space Network to slowly scan the entire sky over a period of 5 to 7 years. Target Search will use the NSF radio telescope near Arecibo, Puerto Rico, to examine 1000 star-type stars in detail over the next 6 to 7 years. The two searches will be studying frequencies in the "microwave window," the section of the spectrum where there are the fewest naturally produced signals. It is hoped in this "window" it will be possible to pick up signals produced by other civilizations.

The dream contact would be a continuously broadcast message designed to be understood by any intelligent life. Those who believe in the odds being high for numerous civilizations in our galaxy envision a network of continuous exchanges designed to "trade" information between star systems too far apart to fight.

Another possibility will be to pick up broadcasts which, like our own radio and TV shows, have simply continued out into space, accidental evidence of a technological civilization.

A 1978 study by the University of Washington determined that of the signals "leaking" from Earth, the two most likely to be detectable in another star system were UHF TV signals, and the radar broadcast by ballistic warning systems. UHF stations are irregular over the years, but the radar systems have been beaming continuously into the sky for several decades.

The trick will be to recognize signals against the background noise of the stars. The decision has been made to look for a continuous steady signal. However, to look at all the data each telescope receives required computerization. The multichannel spectrum analyzer developed for MOP by Stanford University is able to divide the "noise" from each section of the sky into over 14 million channels and analyze each one.

Dr. Kent Cullers, who designed the software for the analyzer, speaks of looking for "spikes", continuous signals millions of times stronger than those produced by stars. His programs will have to

perform the equivalent of reading the entire Encyclopedia Britannica every second to keep on schedule.

In fact, the operation of the radio telescopes will be fully automated. Should "something" fitting the criteria the computer has been instructed to look for be received, it will perform a series of tests. The details of these tests, designed to avoid sounding an alert over a satellite or star, are secret to guard against fraud. If satisfied, the computer will notify a human operator who will perform a second series of tests. If it still looks "real", the operator will call the Ames Research Center which will have the signal verified from another radio telescope.

After all precautions against mistakes are fulfilled, the International Astronomical Federation suggests all information be disseminated through regular scientific channels, and no response be sent without "appropriate international consultation."

The theoretical basis for SETI radio searches was given in a 1959 paper by physicist Philip Morrison (now at Harvard) and Giuseppe Cocconi. The first search was in the same year when Dr. Frank Drake, now a professor of astronomy at the University of California, arranged for (some say pirated) 200 hours on the radio telescope at Greenbank, West Virginia. Since then there have been at least 25 other projects, in this and other countries, all with negative results. However, one estimate says that NASA's MOP will examine more information than all other known projects in its first minute of operation.

NASA first requested funding for a SETI program in 1978. Senator William Proxmire slapped the program with one of his famous Golden Fleece Awards. These were given to projects he considered especially foolish wastes of taxpayer money. NASA tried to continue, but Proxmire was chairman of the Senate committee which oversees NASA's funding. In 1981, he attached a rider to the NASA appropriations bill ordering no funds be spent on SETI.

Senator Proxmire was heavily influenced by the "Fermi Paradox". Proposed by the Nobel Prize winning physicist Enrico Fermi, this simply points out that Earth has never been visited by any extraterrestrials, suggesting there are none, or very few. Carl Sagan, who had just achieved international fame with his Cosmos TV series, met with Proxmire. He explained most astronomers considered it likely there are millions of planets. This increases the

odds of intelligent life developing, as well as many civilizations, both older and younger than ours. Therefore, the odds of several cultures using radio at any one time were better than the senator had been advised.

Senator Proxmire reversed his stand on SETI, but this did not end attacks on government funding. Partly to help campaign for SETI, Sagan and Bruce Murray (former head of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory) founded the Planetary Society. At over 100,000 members and an annual budget of \$2 million, it is the world's largest pro-space organization.

Their largest project was the funding, with a \$100,000 grant from director Stephen Spielberg, of the development of META (Megachannel Extra Terrestrial Assay). This early spectrum analyzer can separate a signal into 8.4 million channels for study. In 1985 this was attached to an 84 foot disk at Harvard. Argentinean researchers duplicated the META analyzer and began using it with a 100 foot radio telescope in Buenos Aires. Both are still in continuous operation acting as supplements to MOP. Currently the Planetary Society is cosponsoring the construction of BETA (Billion-channel Extra Terrestrial Assay), a 160 million channel receiver, also at Harvard.

Despite public and scientific support, resistance to SETI continues. In 1990 Representative Silvio Conte tried to stop funding for MOP declaring, "Of course there are advanced civilizations in outer space. But we don't need to spend six million this year to find evidence of these rascally creatures. We only need 75 cents to buy a tabloid at the local supermarket."

In April SETI funding was eliminated from the 1983 NASA House Authorization bill. In June Senator Richard Bryan tried to cancel SETI funds in the Senate version of the bill. Whatever the final result in this year's budget, the \$10 million annual budget for the Microwave Observing Project will have to be approved each year it operates.

What do we get for this? Even if the results are negative, the spectrum analyzers developed for SETI is being studied for use in air traffic control and medical diagnostic imaging. An immense amount of new data will be obtained on natural radio signals, important to the understanding of stellar processes.

And if we receive evidence of another civilization? In the words of journalist and science fiction writer Arthur C. Clarke, "At the very least it would prove that intelligence does have some survival value, despite what we see on the evening news."[*]

NASA SETI SEARCH SUMMARY

Search Particulars	Sky Survey	Target Search
Area Coverage	All Directions	1000 stars
Signal Type	Continuous Wave	Drifting Pulses or Continuous Wave
Frequency Coverage	1000 to 10,000 MHz+ spot bands	1000 to 3000 MHz+ spot bands
Frequency Resolution	1000, 30 hz	32, 16, 8, 4, 2, 1 Hz
Receiver Bandwidth	Wide (-300MHz)	Narrow (-10MHz)
Observing time per direction at each frequency setting	0.3 to 3 seconds	300 to 1000 seconds
Channels analyzed	10 million	10 million per resolution
Antenna Diameter	34 meters	305, 100, & 70 meters

Of Midwich, Moonmen and Monoliths:

A Brief Guide to British SF & F Cinema in the Sixties

by Steve Green

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In the fall of '89, I met up with longtime friend Martin Tudor to discuss his plans for NOVACON 19, which he was chairing. Martin had chosen science fiction of the 1960s as the central theme of his programming, but bemoaned the dearth of British SF movies from that period. Not so, said I, rattling off a half-dozen such films to get the ball rolling. The conversation eventually led to the following guide, which appeared--in an earlier draft--in the NOVACON 19 programme book.



1960

Village of the Damned
Directed by Wolf Rilla

Gripping translation to the screen of John Wyndham's classic The Midwich Cuckoos, scripted by Rilla, Sterling Silliphant, and George Barclay. George Sanders and Barbara Shelley head the village's adult inhabitants, struggling against telepathic youngsters spawned by alien experimentation. Superior science fiction movie.

1961

The Damned
Directed by Joseph Losey

Grim anti-nuclear fable based on H. L. Lawrence's novel The Children of Light, with a crushingly downbeat ending. The central theme--children being bred to resist radiation sickness in order that they at least would survive thermonuclear conflict--is intriguing, but Losey throws in too many other elements, clouding the essential message of Evan Jones' script.

The Day the Earth Caught Fire
Directed by Val Guest

Also anti-nuclear, also down beat, but with far



78
79

tighter direction, at times almost documentary in style. The final scenes, as humanity attempts to rescue Earth from a decaying solar orbit, as particularly effective and for once the open ending left by Mankowicz's screenplay doesn't come across as a cop-out.

Mysterious Island

Directed by Cy Endfield

Ray Harryhausen's special effects are the real stars of this adaptation of Jules Verne's L'Ile Mysterieuse, wherein Union soldiers escaping by hot air balloon from a confederate jail crashland upon a deserted isle, populated by giant animals and the ubiquitous Captain Nemo (Herbert Lom); an action packed script courtesy of John Prebble, Daniel Ullman and Crane Wilbur.

1963

Children of the Damned

Directed by Anton M. Leader

Midwich revisited, this time on an international scale. John Briley's screenplay suffers from the original's success in exploring virtually all the avenues outlined by Wyndham's novel.

Dr. Strangelove,

or

How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb

Directed by Stanley Kubrick

Adapted from Peter George's Red Alert by the author, Kubrick, and Terry Southern, this darkest of black comedies only loses its edge when Kubrick is unable to resist the lure of total farce (thankfully, the custard pie battle planned for the finale was abandoned, as was Peter Sellers' attempt to take on a fourth role). The American Fail Safe, released the following year, followed a similar theme but approached the topic in a deadpan fashion, though its conclusion was no more credible.

Jason and the Argonauts

Directed by Don Chaffey

Arguably the most successful vehicle for Ray Harryhausen's miniature work, including the classic swordfight between Jason (Todd Armstrong) and the skeletal children of Hydra's Teeth. The script, by Jan Read and Beverly Cross, displays a casual disregard for mythological exactitudes, but such complaints are minor considering the film's inescapable Saturday Matinee appeal.

The Mouse on the Moon

Directed by Richard Lester

Unlike the earlier The Mouse That Roared (1958), in which a tiny European state declares war on the United States and (much to its horror) accidentally wins, the sequel aims for slapstick rather than satire, Lester's all-or-nothing approach exposing the weaknesses in Michael Pertwee's screenplay much as it helped unbalance Superman III.

Unearthly Stranger

Directed by John Krish

Low-budget SF shocker which reverses the genders of I married a Monster from Outer Space, love triumphing over alien loyalties as the extraterrestrial bride absorbs human emotions, refusing to murder her suspicious husband and pave the way for an otherworldly invasion force. Scripted by Rex Carlton.

1964

The Earth Dies Screaming

Directed by Terence Fisher

One of Fisher's least successful ventures, this sloppily-directed invasion saga would have been better titled The Audience Dies Yawning. Henry Cross' storyline is painfully predictable, the special effects work breaches Trade Descriptions Act and the closing shot--in which a group of survivors escape by plane are shown crossing a busy arterial road--typifies the general ineptness of the whole movie.

First Men in the Moon

Directed by Nathan Juran

Enjoyable period yarn adapted by Nigel Kneale from the H.G. Wells novel, greatly assisted by Ray Harryhausen's stop-motion animation (the Selenite leader and lunar worm are especially effective). Film buffs can also look out for Peter Finch in a cameo role.

1965

Dr. Who and the Daleks

Directed by Gordon Flemyng

The first of two movie spin-offs from the perennial TV series, with Peter Cushing essaying the role more as an absent-minded professor than William Hartnell's crotchety original. Milton Subotsky's adaptation of Terry Nation's script keeps the megalomaniac pepperpots firmly in the spotlight (Britain was in the throes of Dalekmania at the time), but the general ambience is strictly juven-

ile. Despite this, a sequel materialised a year later.

Gonks Go Beat

Directed by Robert Hartford-Davis

Obscure attempt to marry pop music to science fiction, as an alien ambassador is assigned to Earth in a bid to bring peace to two communities divided by their musical tastes. Jimmy Watson's screenplay makes room for such "stars" as Lulu and the Lovers, the Nashville Teens, and the Graham Bond Organisation, but the venture appeared to hit a sour note with its teenage target audience and promptly sank without a trace. Tomorrow (1970) was slightly more successful, which isn't saying much.

The Night Caller

Directed by John Gilling

Tense chiller adapted from Frank Crisp's novel The Night Callers by Jim O'Connolly; the plot is rather over-familiar (what is it about Earth women which proves so irresistible to extraterrestrial kidnapers?), but it's given a good run for its money in this moody exercise, retitled Blood Beast from Outer Space for its American release.

Spaceflight IC-1

Directed by Bernard Knowles

A spaceborne Caine Mutiny, as starship commander Bill Williams' Queeg-like authoritarianism fuels rebellion amongst his crew as they flee an overpopulated Earth. It's surprising that the cast didn't rise up themselves against Harry Spalding's script.

1966

Daleks -- Invasion Earth 2150 AD

Directed by Gordon Flemyng

The Timelord's second big screen incarnation reunites star Cushing, director Flemyng and screenwriter Subotsky, again adapting a Terry Nation serial. Indifferent acting, sloppy pacing and unconvincing special effects ensure its failure to rise above the level of its predecessor.

Fahrenheit 451

Directed by Francois Truffaut

Sincere but sterile adaptation of Ray Bradbury's novel, set in a totalitarian future where the written word is prohibited. Ironically, Nicholas Roeg's photography is far more interesting than the screenplay by Truffaut and Jean-Louis Richard, scarcely the message of Bradbury's fable.



Invasion

Directed by Alan Bridges

Low budget thriller which relies on special effects than pacing, starring Edward Judd as the medic who accidentally hits a jaywalking alien with his car, then refuses to hand her over to extraterrestrial law officers until his patient has recovered. An unremarkable but worthy entry, adapted by Roger Marshall from a story by Robert Holmes.

Island of Terror

Directed by Terence Fisher

Low-budget SF/horror hybrid set amongst an isolated community besieged by bone-sucking mutants. Peter Cushing looks stoic, Edward Judd looks heroic, Carole Gray hits the high notes (which is more than the Edward Andrew Mann/Alan Ramsen script manages) in this entertaining yarn.

The Projected Man

Directed by Ian Curteis

Standard morality tale on the theme of science running rampant, as teleportation experiments mutate the scientist into an insane electric killer; needless to say, he finally sees the error of his ways and presses the self-destruct. Taken from a Frank Quattrocchi short story by John C. Cooper and Peter Bryan.

1967

Battel Beneath the Earth

Directed by Montgomery Tully

Ludicrous cold war yarn wherein renegade Chinese tunnel beneath the United States to set the contin-

ent up for nuclear blackmail. Despite the presence of Kerwin Matthews and stock Americans like Ed Bishop, this hilariously bad invasion movie is British, although the screenplay (by L.Z. Hargreaves) would have been better translated into Chinese.

Bedazzled

Directed by Stanley Donen

British television comedians rarely transfer well to the wider screen, and this Faustian fantasy is no exception. Peter Cook's script casts him as the Devil to Dudley Moore's tempted innocence, but not even a guest appearance by Raquel Welch (as Lust) can distinguish this forgettable farce.

The Day the Fish Came Out

Directed by Michael Cacoyannis

Vaguely anti-nuclear fable set on an Aegean island contaminated by the ditched cargo of an American bomber. Cacoyannis produced and wrote the screenplay as well as directing this dull British-Greek collaboration (probably financed on the strength of his highly successful Zorba the Greek), which at least narrows the blame.

Night of the Big Heat

Directed by Terence Fisher

Another low-budget "monsters on the loose" thriller from Fisher, this time adapted from a John Lymington SF pulp by Ronald Lines. Cushing's again on hand, joined by Christopher Lee and Patrick Allen (more famous than his stodgy acting deserves, as the voiceover on the UK's pre-recorded nuclear alert commercials), united against alien invaders. Released in the US as Island of the Burning Damned and Island of the Burning Doom.

Privilege

Directed by Peter Watkins

Absurd near-future political drama starring Paul Jones as a pop star manipulated by the State to control a rebellious youth, finally destroyed by his own angst. Watkins aims for the same documentary approach as The War Game, but Norman Bogner's script (from a Johnny Speight story) is so vacuous and the central performances (by Paul Jones and Jean Shrimpton) so one-dimensional that this pretentious facade collapses long before the final reel.

Quatermass and the Pit

Directed by Roy Ward Baker

Third and final Hammer adaptation of the classic TV dramas, in which human evolution is revealed as

naught more than the after-effects of Martian experimentation. Nigel Neale adaptes his own script, with Andrew Keir stepping into the role first acquired by Brian Donlevy. The final scenes--London in the grip of psychokinetic hysteria--are memorably staged.

The Terronnauts

Directed by Montgomery Tully

Murray Leinster's novel The Wailing Asteroid is converted into an unconvincing but action-packed alien kidnap thriller by SF author John Brunner, who wisely decided to stick to written SF after this venture.

They Came from Beyond Space

Directed by Freddie Francis

Yet another silly invasion movie with an American actor (in this case, Robert Hutton) heading the cast in a bid to boost box office receipts State-side. This time, humans are being turned into zombies by plague meteorites and then shipped to the Moon as slaves for stranded aliens; the conciliatory ending is unusually upbeat, however. Taken from Joseph Millard's The Gods Hate Kansas by the prolific Milton Subotsky.

Viola

Directed by Dunstan Pereira

Unseen for 22 years, this experimental fantasy only came to light again during my research for this article; it received its third screening ever at NOVACON 19. Scripted by Richard Davis from his 1964 short story "The Female of the Species," this bizarre tale of reincarnation and ultimate betrayal (utilising only still photographs) features a score by Ravi Shankar.

1968

The Lost Continent

Directed by Michael Carreras

Dennis Wheatley's novel Uncharted Seas was the inspiration (for want of a better word) behind this mishmash, involving ill-starred seafarers attacked by man-eating seaweed, giant crabs, and the passengers of a seventeenth-century generation ship. Script by Michael Nash.

2001: A Space Odyssey

Directed by Stanley Kubrick

Wide-screen treatment of Arthur C. Clarke's "The Sentinel," scripted by Clarke and Kubrick. If you need to be told any more about this landmark feature, you're at the wrong convention.

1969

The Bed Sitting Room
Directed by Richard Lester

Perhaps the most oddball post-holocaust movie of all, adapted from the Spike Milligan/John Antrobus stage play by Antrobus himself (with some rewriting by Charles Wood). Harry Seacombe hides out in a nuclear shelter; TV announcer Frank Thornton broadcasts to the remaining population individually; Ralph Richardson mutates into a shabby besdit. Lester's direction is uneven, but the film captures well the rampant surrealism of British civil defence thinking in that paranoid decade.

The Body Stealers
Directed by Gerry Levy

Dismal entry in the "alien kidnapers" sub-genre, with parachutists vanishing in mid-air to be replaced by sinister duplicates. Totally forgettable, with a monosyllabic script by Mike St. Clair and Peter Marcus. One of several UK/US collaborations in fantasy cinema (the bulk produced in the early 1970s), released in America as Invasion of the Body Stealers.

Captain Nemo and the Underwater City
Directed by James Hill

Jules Verne's anti-hero resurfaces to save six shipwreck survivors and transport them to an under-sea fortress, but the leaden plot soon sinks without a trace. Screenplay by Pip and Jane Baker, and R. Wright Campbell.

City under the Sea
Directed by Jacques Tourneur

Another underwater yarn, based on an Edgar Allan Poe story by Charles Bennet and Louis M. Heyward, with Vincent Price as the mysterious immortal captain. Tourneur, whose 1940s movies included the classic Cat People, is obviously in the twilight of his career. UK/US co-production.

Journey to the Far Side of the Sun
Directed by Robert Parrish

Gerry Anderson's first attempt to work with a live cast, but for all the emotion on the screen he might as well stuck to puppets. Also known as Doppelganger, the scientifically ludicrous script (courtesy of Gerry and Sylvia Anderson, and Donald James) involves a mirror-image Earth in the same orbit as our own planet. An initially egaging idea soon becomes tediously overlong.



The Mind of Mr. Soames
Directed by Alan Cooke

Eric Charles Maine's novel is transferred to the screen by John Hale and Edward Simpson, but its intriguing theme--Terence Stamp returning to consciousness from a 30 year coma, a child's mind in an adult's body--is robbed of much depth in the process, reverting to straight melodrama.

Moon Zero Two
Directed by Roy Ward Baker

One of Hammer's few overtly SF movies, the cinema equivalent of the 1930s pulp story where the Lunar surface doubles for the wild west. Claim jumpers, shoot-outs, and high noon drama in orbit, too silly to be taken seriously and too straight to work as a spoof. Written by Michael Carreras from a story by Gavin Lyall, Frank Hardman and Martin Davidson.

When Dinosaurs Ruled the Earth
Directed by Val Guest

Typically Neanderthal tale of prehistoric life, neatly ignoring the fact that such reptiles were long dead by the time mankind walked in their fossilised footsteps. Guest directs from his own script and is greatly aided by Jim Danworth's special effects work.

Zeta One
Directed by Michael Cort

Juvenile spy movie involving alien amazons and heavily laden with cheap titillation. Script, such as it is, by Cort and Alastair McKenzie. [*]

Joe Patrouch writes: "I wrote 'Rogue Moon and Me' several years ago simply as a way of clarifying my own thoughts and memories on the subject. Then it occurred to me that others might be interested in it, so I offered to read it at the Worldcon in Boston. As luck would have it, I had two papers there, and time constraints limited me to the other one. Then it was accepted for an IAFA meeting the following Spring, but I broke my leg and couldn't go. Finally I was going to read it at CHICON V, but somehow it was left off my program assignments. As you'll see, 'Rogue Moon and Me' was obviously written to be read aloud and listened to by an audience, but that's never happened so far as I know."

Rogue Moon and Me

by Joe Patrouch

Science fiction has long been known as a field in which writers read one another's work and steal --I mean, borrow and develop--on another's ideas. For this reason some people call SF a particularly incestuous field. I prefer to think of it as a literary tradition evolving before our very eyes. Like all generalizations this one needs specific examples. There is one specific example with which I am very familiar--myself--and I thought it might be interesting and instructive to share that example with you today.

I was unfortunate enough not to read Algis Budrys' Rogue Moon when it originally came out in the December 1960 issue of The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction. I finally encountered it in the Science Fiction Hall of Fame, volume IIB, which first came out in 1973 and which has been in and out of print ever since. (The rule is that volume IIB is out of print whenever I want to use it in a class, and in print when I don't. In choosing texts, I must constantly ask myself: IIB or not IIB?) From the moment I first read it, I was tremendously impressed with Rogue Moon, and I have read it several times since. I think its last line, in context, "Remember me to her," is as fine a last line as I have ever read. Rogue Moon has become a part of me, in the way that Edmond Hamilton's The Star Kings (the first SF story I read) and Jules Verne's The Mysterious Island and Paul de Kruif's Microbe Hunters all became part of me. I am what these books made me.

So, in the late 60s/early 70s, when I came to try to write SF myself, what could be more natural than that my mind should turn to Rogue Moon and, more specifically, to its matter transmitter? How to tell you, in twenty-five words or less, how the matter transmitter in Rogue Moon works? Maybe the best way is through comparison and contrast. Like so: In SF there are two kinds of matter transmitters, Type A and Type B. Type A is a natural development of $E = Mc^2$; that is, matter and energy are convertible back and forth. Matter is simply a way that energy has of storing itself. As with TV you need both a transmitter and a receiver. At the transmitter you convert the matter to energy and

send it out on a tight beam; at the receiver you collect the energy and convert it back to its original matter. Voila! The transmission of matter! That's Type A, the $E = Mc^2$ type.

Type B is the Rogue Moon type. You don't convert the matter into energy and beam and receive that energy; instead, you scan the object in detail and beam its template, its blueprint, and using matter available at the receiver, you build an exact duplicate of the original. Technically, this is not so much a matter transmitter as an object duplicator. You start with the original in the transmitter, and you build an exact duplicate in the receiver. You have two objects, not one that has moved. But the effect is that of sending an object. I mean, there it is in the transmitter, and then there it is in the receiver. Matter transmission, right? Well, close enough. Until the object involved is a human being, which is protoplasm (matter) wrapped around a consciousness. Then "close enough" isn't, and the story of Rogue Moon evolves.

Budrys adds another element to his Type B transmitter: the blueprint is stored on magnetic tape (this was 1960, remember?). Now, any matter-transmitted object exists in three places (not just one, as in Type A, or two, as in Type B): the original in the transmitter, the duplicate in the receiver, and the original stored as data on magnetic tape.

O.K. If you want to know what use Budrys makes of all this, go read Rogue Moon. I want to take you on a tour of what I made of it--in five stories and some additional ideas.

First off, I was intrigued by that tape. In Rogue Moon a character dying of cancer is stored on tape. When the man dies, and if his expertise and judgement are still needed on the project, a copy of that man can be made from that tape. Of course, the copy will be an exact copy of the man on the day the tape was made. If the copy isn't made for years, then--to that man--it will seem as if he has gone into a machine and come out as casually as you or I might go into and out of a telephone booth. That man will not notice the passage of years. In subjective effect, then, Budrys' matter transmitter is a time machine. It can be used to move people

into the future. I never wrote a story using this particular implication of the technology in Rogue Moon. There are so many other ways of moving people into the future in SF that I didn't see the point. But it is an interesting idea, don't you think?

As an aside: Realizing that Budrys' matter transmitter--or, at least, one important element of it, the tape--could be used as a time machine led me to consider something else, and I wrote a story in which some scientists invented a time machine that had one important limitation: it could be used to go back in time only one rotation of the Earth. The story's challenge was: Of what use is a 24-hour time machine? The answer depended on the same insight Asimov developed in his story "The Dead Past," i.e., the past begins (or ends) the briefest of nano-seconds age, and therefore a 24-hour time machine would have many extremely important applications--as a matter transmitter! (I wrote the short story version called "I Need It Yesterday" and a short-short version called "The 24-hour Time Machine," but neither sold. I began both versions by acknowledging my debt to "The Dead Past," and the editors all thought the story too derivative. Oh well, I tried.)

So far, we've seen that Budrys' matter transmitter has applications as a time machine and that all time machines have applications as matter transmitters. Let's go back to that magnetic storage tape that interested me so much a while ago. The man in Rogue Moon had cancer, inoperable, painful, fatal. His stored version would also have that cancer, in an earlier stage. His resurrected self--his time-travelled duplicate--would have a period of productive life ahead of him as the cancer grew until--inevitably--it once again killed him. Am I the only one to whom another possibility occurs, another way to use that tape?

(By the way, while you're thinking about that, let me point out that later--after developing my own idea and story along these lines, I reread Rogue Moon and discovered the passage in which the central character discusses X-ray photography. He says:

When a physician X-rays a sick man, he gets a print showing...the tumor in his brain. But to cure the man, he can't take scissors and cut the blotch out of the print.... What [he] would need is an X-ray film whose chemicals will not only not reproduce malignancy but would reproduce healthy tissue.... Who can build such a[n X-ray] camera?

Perhaps my unconscious was remembering this passage when it thought up this further development of Budrys' magnetic storage tape. Have you got it yet?)

Question: Why matter transmit the cancerous tumor? Why not program into the tape a sort of Gray's



Anatomy? Why transmit and receive a body with a broken bone if you can transmit it with a broken bone and receive it with a whole healthy bone? Why transmit--actually I called it transmatting--why transmat a child with diphtheria bacilli and receive her without them? (One editor rejected the story with the comment that matter transmitters would be complicated enough without introducing normalizing circuits into them. I liked his term "normalizing circuits," although, since matter transmitters are imaginary machines anyway, I didn't see the point in calling my version too complicated to be plausible. Oh well, I tried.) Obviously, this version of Budrys' matter transmitter would render the entire medical profession obsolete. In place of doctors and hospitals people would get their health care at the local "transmed".

So I wrote a story called "Nikki(1)/Nikki(2)" about a little girl with diphtheria whose mother wants to take her to the transmed to cure her and whose father opposes the whole idea on the grounds established by Budrys in Rogue Moon: the process of creating the healthy duplicate involves killing and replacing the unhealthy original. Transmeds don't heal; they replace with exact--though healthy--copies. My story ended with the now-healthy little girl laughing and playing in the back yard, while the father examines a clay medallion she had made in school the week before she became ill. The original girl's thumbprint is clearly imbedded in the clay, and the father knows that the original is dead, gone, and for loss of her bursts out crying.

Of course, I liked the story a lot, but no editor did. (That's not quite true: I did sell it eventually to a semi-prozine in California that has never used it. Oh well, I tried.)

Lest you begin to suspect that contemplating Rogue Moon led me to write a bunch of unsalable stories, let's move on to three that did sell, one to The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction and two to Analog. Two of these stories are matter transmitter stories, though of the Type A [$E = Mc^2$]

kind, while the third merely derives from the matter transmitter stories. But the point is that none of the three would have been written without Rogue Moon.

The two matter transmitter stories both resulted from the same line of thought. Matter into energy; energy beamed over distance; matter reconstituted. What about transmission losses? In one story I softlanded a transmat booth on Mars, then sent a man through without proper testing. As a result of transmission losses he arrives on Mars with less matter than he started out with. I gave him pain, bleeding from the nose and ears, bruises. It is obvious to him that something somehow is trying to kill him--the universe as a death machine has been a part of me since Rogue Moon--and he has to figure out what it is and how to save himself. Of course he solves the problem: because of transmission losses, not enough of his matter arrives on Mars. How to get him back to Earth safely? The gas laws: if you want the same density or pressure with less gas, you simply reduce the volume. He left at 6'3"; he returns at 5'7"--and survives. For obvious reasons I called the story "The Attenuated Man," and it appeared in the March 1979 issue of The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction. (One editor, by the way, turned the story down with the remark, "Matter transmitters don't work that way." This surprised me. I had thought that matter transmitters were imaginary devices that worked however their authors told them to. But the editor had a military background, and perhaps he knows some things the rest of us don't.)

"The Attenuated Man" depended on sending an entire object--a man--and losing a fine, evenly distributed mist of his molecules to unintentional, unavoidable, accidental transmission losses. But if you lose energy evenly across a body, you're not likely to lose complete molecules, are you? Aren't you more likely to lose a certain amount of energy from each and every atom? But if there weren't enough energy received to reconstruct the entire atom of some element, then the atom actually assembled would not be an atom of that element, but of some element with a less complex atom, that is, one farther down on the Periodic Table of Elements. I suddenly realized that a matter transmitter--taking transmission losses into account--could actually be used as a matter transmutter! Naturally, the old alchemists' dream sprang to mind--lead into gold--and sure enough, according to the good old Periodic Table, lead does indeed have a more complex atom than gold. Now, the amount of transmission loss depends upon the distance the matter is transmatted; place the transmitter and receiver the proper distance apart, and lead transmatted would be received as gold. Voila!

So far, so good. But I still wasn't satisfied. The process was too bulky and unwieldy. It would

have to work across finely calibrated interplanetary if not interstellar distances. And where was the story? The SF equipment is one thing; the story is something else entirely. So I kept worrying at the transmuting-via-transmitting idea. O.K., so the amount of transmission loss depended on the distance transmatted; but it also depended on the tightness of the beam. The less tight the beam, the more loss through scattering, and the less distance needed. This led me to consider the transmitter itself. What could be done with it? And then I had it.

Remember those transmats in "Nikki(1)/Nikki(2)"? They grew out of the question: Why send and receive broken/diseased/malfunctioning body parts? Why not introduce a normalizing circuit? Here the thought was: Why send more energy than you need for your purpose? If your purpose is to receive one atom of gold, then send only enough energy to construct one atom of gold. In other words, at the transmitter convert the matter into energy and then split off the proper amount of unwanted energy. The lead is converted into energy, and then the energy is split into two streams. One is sent across the room to be received as gold; the other...well, what to do with it? Aha! Why not let it drive the process? That way the transmutation process would supply its own energy, and the whole thing could be kept secret.

Note that now a potential story is beginning to grow out of the equipment. A group of people learn how to convert larger quantities of lead into gold, and they can do it without using such large quantities of energy that they would draw attention to themselves. Wouldn't widespread knowledge of such a process affect the gold standard and the economy of the world? And why would these people want to devalue their own product? It seemed to me reasonable that these people would want to convert their gold into cash and that they would choose to do it in small quantities. For better or for worse, I tied them into jewelers, bleeding the gold slowly out to their customers and collecting cash in return. Then a shipment of the jewelry gets shunted aside by a young deliveryman who wants it to impress his girlfriend; the young man is killed in reprisal and as an example; the girl hires--you got it--a private eye to find her missing boyfriend; and the story begins to write itself. I named the story after the slogan on the private investigator's business card, "Your Privacy Is My Business," and it appeared in the February 1980 issue of Analog.

The last story I wanted to tell you about derives from that splitter, that energy source, in "Your Privacy Is My Business." What if you don't use the matter transmitter as a matter transmutter? What if you simply feed matter--in the form, say, of a thin continuous wire--into the transmat and get only energy out? It's no longer a matter transmitter at all; now it's simply an energy source. A-

gain, neat idea, but no story. Where to find one.

I've always been intrigued by what I call discontinuous processes. Water absorbs energy and absorbs energy, and at a certain point it becomes a gas (steam); water loses energy and loses energy, and at a certain point it becomes solid (ice). If you didn't know already about steam and ice, if all you knew was water at different temperatures, how could you predict steam or ice? How could you imagine that such a thing as steam or ice could result from adding or subtracting energy to or from water? These are discontinuities. (I wrote a story once in which I played with the notion that the speed of light might be like the temperature of water, that we only know light in its liquid state, so to speak. I added more and more energy to a spaceship until it achieved a significant portion of the speed of light, and then--discontinuity!--(No, it didn't vaporize or freeze, smarty)--it could travel at translight speeds with less and even less energy input. The route to the stars waited at the discontinuity called the speed of light. And no, the story didn't sell. The editors said there wasn't enough laboratory evidence to support the speculative science element. Oh well, I tried.)

Let's get back to that matter transmitter that I have now reduced to a mere energy source. (We're still dealing with $E = Mc^2$, you understand. Matter is a way energy has of storing itself, and a matter transmitter can be a way of unstoring--releasing--that energy.) Is there any way this can be made into a discontinuous process? You add energy and add energy until...until what? One obvious "what?" is, until you get an explosion (like an overheated boiler). But if you're controlling the amount of matter that goes in--that continuously fed wire, remember?--then you're not really adding energy;

you're just keeping the input steady. To add more energy, the wire would have to get thicker or it would have to be fed in more quickly, neither of which would be allowed to happen. So how else can we get a steady increase in the energy output? I could figure out only one way: as the process runs, it becomes more efficient. The same amount of matter input produces more and more...and more...energy output. Build in reasons why you can't simply slow down the matter input to slow down the energy output, and why you simply can't shut the thing off--it's my machine, and I can design it any way I damn well please!--and what have you got? Eventually you've got a complete reversal of the present energy-consumer situation. If that constantly increasing energy isn't used, you lose--early on--say, the city of St. Louis, later the state of Missouri, then the North American continent, and eventually the world. Use it or lose it! takes on an entirely new meaning. Consumers must meet constantly rising energy quotas. Meters are read to make sure you've done your share. Everyone in the world must use energy as recklessly--make that, as responsibly--as an American does today. The more inefficient an electrical device, the better. Gigantic grids must be constructed to beam energy up to geo-powered satellites which then radiate that energy into space. The story was called "Tiger by the Tail" when it appeared in the September 1981 Analog.

I have discussed half a dozen and more stories and story ideas that appeared in my head as a result of reading and rereading and thinking about Algis Budrys' Rogue Moon. I hope you have found it an instructive set of examples of how SF writers borrow and develop one another's ideas.

Thank you for your attention. |*|

When I smile at you, do you know why?
It is these Memories which bring it forth.

The Glimmer of 'Con fellowship, fen and melodies,
Friendship's life glowing in my mind.

and

Striving, Reaching for the last note,
Grasping for that One 4 beat measure,
Placing a melody line in my mind.

It All eclipses my thoughts

Bringing forth a wistful...smile

Filker's Daydreams

by Andrea Yeomans

Somewhere Under the Arch

Attending the St. Louis ARCHON 16

John Varley, Author GoH

Ricia Mainhardt, Toastmistress

Don Maitz, Artist GoH

Roger Tener, Fan GoH

by Linda Dunn

We greatly enjoyed ourselves the first and only time we attended ARCHON and were rather happy to find a good excuse to attend again. It's a bit of a drive from Indianapolis and it IS the weekend after INCONJUNCTION, but the lure of finally meeting John Varley was sufficient inticement for us to take some vacation time from work and travel to a convention we remembered as one of the best we had ever attended.

The last time we went to ARCHON the car transmission failed on the return journey so this time we decided to play it safe. We took the car to a reliable GMC dealership and had it checked out thoroughly the night before leaving. The next morning I discovered we didn't have quite enough cash for the trip so I made a mad dash to the nearest bank machine while my husband Greg finished getting dressed.

Ever notice how things go wrong when you're in a hurry? The billfold fell out the car window, cards scattered everywhere, and it took a few minutes to scoop everything back together, complete my transaction, and return home. I arrived just in time to wave goodbye to the kids as their grandmother took them away for the weekend and then I discovered Greg was ready to leave. We loaded the suitcases in the car, locked the doors to the house, turned on the alarm system, and prepared for a relaxing drive during a time of low traffic.

You can see it coming, right? When we stopped for lunch I discovered my MasterCard was missing. Oops! I must have lost it when I dropped all my cards outside the ATM. The next half hour was wasted while I located a pay phone and sufficient change for a long distance call to my bank to put a block on my card. No, I could NOT find the toll-free number.

Fortunately, the remainder of the trip was somewhat less eventful and I was actually beginning to calm down by the time we arrived at the hotel and met one of the great challenges of ARCHON: finding a place to park (the hotel lacks sufficient parking space). Mission accomplished, we registered for the convention and Greg headed immediately for the Dealers' Room to insure Larry Smith had copies of Steel Beach. Not only did he have copies, they were already autographed! Larry explained that John Varley had stopped by earlier and signed all the books

and then told us he'd had an incredibly difficult time obtaining the books before the convention. It seems the distributor didn't understand SF conventions and thought the following weekend would be adequate. Larry thought otherwise and moved heaven and Earth (or so it seemed) to get them in time for the convention.

After chatting for a while, we turned around to see a friend of long acquaintance: Joe Cunningham (local video junkie and one-half the Indianapolis-based LSV Video outfit which deals in awful, er, um, I mean OLD films). We traded information and Joe told us the Art Room was already open. Naturally we had to drag Greg upstairs to see what was available.

The ARCHON art show was incredible last time I was there and this one was even better than before. Don Maitz was Artist GOH so he and his wife Janny Wurts, had their usual dazzling display of art. On the panel across from them Todd Cameron Hamilton was hangin his original artwork for Steel Beach and other Varley books and I glanced down to see an original with an unusually low (for a Hamilton) minimum bid. He told us later that he had an agreement for a series of paintings for Tarot cards and the deal fell through after he'd completed several paintings. The one on display was "The Sun".

Greg didn't want to spend much time in the Art Room because it had a nasty case of mildew but I was willing to hold my breath for however long it took to tour the room. (The Henry the Eighth hotel is a wonderful hotel with a warm atmosphere and friendly people--but the roofs leak!) I took a deep breath, caughed and wheezed, and headed back into the Art Room as Greg gasped for breath outside.

J.R. Daniels had more of his fantastic art on display (if you haven't seen his work, make it a point to do so in the future) and he was offering everything at \$1.00 minimum bid. By the time the art show closed, every sheet had at least three bids and some items were up to \$60.00!

Lucy Synk had her "25th Anniversary of Star Trek" original for sale, in addition to her usual print selection and after a while I lost track of who was there as the abundance of high quality art work overwhelmed me. Several amateurs, whose names I can't remember, had some extremely good art on display and I was overwhelmingly depressed (remem-

ber, I'd misplaced my MasterCard and had no money with which to purchase artwork). After finding Greg downstairs in the vendors' room and begging and pleading, I managed to convince him to loan me HIS MasterCard for the weekend and dashed back to the Art Room to place bids on several pieces of art.

Although the event I love most about ARCHON is the Art Show, I must admit that the convention had everything a fan could want...except ample parking and food. The consuite had DRINKS ONLY (no ice) and there are no restaurants withing walking distance except the one at the hotel. However, ARCHON more than made up for the lack of food and parking spaces with some excellent programming, facilities, and some of the shortest autograph lines I've seen in years.

At first I was a little confused because the hotel was swarming with people wearing ARCHON badges yet there were plenty of seats available at panel sessions. After a while I realized that a large number of attendees were more interested in conversing with old friends and partying than meetin the pros, and some of these partying fans seemed to be having a very good time indeed. I never learned who won the paper airplane flying championship (I don't think anyone else knows either) but I can attest to the fact that I never saw so many adults flying paper airplanes in a hotel before in my life.

Greg and I enjoyed meeting poeple we'd met before at other conventions, such as Lucy Synk, Richard Knaack, Mickey Zucker Reichart, and others, but we were a little more interested in making new acquaintances and attending programming than partying by the pools. Greg was thrilled to meet Allen Steele again and followed him around to panels while I spent some time talking to Kay Goode in the art show about (1) what caused the mildew and (2) the fabulous artwork and (3) why do fen wait until the last possible moment before bidding?

The only item which rivals the Art Show at ARCHON is the Costuming Event. These participants make some of the best costumes and perform some of the best skits that I've ever seen outside Worldcon. I especially enoyed the Kzin, the bug, the crash test dummy, the human appetizer, the vampire, and Addams Family (from children's costuming), and regret I was unable to squeeze into the room to see the actual competition. From what I could see from the hallway, everyone was having a very good time and even the security guards were enjoying themselves as they conversed with one guest about the futuristic weapon he'd brought along and tried to figure out how it was supposed to work. As one of the guards raised the handle to eye level and touched a button, the barrel fell to the floor. Well, so much for advanced weaponry....

I must admit to drooling over the ARCHON program book. I know most attendees don't pay attention to these books but those who didn't certainly missed

out. The full-color cover by Don Maitz was available for autographing (the committee had extra, unfolded copies available at the autograph table) but the part of the program book I liked best was a short piece written by Todd Cameron Hamilton. He "explained" that the reason John Varley hadn't been seen in fandom for the last five years was because he had suffered a tragic accident while cleaning his Hugo awards and had turned into an Elvis impersonator. I don't quite believe his account, but it was an amusing story.

In summary, we had a fabulous time and met a large number of friendly and interesting people and our only regret was that we didn't have more time to stay and get to know some of them a little better. Well, perhaps I should say two regrets: I wish I'd had more money with which to purchase some outstanding pieces of artwork.

Finally, about that charge card: I left it at the car dealership after paying for the tune-up, so everything worked out well--except that Greg made me reimburse him for the charges I made on his account. It's going to be a few weeks before I can afford to eat lunch again, but it's worth it. "The Sun" looks beautiful near the sofa. [*]



Pulp & Celluloid

Book, film, tape, graphic novel, comic, theatre and record reviews by: Bill Breuer, Dave Creek, Lan, Evelyn C. Leeper, Mark R. Leeper, Lynn McMillen, David M. Shea, Lawrence L. Touse, Don Wenzel.



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Book Reviews by Evelyn C Leeper

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City of Truth

by James Morrow

St. Martin's Press, 1992 (c1990), \$14.95

In the 1950s C. M. Kornbluth wrote two classic stories which centered around lying as a way of life: "The Marching Morons" and The Space Merchants (the latter co-authored with Frederik Pohl). Whether Morrow's novella is a response (of sorts) to these, or just the result of being quoted John 8:32* once too often, I cannot say. But Morrow has given us a society in which everyone tells the truth, everyone knows the truth, and it does not set them free.

Veritas (the "City of Truth" of the title) would seem to be following perfectly Kant's categorical imperative ("Act as if the maxim of your action were to become by your will a general law of nature"), which might lead the reader to question whether Kant's "Metaphysical Foundations of Morals" might not need a few revisions. It is the rare science fiction book today that takes on both the New Testament and Immanuel Kant, which is probably reason enough to read the book. But Morrow manages to write a very funny book even while examining these weighty issues. When one character asks her husband whether he copulates with a lot of women to strengthen their marriage, he says no, he just likes to ejaculate inside other women. I also like the aptly-named Camp Ditch-the-Kids. In fact, it's probably Morrow's injection of honesty into the advertising and mercantile aspects of the society that reminds me of Kornbluth. There is much, much more, but to tell it would ruin a lot of the enjoyment of the book.

*"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

But it's not all humor and jokes. Morrow constructs a situation in which the main character needs something besides the truth--he needs the hope and innocence that lies (of commission or omission) can bring. And he finds that he is not alone in this need. In the end, it is not truth that sets him free, but the lies.

Morrow is writing some of the most thought-provoking short fiction today, and I highly recommend his work in general and City of Truth in particular. I would nominate this for a Hugo this year, but a British edition appeared in 1990. (In fact, this edition was apparently done from those plates and follows British spelling conventions.) Maybe I'll just lie on the nomination form and hope no one notices.

Universe 2

Edited by Robert Silverberg & Karen Haber
Bantam/Spectra, 1992, \$21.50

As Silverberg says in his introduction, "This is the second of a new series of anthologies of previously unpublished science fiction stories, carrying on the name and spirit of the distinguished Universe series that the late Terry Carr produced between 1971 and 1987." (Of course, he then goes on to explain how that's not entirely accurate, but you get the idea.)

Universe 2 contains twenty-two stories, ranging from the memorable to the unremarkable to the incoherent. The best is "The Passing of the Eclipse" by Donna Farley, about a future society in which people all wear masks and, by extension, about the (figurative) masks we all wear in our society. It's a moving story, and a thought-provoking one, worthy of consideration come Hugo time next year.

Almost as good is Kathie Kojas's "By the Mirror of

My Youth," about the consequences to one family when cloning humans becomes a real possibility. It did remind me a lot of Faye Weldon's "The Cloning of Joanna Way" (I hope I have the title right there), though I suspect coincidence rather than influence. (For reasons surpassing my understanding, Silverberg and Haber follow this story with a protagonist named Rachel with another story with a protagonist named Rachel. This is as bad as Full Spectrum 2's placement of David Brin's "The Giving Plague" immediately following Karen Haber's "A Plague of Strangers"--and there's an irony that one of the "victims" of the latter is one of the "perpetrators" here. Part of editing is sequencing, and alas, this sometimes seems random.)

Sean McMullen's "Souls in the Great Machine" is a must-read for people interested in the history of technology, alternate technologies, and what it really means to become "cogs in the machine." (If this story seems unlikely, I suggest you read Kevin Anderson's and Doug Beason's Trinity Paradox for a demonstration of how the idea was actually applied in our world.) Other stories worth reading include "Burning Bush" by Carolyn Gilman and "Lost in Transmission" by Tony Daniel.

I found this anthology spotty, but with five very-good-to-excellent stories (including one of Hugo caliber), I feel I can recommend it.

Cloven Hooves

by Megan Lindholm
Bantam/Spectra, 1991, \$4.99

I have to admit that the description of this book as being about a woman who leaves her husband to go to live with a faun in the forest did not make me want to run out and read it. It sounded just a bit too "woodlands-cutesy." But a friend who knows me said that I might enjoy it--it wasn't quite what I was thinking.

Well, she was right that it wasn't woodlands-cutesy, and I think Lindholm shows promise, but I can't wholeheartedly recommend the book. The problem is the characters--they are all one-dimensional (with the possible exception of the main character, who avoids being one-dimensional only by being a collection of quirks, "funny hats" in an almost literal sense, as her clothes are a large part of her characterization). Take the husband, for example. The whole point of his character is that he has no independence--he functions only as an appendage of his family. The son seems present in the book only as a plot device, not a fully realized character. Ironically, the faun is perhaps the most fully-realized--ironic because he is the one whose nature is the least complex. (Well, maybe it's not so ironic after all.)

As far as the main character goes, she seems so

spineless as to be almost a non-entity. She puts up with an unbelievable amount of emotional abuse from her family and her husband's family until one day she just leaves and runs off with the faun. Now I'm sure that there are people who put up with emotional abuse, so I can't say it's unrealistic, but I can say that to me it was unconvincing. Your mileage may vary. (It shouldn't be necessary to say that in a review, but my experience is that it is.)

Maybe this is all a modern-day fairy tale and I should look more at the meaning than at the characterization. (How much personality did Snow White have?) There is a power in Lindholm's writing that kept me reading even when I wanted to shake some life into the characters, so I give Cloven Hooves a conditional recommendation.

Prayers to Broken Stones

by Dan Simmons
Bantam/Spectra, 1992 (c1990), \$5.99

In the last ten years, Dan Simmons has written eight novels (or seven, if you count Hyperion and The Fall of Hyperion as the two halves of a single novel). These include fantasy (he won the World Fantasy Award for Song of Kalid), horror (he won the Bram Stoker Award for Carrion Comfort), science fiction (he won the Hugo Award for Hyperion), and even mainstream (Phases of Gravity). This is his first collection, and shows that same range.

Unfortunately, Bantam has chosen to start this collection with an introduction by Harlan Ellison, in which he congratulates himself for having discovered Dan Simmons. But after describing this feat, he says Simmons can remember and tell it better. And sure enough, in the introduction to "The River Styx Runs Upstream," Simmons does. Interestingly, he remembers it differently. In Ellison's version, Ellison makes Simmons identify himself at a writers' workshop only when he wants to praise him; in Simmons' version, he is singled out and verbally abused before his story is even read. The two tellings provide, I suppose, further evidence that Rashomon shows us an accurate view of human memory. (By the way, be sure to read all of Simmons' introductions--they're as good as the stories.)

In any case, "The River Styx Runs Upstream" was Simmons' first published story and is a blend of the science fiction and horror genres. What if through scientific means we could bring the dead back to life? The horror is not the George Romero sort of horror, but a quieter horror that comes from knowing that something very important is missing from someone close to you.

If "The River Styx Runs Upstream" is about something missing, "Eyes I Dare Not Meet in Dreams" is a perfect counterpoint: a story in which there is

more to some of the characters than one would think. The basic premise may seem familiar, but Simmons handles it with a skill that carries the reader along, and characters that the reader cares about.

The third story is a definite change of pace. "Vanni Fucci Is Alive and Well and Living in Hell" has that resident of the Seventh Bolgia of the Eighth Circle of Hell comes on to Brother Freddy's Hallelujah Breakfast Club as a guest and explain how it really is. A knowledge of Dante is useful but certainly not necessary for the enjoyment of this tale of the true status of televangelists.

And in case the reader had any lingering doubts about Simmons' opinion of televangelists, "Vexed to Nightmare by a Rocking Cradle" will set them to rest. (I'm not sure this seeming juxtaposing of stories is a good idea--they end up as halves of a pair rather than as individual entities. Given that the stories had no connection in their original appearances, connecting them here is probably an ill-conceived idea.) "Vexed to Nightmare by a Rocking Cradle" is a post-holocaust (one is tempted to say post-apocalyptic, but that would be misleading) look at the direction one particular brand of Christianity might take. Written as a Christmas story for a comics catalogue, this story was not designed to brighten the reader's Christmas morning --though depending on the reader, it just might.

"Remembering Siri," set in the Hegemony universe of Hyperion and The Fall of Hyperion, is perhaps the best piece in the book. But some of that may be that the universe is familiar; when the story was published in 1983, the reader had no well-developed background to place it against. Still, the characters and their situation are close enough that reading Hyperion or The Fall of Hyperion is not a prerequisite for appreciating this story of a space traveler, the woman he loved, and the world he came to change but instead was changed by. (I realize my comments make it sound as though I am saying that the best stories are those in series; this is not my intention. It is more that Simmons can accomplish in a short story what might have required a longer length to do as effectively if there was no other information to draw on.)

The next two stories are another pair, but at least there is good reason for the pairing: "The Offering" is Simmons' screenplay of his story "Metastasis." I didn't see the show when it aired (on the syndicated television series Monsters in 1990, but the transition of an almost mystical story to a television play is instructive to see. Simmons' introduction to the script describes some of the changes--apparently they even wanted to change the basic premise of the "cancer vampires," but he drew the line at this.

These days it seems as though every writer is doing a Vietnam story, and so we have "E-Ticket to

'Namland," which extrapolates our preference for hyperreality over reality (which Umberto Eco elucidates in his Travels in Hyperreality). In this case, of course, one might claim that 'Namland is preferable to 'Nam, but then the boundaries start to blur, much as camouflage makes the wearer blend into the background.

Now we move into horror stories of a more standard type. "Iverson's Pit" and "Shave and a Haircut, Two Bites" are straightforward horror stories --well-written, as all the stories are, but nothing ground-breaking. Then comes "The Death of the Centaur" about the power of story-telling, which failed to work for me for a couple of reasons. First, I never got involved with the story within the story --maybe I just have difficulty with a multi-layered story. Secondly, no matter how well done, a story written about the power of storytelling must appear somewhat self-serving. But it's not unreasonable to say that no story can ever be written about storytelling, so you may just want to write this off as one of my quirks.

"Two minutes Forty-Five Seconds" is what Simmons (or perhaps Ellen Datlow should get the credit) calls "high-tech horror." It served its purpose as a short filler in Omni, but doesn't really stand up.

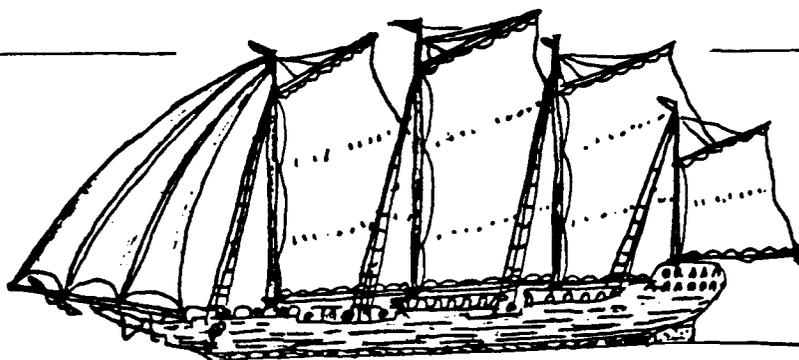
Prayers to Broken Stones finishes with the short story "Carrion Comfort" upon which the novel was based. The short story seems to be quite sufficient unto itself--one wonders why it needed to be expanded into a novel (and a half-million-word novel at that). This means, of course, that the reader is left not desiring to run out and read Simmons' full-length novels, but asking why, if Simmons can tell a story in less than 20,000 words, he then expanded it to a half a million. (Okay, I haven't read the novel, and it's possible that if I read it I would understand. But my first reaction is to ask "why bother?" rather than to read it immediately.)

Not every story in Prayers to Broken Stones is a gem. Not every story is to everyone's taste. But the stories show Simmons' range and technique, so even if there are a couple not to your liking, I think on the whole you will find Prayers to Broken Stones a rewarding experience.

Tramp Royale

by Robert A. Heinlein
Ace, 1992, \$18.95

These days even death doesn't slow an author down much. This is Heinlein's second post-mortem book (the first being Grumbles from the Grave). There was also Requiem (which was mostly tributes from other people, though he was listed as the primary author), and I wouldn't doubt that there are more coming. But this volume has little to recom-



mend it except Heinlein's name.

As a travelogue it can most charitably be termed "of historical interest". The trip described was taken in 1953 and 1954 (and the manuscript written then), so conditions were very different than now. Anyone reading this as current--as one is apt to do with such a new book--will get a very outdated view of the world. Unfortunately, even keeping in mind that this is forty years old, one can't help but carry away misimpressions. Heinlein's exoriation of New Zealand, for example, was probably unfair even then, is certainly inaccurate today, and yet still leaves a negative impression on the reader.

Everything people love or hate about Heinlein is here. Either he patterned all his fictional characters' dialogue after the way he and his wife Virginia talked, or (more likely) when he writes up dialogue that supposedly took place, he remembers it as being the way his characters would speak. In any case, Robert and Virginia Heinlein sound like two characters out of one of his novels, complete with his patronizing and condescending attitude toward her. (Yes, it's her business if she wants to put up with it, but when he puts it in a book, the reader gets to object to it as well.)

Heinlein's politics also come roaring through. McCarthyism wasn't all that bad, he says, because they were after Communists and because, after all, no one was thrown in jail after they testified. (Failure to testify led to being cited as in contempt of Congress, which at that time did result in jail. Now, of course, it's the feeling of the average citizen.) I wonder if her would have defended Meese's intimidation of the distributors of Playboy et al the same way--after all, there was really no force of law behind those letters that his office sent to the stores saying that they might be guilty of marketing pornography. When Heinlein asked to be taken to the slums of Buenos Aires, he found them remarkably clean. The possibility that he might have been taken to someplace other than the worst slums did apparently occur to him, but he seemed perfectly willing to believe the driver's statement that these were the worst slums. He judgements on the various governments are equally naive, and his opposition to apartheid seems to focus more on how difficult it makes it for a black man to buy a wife than on its obvious faults. (But then his objection to the Aztec custom of sacrificing virgins seemed

to be more than they wasted a natural resource that way than that human sacrifice was a bad thing.)

In the introduction it is claimed that this manuscript didn't sell at the time because of the depressed publishing industry. (Depressed because all the best people left because of McCarthyism? Sorry, that was a cheap shot.) But I suspect it wouldn't have sold in any case. It lacks the insight of the timeless travel journals (such as Charles Darwin's Voyage of the Beagle, Cabeza de Vaca's Adventures in Interior America, or John L. Stephens' Incidents of Travel in the Yucatan, or even some recent works such as James Michener's Iberia, Vikram Seth's From Heaven's Lake, or Ronald Wright's Cut Stones and Crossroads), and consists more of complaints about small ship cabins, bad food, and unfriendly custom agents. I've seen better travelogues on UseNet. (Before anyone points this out, yes, my travelogues are filled with minutiae as well. But they are written primarily for family and friends who care about such things. I would never expect anyone to publish, nor would I expect readers to pay \$18.95, for one.) Tramp Royale was published now only because there is a perceived to be a large audience for anything Heinlein wrote or was connected with. If you're in this audience nothing I say will deter you, but for everyone else, skip this book.

The Exile Kiss

by George Alec Effinger
Doubleday/Foundation, 1991, \$11.00

This, the third novel in Effinger's Marid series, takes place in a large part outside the Buda-yeen, that great Arab metropolis of the future. Marid Audran and Freidlander Bey are kidnapped at the start of the novel and left to die in the desert. The first half of the book covers their struggles and adventures there; the second half is about their revenge on those who arranged for their kidnapping. The first part seems to draw rather heavily on the film Lawrence of Arabia at times, but works well and even events that seem superfluous turn out to be important.

Effinger has done his research well, but may expect more knowledge of his readership than they have. For example, he follows Arab custom in referring to a mother as "Um Jirji" (where Jirji is her

eldest son; name), but since she is also sometimes referred to by her own name, this may lead to confusion. And he keeps his calendar based on the Hegira, which requires some mental arithmetic at times. But all this means that The Exile Kiss feels authentic. Effinger doesn't give the reader New York or London with a couple of minarets stuck on and a reference to Friday prayers. Instead he extrapolates from Cairo or Damascus, and achieves a much better result. (He also has his final manuscripts read over by Arab friends for errors--a highly commendable practice that other authors would do well to emulate.)

As with the first two books (When Gravity Fails and Fire in the Sun, both Hugo nominees), the story follows Marid's character development and how he is changed by events. Unfortunately, The Exile Kiss probably does not stand well on its own. Fortunately, I can recommend that you read all three books, and since Effinger writes clear prose with no padding, it will take less time to read all three than to read a single bloated novel from the best-seller list. In fact, it's probably worth re-reading them even if you have already read them--Effinger is a solid writer.

Griffin's Egg

by Michael Swanwick
St. Martin's Press, 1992, \$15.95

In response to complaints about rising prices for novels--somewhere around US\$25 for a hardback these days--and also that novels are getting too long and bloated, some publishers are publishing novellas in book form at lower prices. (Pulphouse took this a step further and is doing short stories in paperback at US\$1.95 each.) The first such novella I noticed was The Hemingway Hoax by Joe Haldeman (though it turned out that it had been fleshed out to novel length--about 150 pages, or 45,000 words); now we have Griffin's Egg by Michael Swanwick. How successful this trend will be is unclear. Unit pricing has always been popular with readers; years ago a friend of ours had a "penny-a-page" rule for books which by now must have been modified to at least a penny-and-a-half. Perhaps realizing this, Haldeman said in his acceptance speech for the Hugo for Best Novella for "The Hemingway Hoax" that people had asked if they should buy the novel if they already had the novella version and he wanted to assure them that the only difference between the two was that for the novella version he had cut 15,000-20,000 words of explicit sex from the novel. At any rate, whether US\$16 for a 100-page book will be more acceptable than US\$25 for a 500-page book remains to be seen.

Now admittedly everything I've said so far is crassly commercial and has nothing to do with art

or entertainment, which are presumably what books are about. So what about the novella itself? Set on the moon in a future in which mining and manufacturing are carried out on the moon to avoid destroying the Earth's ecosphere, it seems to be about how this is destroying the moon. Then a thermonuclear exchange occurs on Earth, and it seems to be a "how we will survive in isolation" story a la Heinlein. Then it shifts to bio-chemical warfare, mind-altering drugs, ... There is just too much here for a novella--the plots twists are too rapid-fire. It's ironic, but this would have been better as a novel. As a novella, all the good ideas are just too dizzying.

(The title is from a Vachel Lindsay poem quoted before the title page. It is, alas, extremely sexist and its inclusion, coupled with some of the events in the story, gives the story a slant that I suspect Swanwick did not intend.)

Down the Bright Way

by Ralph Reed
Bantam Spectra, 1991, \$4.50

Another reviewer has recently suggested this as a possible Hugo contender. Well, in this world anything is possible, but I have to disagree on this one. This novel suffers (for me, at any rate) from the same fault as Reed's other novel, Black Milk. (Each, by the way, contains an excerpt from the other at the end of the book, possibly to confuse anyone who might skip to the end to find out what happened.) This fault is that after setting up an interesting premise with a lot of promise, Reed does nothing with it. In Down the Bright Way, Reed postulates an infinite number (more or less) of parallel Earths connected by the Bright, a sort of highway that one can travel between them. Millions of years after the creation of the Bright, the Wanderers send out two parties, one in each direction of the Bright, to try to find the Makers who created it. (I find myself asking why the Bright is linear. Some ordering of Earths along a line--a single dimension--doesn't seem to make a lot of sense.)

Now to my mind the most exciting possibilities of this story are in the parallel Earths. But these are almost entirely glossed over so that all the rivalries and conspiracies among the Wanderers can be developed. The only time the parallel Earths become important is when Reed needs something to menace the entire set-up. But for that, this seems more like a spy thriller than a sweeping science fiction novel. There's nothing wrong with spy thrillers, but why bother with the science fiction part? It's as though you sent a team of time travelers back to ancient Egypt and then had them sit in their tent arguing about who was the team leader the whole time, pausing only to notice a huge num-

ber of frogs, swarms of flies, a rain of fire, a swarm of locusts, and finally what seems to be a large number of people walking by. The team interactions might normally be interesting, but the reader wants to rip open the tent door and go outside.

The Divide

by Robert Charles Wilson
Doubleday Foundation, 1990, \$8.95

Let's clear something up right away: this book is not by the co-author of the "Illuminati" books. That is Robert Anton Wilson. No, this is by the author of A Hidden Place, Memory Wire, and Gypsies, all of which I read, liked, and recommended previously. So it should come as no surprise that I liked this book as well.

John Shaw is the result of a government-sponsored experiment in enhancing intelligence. (The back blurb compares The Divide to Flowers for Algernon, but there is something of Firestarter here as well.) But John Shaw found that greater intelligence was a curse as well as a blessing, and so Benjamin was born. Beginning as a role that John played, Benjamin became an independent personality, a normal person who lived a normal life. And now, to complicate matters, John/Benjamin gets a message that he is dying.

It is difficult to portray convincingly a genius so that the non-genius reader (or viewer) can comprehend it. This was one of the major failings of the film Little Man Tate, for example. Wilson knows this, and even has John comment on this in regard to Olaf Stapledon's Odd John, a classic work on this theme. Wilson succeeds in his portrayal by avoiding the specific--he doesn't show John solving polynomials in his head or doing esoteric scientific experiments. Rather, he is shown as subtly different in outlook, successful at anything he sets his hand to, and alone.

On the other hand, The Divide does have problems. The "psychotic boyfriend" subplot seemed unnecessary (one might almost say gratuitous), and the resolution was singularly unsatisfying--it was just too fortuitous. (This is similar to the problem that Wilson had in his second and third novels, Memory Wire and Gypsies, whose endings I felt were too predictable.) Because of these flaws I can't

recommend this book as strongly as Wilson's previous works, but if you are interested in the subject of enhanced intelligence and its effects, this book is of definite interest to you.

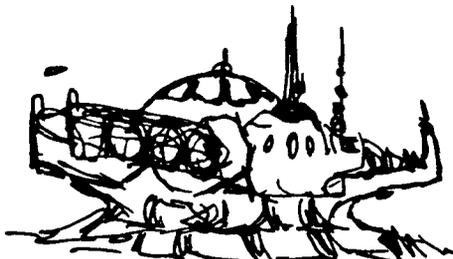
Brain Child

by George Turner
William Morrow & Company, 1991, \$20.00

A year ago I reviewed A Pursuit of Miracles, a collection of short stories by George Turner. One of the stories was "On the Nursery Floor" and at the time I said it showed the influence of such works as Philip Wylie's Gladiator and Olaf Stapledon's Odd John without adding a lot to them. In Brain Child Turner pulls his camera back, as it were, and shows us more of the surroundings of the experiment, and more of the consequences.

Brain Child, I should explain, is about a government experiment to enhance intelligence. In this regard it is similar to Robert Charles Wilson's The Divide, but while Wilson's work is set in present-day Canada (with the experiment having been carried out in the United States), Turner's is set in the Australia of the 2040s, a somewhat grotty, overpopulated, heavily structured and controlled society. Into this world is thrown, only partially prepared by his eighteen years in a state orphanage, David Chance. Seven years later, he gets a letter from a man claiming to be his father--a man who was one of the twelve children produced as part of an intelligence experiment in 2002. So begins David's quest for the truth about the experiment, the children produced, and the "legacy" they were rumored to have.

"On the Nursery Floor" consisted of interviews with various people who had contact with the children. Brain Child expands these interviews and adds the events surrounding the interviews. The interviews are no longer an end in themselves, but the means to an end (an end, I might add, considerably changed from what is described in "On the Nursery Floor"). As a result, Turner can add to the texture of his society and this, rather than the "supermen" themselves, is where he does best. His society is much the same as the ones he has used in other stories, but these are not all part of some single "Future History." Instead, they form a set of "Possible Histories"--a variety of paths Australia might take. (There seems to be little interaction between Australia and the rest of the world in Turner's stories, reflecting perhaps Australia's biological and historical isolation.) Turner shows how information will become a commodity of great value--and how this will lead to more forms of control. Given Turner's society, the ending of the book is more satisfactory than that of the short story, and perhaps it was seeing the ramifications of his



society as he fleshed it out that led Turner to change the resolution.

I recommend Brain Child for its combination of societal extrapolation, inquiry into the nature of intelligence, and scientific mystery. Turner's books are gradually becoming more available in the United States (and a good thing that is), so look for them.

Raft

by Stephen Baxter
ROC, 1992, \$4.99

Sunday, 10 AM, BOSKONE, talking to Mark's college roommate: "So what have you read that you liked lately?" "Oh, [some books and] I really liked Raft by Stephen Baxter."

Sunday, 11 AM, BOSKONE panel on nominating for the Hugos: "Yes, You over there?" "I recommend Raft by Stephen Baxter."

Sunday, 11 PM, logging onto Usenet, Chuq Von Ros-pach talks about: "... a fine first novel like Raft (by Stephen Baxter, ROC. If you're a hard SF junkie, grab it, especially if you liked Ringworld)."

Thursday, 3 PM, chatting with a friend about books, he says: "You know what I really enjoyed recently? Raft" "...by Stephen Baxter, right?"

By this point, of course, I was convinced that Raft had not only a perfectly constructed plot, marvelous multi-dimensional characters, and more ideas than Plato, Kant and Olaf Stapledon combined, but also the cure for AIDS and the Mrs. Fields cookie recipe.

It doesn't have the cookie recipe.

Well, okay, it doesn't have the cure either, and it's not the greatest British novel since David Copperfield, but it is a very competently done hard science story a la Clarke and Niven (both of whom are quoted on the cover) and Clement and Heinlein (who aren't). The back blurb gives you the premise in its first sentence: "Imagine a universe whose force of gravity is one billion times stronger than today's." (Thou clearly that last word should have been "ours," and is this an American billion or a British billion?) Somehow a spaceship from our universe crossed into this one and got stranded many generations ago, and at the time of the story we have three distinct societies: the Raft, the Miners, and the Boneyes.

The plot is not all that original. There is a menace. The three groups, each of which hates and/or distrusts the other two, will have to learn to cooperate. Forgotten knowledge will have to be re-learned. Our hero, a seventeen-year-old boy, will have many adventures. Odd physical effects in this universe will amaze the reader, and so on.

There are some intriguing ideas, but all have to do with weird physics or biology. As far as sociol-

ogy, psychology, or philosophy go, no new ideas are put forth. The values are Heinleinian, as are the characters. In fact, I would probably describe Raft as what we would have gotten had Hal Clement and Robert Heinlein ever collaborated. (The scenes with Rees carrying books of logarithm tables had me practically yelling, "Starman Jones!") It also suffers from a section seemingly heavily inspired by George Pal's When Worlds Collide, which at times was painful to read. A derivation needs to carry from its source or it reads as a stock piece at best, or plagiarism at worst. In this case, it is the former, since the original is far too well known for anyone to think it would be unfamiliar to the readers.

Is this damning with faint praise? I don't think so. Okay, so Raft won't win the Pulitzer Prize this year. But I think it a not unworthy choice for a Hugo nomination. Even with its flaws--and it is, after all, a first novel--it is far better than most of what I've seen from the past year.

The Missing Matter

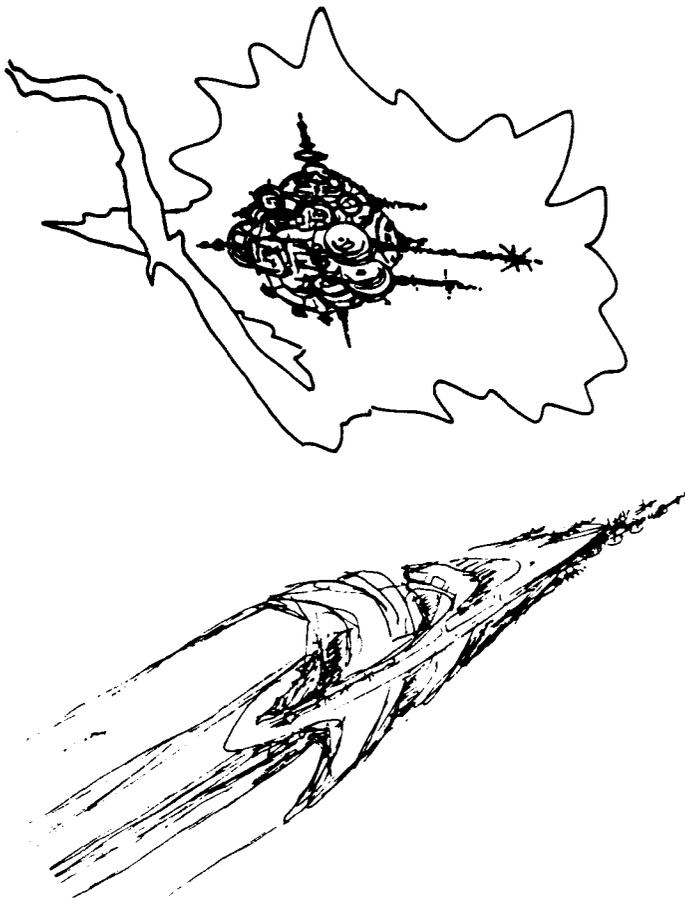
by Thomas R. McDonough
Bantam Spectra, 1992, \$4.99

This book is sitting on my review stack staring at me, saying, "Okay, now that you've read me, say something about me." The problem is I don't know what to say. (All right, you out there who just said, "But you've never let than stop you before"; I heard that!)

Well, I'll start with the basics. This is the third book in the "Next Wave" series packaged by Byron Preiss. Each book consists of a novel based on some hard science concept, prefaced by a short science article on the subject by Isaac Asimov (though his death will change that), and followed by a somewhat longer science essay by a "real" scientist. The first two novels were Red Genesis by S. C. Sykes and Alien Tongue by Stephen Leigh. Now, somewhat delayed from its originally announced release date, is the third volume, The Missing Matter by Thomas R. McDonough.

The science concept behind the novel is that of "black matter," or "missing matter." That is, it has been postulated that there isn't enough matter in the universe to explain the physical laws. So where is this "missing matter"? McDonough seems to be saying that it's stuck in parallel universes and that there are planets traveling between (among?) these universes. I say "seems" because none of this was very clearly stated or shown in the novel itself. I concluded this only because of the essays.

And that may be one of the problems with packaging The Missing Matter this way--a perfectly good novel which could stand on its own is turned into a novel appearing to illustrate some point in physics,



and not to do it very well. The story is that of a Plutonian colony which discovers a planet moving toward our solar system and sends a team to explore it. Once on the planet, however, the team finds itself traveling between universes, because that's what the planet is doing. It's a good old fashioned adventure story, with interesting characters (well, oaky, the bureaucrat is a bit two-dimensional, but think of her as comic relief), and works far better as a story if you don't try to learn physics from it. As with others in this series, if you like the sort of science fiction of the 1950s but with better characters and up-to-date (i.e., non-outdated) science, you'll probably enjoy The Missing Matter.

The Face of the Waters

by Robert Silverberg
Bantam Spectra, 1991, \$20.00

The Face of the Waters seems to be an attempt to combine an introspective character study with an adventure story focusing on the weird biology of a strange planet. Even with Silverberg's not inconsiderable talent, it's not entirely successful.

The planet is Hydros, a world that is almost entirely water. The small human population lives (by sufferance) on the floating islands built by the native intelligent species, the "Gillies." But the Gillies allow no spaceport to be built, so traveling to Hydros is a one-way trip in a drop-capsule.

(One wonders how humans found out that Hydros was livable, or how they negotiated with the Gillies for permission to settle Humans there, since the implication is that no spaceport means that no ship can ever take off if it lands, plus of course there's no place to land anyway.)

The original humans were criminals sent into permanent exile; now the new arrivals are mostly misfits who choose this particular permanent exile. (The social structure in which descendants of the original convict settlers becomes the elite, proud of their ancestry, is reminiscent of Australia, reinforced here by the image of islands, though Australia is a much bigger island than any of these.) One community of 78 humans lives on Sorve Island, but when one of the members offends the Gillies, they are all evicted.

Valben Lawler, the community's doctor and descendant of one of the original settlers, wants to keep the group together instead of scattering it to several of the other islands. This leads to difficulties and eventually an epic voyage to Hydros' one land mass, called the Face of the Waters.

When I say "epic voyage", I have this on good authority--one of the characters is writing an epic about it even as it is going on, and another keeps quoting Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner." Yet all their adventures have a certain sameness to them: they encounter a weird life-form which either 1) they know to be dangerous, or 2) looks harmless, but is dangerous. They fight it, possibly suffering some losses, and then go on to the next. With all this adventure, the character study of Lawler gets somewhat lost in the shuffle, reserved mostly for scenes between Lawler and Sundra Thane, a woman who intrigues Lawler because she has traveled widely on Hydros, as contrasted with his having lived only on Sorve (his entire experience off Sorve was a single day spent on another island as it drifted close by).

At the end, however, the book switches to a more philosophical tone, not effectively (in my opinion). The switch is too abrupt and the message--of casting aside the past and embracing the future--is not so much demonstrated as announced. In both this book and Raft (by Stephen Baxter), artifacts are used as powerful symbols of the past, but here Silverberg doesn't carry through with the metaphor.

The Face of the Waters isn't a bad book, but it is a dissatisfying one. I can see the necessity of conveying the impersonal hostility of the world, but by using the "weird alien biology" motif, Silverberg undercuts the mood the reader needs for the philosophy. And to be honest, the fact that I was not comfortable with what Silverberg seemed to be saying in his ending no doubt affected my opinion--but that you would have to decide for yourself if you read the book.

Book Reviews by *Dave Creek*

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The Alternate World of Stephen Coonts'
Under Siege
 ?????, 1992, \$4.99

In his latest novel, Under Siege, which was recently reprinted in mass-market paperback, Stephen Coonts has crafted a cautionary tale on the evils of the drug trade and its effects on society in the guise of a fast-paced thriller. He also employs a "what if" scenario that throws his narrative into an alternate universe. In our universe, after all, George Bush is dealing with the rigors of the presidential campaign, not fighting for his life after an assassination attempt. Dan Quayle is still safely ensconced as Vice-President, not filling in for the ailing chief executive.

In Coonts' world, in rapid succession, the House majority leader, the attorney general, and other top officials are also targets. The demand for an end to the violence is the release of the kingpin of Colombia's Medellin drug cartel, Chano Aldana. He was extradited to the U.S. after Colombian authorities captured him.

This dust-jacket-type summary, though, doesn't do justice to the more detailed and subtle extrapolation of the effect of the drug trade on the justice system, the role of the military, and, most importantly, the very concept of whether government is the tool by which the drug trade and the crime organizations that bring them into this country can be defeated.

Coonts' perennial hero, Navy Captain Jake Grafton, becomes a major player in the search for the attempted assassin and the effort to maintain some semblance of law and order in a capital city under martial law. Before it's all over, we're shown treachery, torture, and the deaths of innocents.

Coonts makes the point that in such desperate times, we will naturally turn to the military for increased security, especially if Washington itself is threatened. That security, however, has a price. Coonts puts his fears into Captain Grafton's thoughts after Grafton sees the aftermath of a massacre in the Capitol Building in which over sixty people are killed. As he stands over the draped, bloody body of one of the victims, a woman, Grafton muses that we are all victims:

The America that had given birth to this woman and made her what she was would soon be changed in unforeseeable, incalculable ways by the white-hot fury of the forces that had been unleashed here this morning. The trans-

formations cause by war--make no mistake, this was war--would be irrevocable. And Jake knew that the changes so wrought would not be welcomed by most Americans, himself included.

God damn these terrorists. He said it to himself as a prayer.

Ultimately, the authorities declare martial law. The crack supply dries up and the streets of Washington become even more desperate.

All of Coonts' characters are vividly realized, and their motivations are plain. Ambitious Washington Post reporter Jack Yoske, searching for a story that will catapult his career skyward, immerses himself in the nightly violence on the streets of the nation's capital. A resident of one of the projects describes the conditions:

"Try to imagine living in there. No privacy, walls paper-thin, kids abused and hungry, trash everywhere, light bulbs out, doors kicked in, liquor sales out of one apartment and crack out of another, the white women from the suburbs buying their down the on the streets, the smell of shit and piss and filth and hopelessness. It gets in your nose so bad you'll never get it out."

Many of Under Siege's characters are trapped in such desperate circumstances--unable or unwilling to escape. We meet drug dealers driven by the sure knowledge that drugs are their only ticket out of peverty, and an obsessed undercover police officer whose risk-taking increases with every day he stays a part of a drug ring.

Only the wild-game-hunter-turned-assassin Henry Charon is different. He chooses his fate, knowing the chances are against him. He's not driven by profit, and certainly not by ideology, but purely by the thrill of the ultimate hunt; he believes trying to kill the president is "exactly like hunting deer."

One small-scale solution to the drug problem comes not from the government, but from everyday people who take matters in their own hands. I've revealed enough of the surprising twists in this book--I won't tell any more. I'll only say it's an understandable solution in the circumstances, but not one that shows much faith in the justice system or in the idea of using the military to back up civil authorities in these matters.

Coonts uses his "twenty-minutes-into-the-future" format well. He keeps characters we care about mov-

ing through a fast-paced plot. In best SF fashion, the message is inherent within the story, or delivered by the believable comments of characters caught up in these events. Under Siege is a fascinating depiction of a war that could come to our shores sooner than we believe--if, in fact, it isn't already being waged.

Three Views of Mars

SF writers have returned to Mars. Three recent books show the pitfalls, both political and personal, which could complicate our exploration and colonization of the red planet.

Mining the Oort

by Frederik Pohl
DelRey, 1992, \$19.00

Mining the Oort is the latest of Frederik Pohl's works in which he takes a bemused look at the choices humanity may make when we finally live and work in space. Dekker DeWoe is a Martian colonist who yearns to pursue the same career as his late father. In the swarm of comets known as the Oort Cloud, far beyond even Pluto's orbit, lies the key to terraforming Mars. There, miners are hurling comets toward the inner Solar system, where they arc around the sun then head outward again to strike the Martian surface. Since comets are mostly ice, repeated comet strikes will provide the water needed to support the terraforming effort.

The eventual goal of a Mars where humans can breathe freely on the surface, swim in lakes, and experience a rainstorm seems far away to Dekker--indeed, it may not be accomplished in his lifetime. His dream of working as a comet miner sometimes seems equally distant--Mars doesn't have enough Earth currency to pay the fare for its people to travel to Earth for training. Naturally, the Oort Corporation isn't located in the Cloud itself, or on Mars, but in Colorado.

Dekker eventually manages to get to Earth. To him it's as alien a planet as anything in SF, when he lands at the base of the Nairobi skyhook:

Earth hurt, hurt his bones at every step with its cruel pull. Each was dirty. Earth was hostile--or the people were; or so it seemed to a skinny Martian kid who couldn't run or jump very well....

Earth's history makes little sense to him as he studies it during his training--concepts such as tribes, politics, weapons, and wars are foreign to him. Martians are taught from an early age to get along with each other, since they have little choice in the tight ecology of a planetary colony.

Pohl shows us that the eternal struggle of "have-nots" to become "haves" may continue into the future, as will the efforts of the "haves" to hold on to as much money and power as possible. He also makes it clear that the dream of exploring the solar system and harnessing its resources will not be exempt from economic and political pressures. Dekker's own dreams are always somewhat tentative--if he can find the money to get to Earth, if he can cope with these strange "earthies" and their dizzying varieties of food, their intoxicating beverages, and their insistence upon competition to achieve goals, perhaps he can achieve his dream of pursuing his father's profession.

Despite the book's title, there are no scenes in the Oort Cloud. The concept of mining the Oort is symbolic of a dream, one most SF fans would share as enthusiastically as Dekker DeWoe. Those of us old enough to remember Apollo, though, dreamed we'd have Lunar colonies and flights to Mars by now. Pohl knows politics and economics often determine which of our desires will become reality. His vision of a terraformed Mars shows us our dreams of the future are often constrained by eternal conflicts.

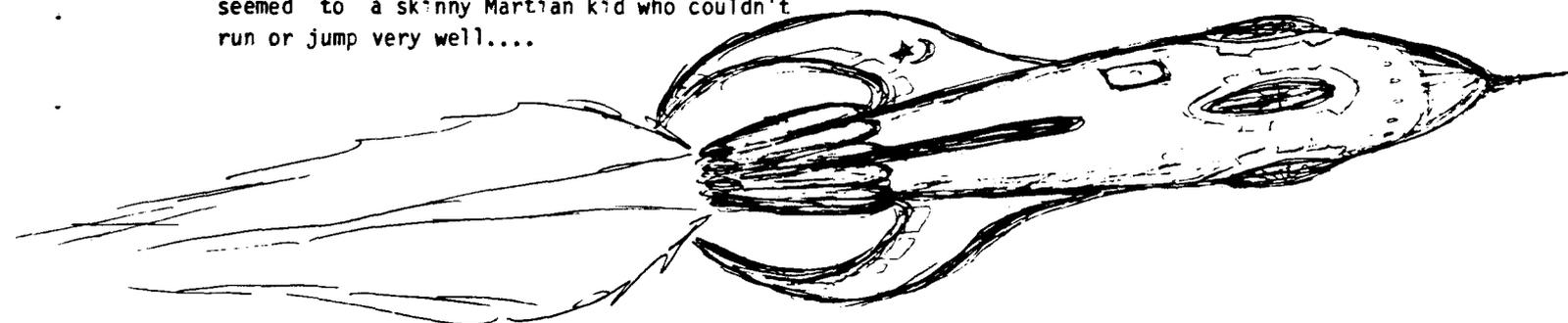
In his emphasis on the human realities of how to accomplish a project of the magnitude as terraforming Mars, Pohl sets a high literary standard. It's apparently time for SF writers to explore Mars again, with a renewed emphasis on realistic portrayals of what we might find and how we may live there.

Mars

by Ben Bova
Bantam, 1992, \$20.00

Speaking of realistic portrayals, here; how Ben Bova introduces us to Mars in his new novel called, simply enough, Mars:

Picture Death Valley at its worst. Barren desert. Nothing but rock and sand. Remove ev-



ery trace of life: get rid of each and every cactus, every bit of scrub, all the lizards and insects and sun-bleached bones and anything else that even looks as if it might have once been alive.

Now freeze-dry the whole landscape. Plunge it down to a temperature of a hundred below zero. And suck away the air until there's not even as much as you would find on Earth a hundred thousand feet above the ground.

Bova tells the story of the first manned mission to the red planet. Jamie Waterman is a geologist, half white, half Navaho, who discovers as much about his own heritage, which his parents refuse to embrace, as he does about Mars. When his first words upon landing on the Martian surface are a Navaho greeting rather than the short speech the politicians want him to say, he ignites a political firestorm. Even millions of kilometers from Earth, its politics intrude upon Mars's harsh beauty.

Bova's depiction of that beauty is among the best in SF, a reflection of how much Viking, Mariner, and other probes have told us about our most interesting neighbor:

The badlands grew much more rugged, until they were threading through a jagged stony forest of rock spires that loomed high above them; rock pillars carved into eerie sculptures that reminded Jamie of wildly abstract totem poles. The winds eroded away the soft stone and left these pillars of granitic stuff standing, he told himself. Then he realized that the gentle winds of Mars had to work for hundreds of millions of years to carve their magic this way.

Even so far away from Earth, though, the explorers remain in the grip of an often-petty, sometimes paranoid bureaucracy. Waterman is almost thrown off the mission after his Navaho greeting. Politics had already mandated a carefully designed mix of astronauts from Russia, the US, Brazil, Japan, England, and other countries.

These characters are not the Heinleinian "Competent Man" (or woman) or the idealized inhabitants of a Star Trek-type universe--they are people as realistic as their environment. Jamie Waterman can be careless--he has to be reminded more than once in donning his spacesuit that he's forgotten to put on his gloves, for instance. A Hungarian woman hates Russians, because her grandfather was killed in Budapest in the 1956 uprisings. One arrogant, insufferable, though competent, mission candidate is eliminated because the others can't stand him.

Real life has already intruded upon Bova's vision of the future. The many references to "Soviets" and to lingering Cold-War tensions have already

dated the book, though not seriously. Perhaps it's now taking place in the same future history as Bova's Kinsman Saga, another book whose background has been overtaken by events.

If Mars has a failing, it's that Bova's depiction of its namesake is so compelling that we wish to view more of it. Fortunately, though this book is complete in itself, Bova leaves his characters' fates open-ended enough to further missions to the red planet. If he writes them, I'll be eager to read them.

Labyrinth of Night

by Allen Steele
Ace, 1992, \$4.99

In 1976, the Viking orbiters photographed several mysterious structures on Mars which are still subjects of controversy--the Face and the City. The Face appeared to be a representation of human or simian features--the City was a set of pyramids that seemed to be aligned with the Face somehow. Are these structures a trick of lighting or some other sort of coincidence, or are they evidence of an alien presence on Mars?

Allen Steele, in Labyrinth of Night, assumes these features are alien artifacts. His explorers must penetrate a series of chambers beneath the City--without being killed in the attempt. Each time a new chamber is opened up, an explorer is confronted with a new intelligence test--involving mathematics, physics, or, in the tradition of Close Encounters, music. Fail the test and you may be crushed by a one-ton stone block or ripped to pieces by a swarm of small alien robots.

A new arrival, Richard Jessup, sees the artifacts for the first time:

...Jessup paused to look at the City: four enormous, eroded stone pyramids, eerily reminiscent of the Egyptian pyramids at Giza, towering above the flat red landscape...even from here, he could see the cracks and fissures what ran across their flanks, the ravages time itself had made upon these living-rock hills which the aliens, through some undetermined means, had managed to carve into pyramids. Their sheer size was overwhelming: it caused the eye to play tricks upon itself, making it seem as if they were somehow miniaturized instead of hundreds of feet in height.

SF writers sure are cynical about politicians. As you can imagine, the military becomes involved in the exploratory mission once lives are lost, and Cold-War tensions are briefly renewed between the US and Russia.

For a time, as well, Labyrinth of Night threatens to become standard SF adventure, although a good one. Steele, though, by the end of the book, takes this work a step further--with a satisfying, old-fashioned "sense of wonder" resolution. Even his tendency for characters to be obsessed with twentieth-century rock and blues music, though present, is somewhat muted here.

Still to come, more Mars novels from Jack Williamson, Kim Stanley Robinson (a trilogy!), David Brin, and others. Apparently it's an idea that's in the air. In fact, one aspiring SF writer, your reviewer, was outlining his own novel set on the red planet last year, just as the current flood of such novels began to appear. It doesn't seem like that good an idea any more--who wants to follow these heavy hitters?

Green Shadows, White Whale

by Ray Bradbury
Knopf, 1992, \$21.00

Veteran Mars explorer Ray Bradbury turned his attention back toward Earth, specifically to Ireland in Green Shadows, White Whale. This episodic novel incorporates several short stories that came out of Bradbury's 1953 visit to that country to write the script for John Huston's film version of Moby Dick. We follow the adventures of that young Ray Bradbury as he works to discover the essence of Melville's whale and put it on paper:

I was and remained a pursuer of the Whale.
I was a small ahab, with no capital up front.
For I felt that as fast as I swam, the Whiteness outpaced my poor strokes and my inadequate boat: a portable typewriter and great white pages waiting to be covered with blood.

Along the way, he finds himself trying to fathom the secrets of the Irish, as well. He admits his ambitions to a customs inspector as he enters the country. The inspector replies:

"...Why, lad, we're not here. We're over there or just beyond. Lend me those glasses."
He reached gently to take the spectacles from my nose.

"Ah, God." He slipped them on. "These are twenty-twenty!"

"Yes."

"No, no! The focus is too exact. You want something that bends the light and makes a kind of mist or fog, not quite rain...."

He discovers a country full of people who are too loud, thoughtful, drunken, loving--everything

the rest of humanity is, but seemingly magnified. If we believe Bradbury, there's a story around every corner in Ireland, and everyday events are commonly afforded the trappings of myth.

This is a rich, colorful story, sometimes quietly touching, other times raucously funny, as when a new bride tries to cut her week-old wedding cake (the wedding had been delayed and the groom refused to buy a new cake):

She stabbed at the cake.

Silent, the cake was obdurate.

It did not cut, it did not slice, and it gave only faint tendencies to flake or chip.

Eventually, the groom takes over, and the cake is served, "shoveled onto the plates with a dreadful clatter."

The book rambles at times and there's not as much about the process of writing Moby Dick and working with John Huston as I would have preferred, but those are minor criticisms. Green Shadows, White Whale is one of Ray Bradbury's most satisfying works.

Time's Arrow

by Martin Amis
Harmony Books, 1991, \$18.00

The paramedics eventually drove me uptown to the scene of the accident. There was my car, like a mad old hog caught in midspasm, its snout and tusks crushed and steaming. And I didn't feel too good myself as the police officer helped wedge me into its driving seat and tried to shut the warped front door. Thereafter I sat back and let Tod handle everything. There were all kinds of people staring in at us, and for a while Tod just stared stupidly back at them. But then he got on with it, he rammed his foot down on the brake and sent the car into a fizzing convulsion of rev and whinny. With a skillful lurch he gave the bent hydrant on the sidewalk a crunchy shouldercheck--and we were off, weaving at speed back up the street.

Confused? Not if you realize the protagonist of Martin Amis' Time's Arrow is witnessing another person's life backwards. This doppelganger is merely along for the ride; it cannot affect the actions or thoughts of its host, nor can it read the host's thoughts, though it can feel his emotions.

It's difficult to say much about this inventive, frightening work without revealing too much about the nature of the host, a man we first know as Dr. Tod Friendly. Dr. Friendly has a secret, which his unperceived doppelganger is eager to discover as

the journey back through the years continues. At least one other reviewer has already revealed that secret, but I don't intend to here (you also should not read the dust jacket copy). This isn't to imply that Time's Arrow is a book that depends upon plot machinations--rather, it builds slowly, getting you accustomed to the perceptions of the invisible spirit within Tod Friendly, then revealing layer

upon layer of the man's past. Eventually its mood changes from that of a wry, detached view of an elderly man's everyday life to a vision of sustained horror. While not part of the SF genre as such, it presents a skewed world-view that provides the same pleasures of revelation and discovery as the best social-science SF.

Book Reviews by Lynn McMillen

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Homegoing

by Frederik Pohl
DelRey/Ballantine, 1992, \$19.95

The Hakh'hli are a people with a problem--several million fertile eggs in cold storage, and a fully populated ship, hundreds of years from their home planet.

Sandy Washington has a problem, too. He is the only non-Hakh'hli on a ship of much larger, stronger beings than himself. But the Hakh'hli are the only people Sandy has ever known. His friends, roommates and guardians are all Hakh'hli.

All Sandy knows of his heritage is that he was picked up by the Hakh'hli ship as the only survivor of a war-damaged ship on an escape trajectory from Earth. Now the Hakh'hli are backtracking the trajectory of that ship to try and find Sandy's people.

When Sandy and the ship arrive at Earth, Sandy becomes the Hakh'hli's liaison to Earth's people. Slowly, feeling his way in a culture that is totally alien to him, he begins to come to know the people of Earth, and to discover what a legacy of war and selfishness have done to the planet.

Then he must try and convince the people of Earth that the Hakh'hli can help them, that they have the technology to clean up the radiation, pollutants, heat damage and other problems slowly but surely making Earth unlivable.

As he works with the humans, Sandy begins asking himself what the Hakh'hli are getting out of this? Why are the Hakh'hli so anxious to help clean up planet Earth? He must also discover why the people of Earth are so anxious to learn as much as they can about Sandy and the Hakh'hli.

Only as he learns more about himself, does Sandy begin to gain insight into what he is uneasy about, until his suspicions lead into a confrontation with both peoples.

If Frederik Pohl has not yet been elected a Grand Master by the Science Fiction Writers of Am-

erica, it's just a matter of time, as Pohl is one of the strongest writers of "hard" science fiction still living. His plots are fast-paced and straight-forward, with always a strong scientific basis. His characters are strongly motivated and never boring. Homegoing is a superb novel by a man who has a long record as a winner. Top rate!

Damia

by Anne McCaffrey
Ace/Putnam, 1992, \$21.95

In reviewing books by Anne McCaffrey, it becomes harder to find superlatives that haven't already been used. Though occasionally she is less than perfect (i.e., in this reviewer's opinion, Moreta), in general the name McCaffrey on the cover is as good a guarantee as you'll find of a terrific story inside.

Damia is no exception. When McCaffrey wrote The Rowan, the story of Damia's mother, she made the mistake of trying to incorporate "The Lady in the Tower", the short story from which it derived, nearly intact. The difference between the pacing of a short story and that of a novel was obvious, and somewhat distracting. In writing Damia (from the short story "A Meeting of Minds"), she changed her tack, and simply rewrote the sequence as part of the novel, keeping the flow and timing of the novel steady.

Damia is the daughter of Rowan and Jeff Raven, and is the strongest T-1 yet tested in the Nine Star League. Besides being a strong telepath and tele-kinetic power, Damia has another, unusual gift. She can increase the power of those with whom she melds, mentally shifting the whole gestalt into a "higher gear."

As a baby, the highly talented Damia nearly drove her parents crazy, teleporting unpredictably, getting into one scrape after another. Only Afra, the Rowan's longtime friend and station manager, seemed able to persuade her to cooperate cheerfully

with her caretakers and obey rules for her own safety.

By the time she is 20, Damia is FT&T Prime for Iota Aurigae, handling all the incoming and outgoing passenger and cargo traffic for that sector of the galaxy. But despite her tremendous gifts and responsibilities, Damia lacks the one thing she wants most--someone to share her life. Then one day, while resting in her personal capsule in Aurigae space, Damia feels the touch of another mind. As the new arrival comes closer and closer to Aurigae, Damia becomes more and more caught up in the other's powerful personality.

Only when Afra joins her in reaching out to the alien does he become aware there is more to this meeting than an explorer traveling from star to star. With her eyes now open, Damia joins forces with Afra, her brother Larak, her parents and other Primes to destroy the alien entity and his weapon-laden ship. But the backlash from the alien kills Larak, and leaves Afra temporarily "psionically numb."

Crushed as only the powerful and confident can be, Damia finds herself lonelier than ever, wondering if she will ever find for herself a true "meeting of minds."

Time Patrol

by Poul Anderson
Tor, 1992, \$21.95

Manse Everard, Time Patrol, a hero for all ages. About 20 years ago, while churning out navel after novel, Poul Anderson began writing about a dashing hero called Manse Everard, and created for him the ultimate law and order agency, the Time Patrol. The Time Patrol is everywhere and everywhen, going forward and back in time to prevent the manipulation of time travel for the ill-gotten gain of the ill-intentioned.

The first stories were short ones--"Time Patrol," "Brave to Be a King," "Gibraltar Falls" and others. As the Manse Everard stories caught on, and the hero became more popular, the stories became longer and longer. "The Sorrow of Odin the Goth" was novelette length, as the "Star of the Sea." The most recent story, "The Year of the Ransom," is copyright 1988.

Most hard core science fiction fans have at least one shelf in their bookshelf dedicated to Anderson's works, and many have hoped and prayed and waited for Anderson to collect his Time Patrol stories in just such a volume.

If you have already read some of Anderson's stories, you know just what kind of treat you have in store. If you haven't, this collection is a great place to start.



Blood Trillium

by Julian May
Bantam/Spectra, 1992, \$20.00

The united kingdoms of Labornok and Ruwenda knew peace of hundreds of years. Then the Archimage Binah foresaw the incursion of a powerful magician, Orogastus. To balance his awesome powers, the White Lady caused triplet daughters to be born to the king and queen.

At birth each daughter, each Petal of the Living Trillium, received from Binah an amulet containing a fossil rare black trillium for protection. It was the fate of the three daughters to find the lost pieces of the fabled Sceptre of Power, and combine them to banish the evil of Orogastus forever.

But the great power of the Sceptre itself was also an unbalancing force. As soon as it had performed its job, the Sceptre was disassembled, each section held by the sister who found it, to check its terrible power.

Ten years have passed. Archimage Binah has died, and passed the office of Archimage to Haramis, the eldest of the three sisters. Anigel rules in Laboruwenda, and Kadiya has become the Eyes of the native tribes of Laboruwenda. Each has power in her own way, and is content in her life.

Then Orogastus returns, unbelievably, from his Sceptre-wrought exile, and again the power of the united Sceptre must be called upon. Only this time, the three sisters holding the Sceptre are not united. Private desires, frustrations and weaknesses have undermined the unity that would allow the sisters to wield the Sceptre as one.

As each sister turns from the unity that has bound them into a cohesive whole, her black trillium turns an accusatory shade of blood red. Unless the sisters can search their hearts, put aside personal needs and learn to bend, Orogastus will

wrench the sceptre from them piecemeal and rulle
 all of Laboruwenda by force.

Imzadi

(Star Trek: The Next Generation)

by Peter David

Pocket Books, 1992, \$20.00

Early in his Star Fleet career, at a diplomatic posting on Betazed, Lieutenant Will Riker falls in love with a beautiful young woman named Deanna Troi. Though only half-Betazoid, and not as strongly telepathic as many Betazoids, Deanna still senses Riker's casual attitudes toward women. She is not impressed.

Riker, however, is smitten, and begins wooing her seriously.

Deanna, too, finds herself strongly drawn to Will, despite his casual past. But her future has already been planned as the only child of the Fifth House of Betazed.

Then disaster strikes, as pirates raiding a Betazed museum take Deanna hostage. Their crippled ship crashes in the steaming Betazed jungles, and Riker follows his heart into the treacherous, dripping Jalara Jungle to find and claim his beloved, his Imzadi.

Now Will Riker and Deanna Troi serve together on the starship Enterprise. Though no longer lovers, the bond of Imzadi still binds them. It is through the bond that Riker awakens one night, the scream of "Imzadi, help me!" tearing through his mind. He races to Deanna's quarters to find her struggling for breath. "Help me, please," she pleads. But before the med-team even arrives, she is gone.

Fast-forward to the future. Seventy-year-old Admiral Will Riker commands a god-forsaken outpost in the back of nowhere that is as far as he will ever go. He receives a message from the Betazed that Lwaxana Troi is dying, and wants to see him. Reluctantly, for she has never forgiven him, Riker sets out for Betazed. Driven by hate, Lwaxana's dying wish requires Riker to remember it all again.

Reliving each agonizing moment, torn again by the hopelessness and despair he felt then, a new certainty is born in Will Riker's mind. The longer he thinks about it, the more certain he is something is very wrong. Something more than just the unexplained death of a beautiful young woman, something caught up in the very fabric of the universe as he knows it. Something about the very time-line in which he exists.

Mars

by Ben Bova

Bantam/Spectra, 1992, \$20.00

Time: the reasonably near future, and the first manned mission of going to Mars. Their Goal: to find any kind of life at all, and to gain a foothold on the red planet. The team includes the USA, former Soviet Bloc nations, India, Japan, and European Community members.

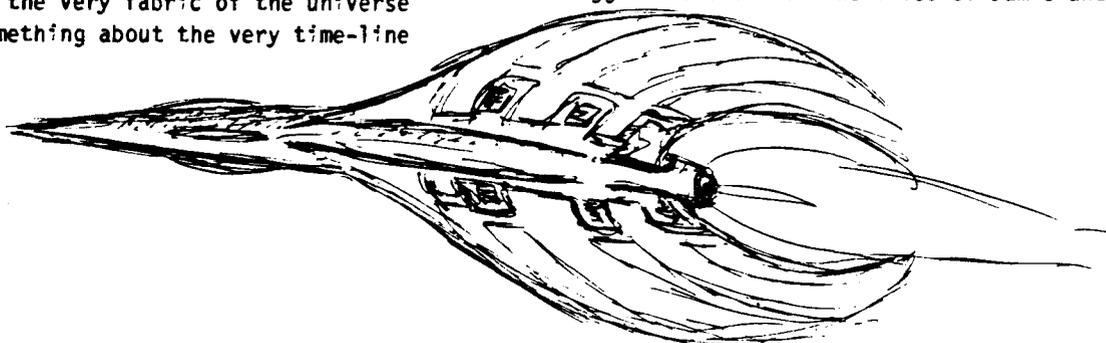
Jamie Waterman is an American Indian, a geologist, and a last minute replacement for an ill crew member. All of Jamie's life, he has felt estranged, rootless, lost between two worlds. His father, a full-blood, has become so rooted in academe that he has lost all touch with his Indian heritage, and his mother lives in the "ivory tower." Jamie's grandfather Al lives in the reservation and manages a trading post, but occasionally finds time to show Jamie parts of his native heritage.

It is in dreams of the red planet that Jamie finds for the first time a feeling of comfort, of familiarity, and he yearns with all his heart to go there. When he is chosen as a last minute replacement, he is ecstatic.

Though the mission to Mars has been designed and planned to be a showplace of technology and the unity of man, there are problems from the start. Funding, as always, is short. Tempers flare as nations and crew members jockey for positions of prestige and visibility. Sexual tensions rear their heads as the mixed-sex crew face the confinement of close quarters and the temptation of propinquity. Ethnic tensions add to the explosive mix as several crew members dredge up past injustices and wrongs.

The tension culminates when the ship reaches Mars. A trace of green on a rock creates dissension among geologists and biologists, a suggestion of water opens arguments with hydrologists. Then Jamie, searching one of the giant chasms of Mars comes across a rock formation of such regularity that it seems impossible that it is natural, and all hell breaks loose. Everyone wants his or her own priorities, and the mission is limited in time, materials and money.

The mission leaders finally decide to allow Jamie and several other scientists to make the trip to the gorge. Just miles from their goal tragedy strikes, as the research vehicle becomes trapped in a dust-clogged crater. Now the lives of Jamie and



the other scientists depend on whether the whole crew can forget their differences and work together flawlessly to wrest life from the bloody jaws of the red god, Mars.

The Summer Queen

by Joan D. Vinge
Warner, 1991, \$21.95

Finally, the long-awaited sequel to Vinge's tremendous novel, The Snow Queen has arrived.

Summer has come to the world of Tiamat. The last winter queen, Ar'ienrhod, has been sacrificed to the sea as custom dictates, and Moon Dawntreader Summer has become the new Summer Queen.

As Tiamat enters its century and a half of summer rule, it also becomes inaccessible to the star-gate through which the offworlders have traveled. Now the offworlders will leave and take with them their technology and their customs. Tiamat will be free to return to the pastoral way of life which is the legacy of Summer.

The slaughter of the mers, the friendly, intelligent water dwellers of Tiamat can be stopped. The greatest single attraction drawing the outworlders to Tiamat has been the "water of life," a life-prolonging substance that can be obtained only from the blood of slaughtered mers. But the mers are sacred to the Lady, goddess of the summer-folk. The sibyls, who bear the Lady's sacred mark, and commune with her in trance, know that the lives of the mers are in some inexplicable way irretrievably linked with the continuance of Tiamat.

With 150 years of time, Moon believes she and those who will follow her can change Tiamat into a world strong enough to control its own destiny when the next Change brings back the outworlders. But destiny has its own ideas and an incredible discovery on another world re-opens the closed star lanes to Tiamat. Now it is imperative that Moon discovers the secret of the mers before Tiamat and the whole Confederation come tumbling down in chaos.

The Summer Queen is a superb book! Joan D. Vinge is a craftswoman of the first order. Though she is not prolific, each novel is painstakingly crafted to hone the story line clean and sharp. Her plots are excellent, compact and fast-moving, but it is her characters that give her stories their irresistible appeal.

Brain Child

by George Turner
William Morrow & Company, 1991, \$20.00

David Chance is a journalist raised in an orphanage, knowing nothing of his heritage or background. He knows only that someone paid to keep him

there and to have him well-educated. Then one day he receives a note from someone who claims to be his father.

The man who wrote the note is one of four genetically identical siblings, the result of a genetic experiment to develop super-intelligence. Five groups of four children were originally developed. Two groups died in early infancy, and two still live. The third, C group, committed suicide en masse in their late teens, after one of the group escaped into the outside world and returned.

Now David begins a search to discover what C group learned that caused them to commit suicide, and to find the whispered-about legacy that the escaped group member may have left. The only clue he has to go on is from one of C group's nurses, who remembers the phrase, "I will teach you to turn dogs into gods." Danger lurks at every corner, however, as David is not the only person who wants the legacy of the super-genius known as "young feller."

NOTE: This is not a good book to begin reading just before bedtime. I made that mistake and was still reading when the sun rose the following morning. This book is nearly impossible to put down.

Whether you are a hard-core science fiction fan or avid devotee of nailbiting whodunits, Brain Child will grab and hold your interest as soon as you open the cover. George Turner has done a tremendous job of setting a really first-class mystery in a solid science frame only a few decades in the future. His premise is believable, and with a liberal lacing of red herrings, the question of who did the dirty deed remains unanswered virtually until the last page.

The GOD Project

by Stan Lee
Grove Weidenfeld, 1992, \$19.95

The time is just a few years in the future. Place: the United States of America. Liberal president Richard "Doc" Halliday has squeaked into office on a minimal interventionist platform. With no firm majority backing him, and little established support anywhere, Halliday finds himself in a precarious political position from the first.

Looking for any edge he can find, he discovers Malcolm Keyes, an unassuming copy editor who worked for Halliday's campaign. Malcolm has two gifts. He can invent a political slogan while waiting for the carriage return on his IBM Selectric, and he has an eidetic memory. He can repeat anything he cares to pay attention to word for word. Malcolm becomes Halliday's "hidden recorder."

Halliday also finds a sinkhole into which covert funds are being poured at a tremendous rate--but even as president, he can't seem to figure out what the project really is. Dubbed the "GOD" project, it

seems to have something to do with computer-based artificial intelligence, and with a person or persons whose physical measurements meet a very specific standard.

With the aid of his "invisible recorder", a great deal of determination, and a bit of luck, "Doc" Halliday may find out why the GOD project is so secret--and what the hidden implications are for the conflict in the Phillipines that is testing his administration's resolve.

The White Mountain

by David Wingrove
Delacorte Press, 1992, \$22.50

The White Mountain is the third book in the saga of Chung Kuo.

Li Shai Tung, T'ang of City Europe and the strongest influence in the Council of Seven, the great council of hereditary rulers of Chung Kuo, dies and is replaced by his son, Li Yuan. Yuan is determined to carry on the ideals of his father, though he is not as powerful as was his father.

Li Yuan also chooses Hans Ebert, son of Klaus Ebert and heir apparent to the incredible wealth of GenSyn laboratories, as his new general, unaware that Ebert is one of the leaders of the movement to overthrow the Council of Seven. Ebert is also engaged to marry Jelka Tolonen, daughter of Li Shai Tung's Marshall Tolonen, though Jelka hates and fears him. It is a bungled attempt to kidnap Jelka that sets in motion the events that ultimately catch up with Ebert.

The greatest issue facing Li Yuan, however, is the incredible population growth of Chung Kuo. One of the strongest foundations of the rulership of Chung Kuo has always been the family. The right to have an unlimited number of children has been one of the strongest forces upholding the rule of the Seven. Now the incredible growth in numbers of citizens of Chung Kuo is threatening to overwhelm even the food resources of the multitudes of food-raising satellites orbiting Earth. For the first time, a ruler of Chung Kuo must confront the issue of population growth limits.

Slowly, inevitably, events begin to move implacably toward a confrontation that will change all of life on Chung Kuo forever.

Rich with incredible detail of plot and motive, full of fascinating character studies, The White Mountain is a book that will grab and keep your attention as you follow the twists and turns of Wingrove's complex story.

Partnership

by Anne McCaffrey & Margaret Ball
Baen, 1992, \$5.95

Cyborgs, an amalgamation of man and machine, have long been a science fiction staple. Early cyborgs were terrible half-man, half-machine monsters. Later examples have included computers incorporating human minds, human bodies with mechanical and electronic components and pilots implanted with ports which allow them to directly control their ships.

Award-winning author Anne McCaffrey has taken the concept even further. In McCaffrey's world, shell people, people born with physical deformities so severe as to preclude living a normal life, become the wards of Central Worlds. Here they are given hormones to suppress physical growth, placed in a mobil "shell" to which they are connected neurally. They see and hear by external sensors, manipulate objects with peripheral mechanical attachments, and move by neural command.

Many shell people become the "brains" in brainships, physically placed in an impregnable titanium column within the ships which will be their new "bodies." They are partnered with a "brawn," a physically normal person who can perform the functions no ship is able to handle. Together "brain" and "brawn" comprise Central Worlds most flexible operating team, the legendary "brainships."

In The Ship Who Sang, McCaffrey introduced us to the concept of shell people. Now, with Margaret Ball, McCaffrey has written a new brainship story, Partnership.

Nancia Perez y de Gras is nobly born, of one of the illustrious High Families. She is also a shell-person. On Nancia's first mission, she is assigned to carry five other young members of High Families to their first missions on various planets. Before she can introduce herself and make them aware of her presence, Nancia overhears some conversations that chill her blood. But without a brawn, and with no evidence other than her own word, Nancia can do nothing to frustrate the horrendous plans of these ruthless High Families scions.

But because of their High Families status, Nancia knows she has no chance of bringing them to justice. Justice will have to wait...for a while.

Excellent! McCaffrey and Ball at their best!

Anvil of Stars

by Greg Bear
Warner Books, 1992, \$19.95

Anvil of Stars is Greg Bear's dynamic sequel to Forge of God. The series begins with the destruction of Earth by alien probes known only as the Planet Killers. Only a handful of humans remain alive, rescued near the very end by a second group of aliens called the Benefactors.

The Benefactors are part of a group sworn to locate and destroy the Planet Killers. Whenever they

are able to prevent the complete destruction of a planet, or to rescue any of its people, they give the survivors the chance to join the hunt for the Killers.

Eighty four teen-age volunteers from Earth join a Ship of the Law and begin training to become avengers of a lost and destroyed Earth. For months the ships find nothing. Training becomes boring, meaningless. Motivation falters. There is even suicide.

The change comes when the ship's sensors locate a star system which appears to have been shaped and even camouflaged with Killer technology. The Wendys and Lost Boys must decide whether the inhabitants of this system are indeed members of the Killer culture, or they are simply descended from what was once the Killers, or the Killer technology is still alive, cleverly hidden and protected by the lives of trillions of the system's inhabitants.

Now the decision lies with them--to destroy a culture or to let it live. What if they are the Killers? Dare they let them live? Are they even able to destroy them? Will they be taking trillions of innocent lives, becoming Planet Killers themselves?

Though the alien Benefactors have come with them in the Ships of the Law, they will not make these decisions. Now it is up to Earth's children to decide the fate of an entire solar system, and to bear the weight of that decision forever.

Anvil of Stars is a penetrating look at the basis of society and culture, and what values and beliefs form the basis for all human thought and action. A powerful book, well worth the time to read.

Beachhead

by Jack Williamson
Tor, 1992, \$18.95

Sam Houston Kelligan, playboy son of one of the richest and most influential men in the state of Texas, is also one of the most determined. Sam's dream is to be on the first team to colonize Mars, despite his father's ranting and his mother's vapors.

From the beginning, the project is plagued by production problems, cost overruns, and crippled finances. Then comes the news that a virus has been discovered in the dust of Mars that may be harmful to humans. Despite the news, despite the desperate shortages in money and equipment, the decision is made to go ahead with the launch immediately, before failing finances permanently cancel the program.



With fewer people, less equipment and less support than originally projected, the small colony will have few resources to fall back upon in need. While part of the crew remains aboard the orbiter, Kelligan and the remainder begin to set up their base station.

But dissension has divided the group practically from take-off, and while Kelligan's crew are building on Mars, the ship Mergal breaks orbit and disappears. With only a small portion of the tools, seeds and stock necessary for survival, and a one-man lander for transportation, the odds of survival for the tiny, ill-equipped colony appear grim.

Anyone who has bought any speculative fiction lately knows that the heavy emphasis right now is on fantasy. You have to look hard to find much straight, old-fashioned, hard science fiction. In fact, were it not for a handful of tried and true authors like Frederik Pohl, Poul Anderson, Gordon Dickson, Jerry Pournelle, Arthur C. Clarke, and Jack Williamson, the amount of hard science in speculative fiction would be miniscule.

Jack Williamson is one of a select few writers ever to be elected Grand Master by his peers. Beachhead is a classic example of why.

Heir to the Empire

by Timothy Zahn
Bantam/Spectra, 1991, \$15.00

Okay, folks, here we go again--Star Wars, episode four, Heir to the Empire. I don't know if they are going to make it into a movie or not, but it has all the elements for a bang-up Star Wars movie. It's all there, star destroyers, tie-fighters, X-wing fighters, droids, death stars, the dark side of the Force, intrigues, life, death, love, loyalty, bravery, battle.

The Rebel Alliance is winning. They now have more planets and more people on their side than the Empire, and the balance is slowly, but surely tipping in their direction. But the Empire has not laid down and died--and woe to the galactic citizen who thinks otherwise.

Grand Admiral Thrawn, a superb tactician and strategist, is commanding the star destroyer Chimera. He is the Empire's best hope for regaining the power and territory they have lost to the Rebel Alliance. Aiding and abetting him is a Dark Jedi, Joruss C'baoth. To secure C'baoth aid, Thrawn has promised to deliver students for him to turn to the Dark Side of the Force--Leia Organa Solo, and the twins she carries--already strong in the Force.

Thrawn has already made a very dangerous discovery--a way to neutralize the Force. And he is willing to expend whatever he must to find and destroy the last of the old Jedi before he becomes the first of the New Jedi.

It's been a while, but if you are a true Star Wars fan, it's been worth the wait. This fourth book, the first of a new three-book cycle, is pure Star Wars. The only thing I didn't care for was the concept that there was something--anything--that could neutralize the Force. After all, it's supposed to be the basic force permeating the universe.

The images are great. I could see the "movie" in my head even without a big screen. All the elements that made the first three movies so much fun are here in a story that is fast-paced and true in story-line and characterizations to its forebears. Have a ball!

The Healer's War

by Elizabeth Ann Scarborough
Doubleday, 1988, \$17.95

Kitty McCully is an Army nurse at the 83rd Field Hospital, living through the heat, the bugs and the monsoons of northern South Vietnam. Kitty is frustrated by everything--the climate, the poor facilities, the callousness she sees everywhere, her own limitations. Then an old holy man named Xe dies and leaves her a powerful amulet. With the help of the amulet Kitty can see auras, perceive good and evil, pain and injury. And she can heal with a touch.

When Kitty first arrives at the 83rd, the hospital is treating both native and military casualties. Shortly thereafter, the hospital's chief doctor rotates stateside and the new chief is a man full of hate. He forces the hospital's native patients out, to certain death in the native chanel house.

When Kitty's best efforts to save two patients she has befriended, she takes matters into her own hands for the thirs, ten-year-old Ahn. She talks a chopper pilot into flying them to Quang Nga where a friend of hers is a chief nurse.

The attempt ends in tragedy as the chopper is shot down. Suddenly Kitty finds herself alone in Viet Cong controlled territory with a one-legged child to protect. Not even the amulet will keep them from being killed if they are caught.

The Healer's War is an eerie and unusual foray into the world of fantasy. Scarborough, herself an Army nurse in Vietnam, admits that parts of the book are autobiographical. Even without the fantastic element she has introduced, The Healer's War would be a powerful novel of the horrors of war. In adding the element of fantasy, she has brought to the genre a rare and caustic realism seldom experienced.

This is a deeply disturbing novel, and I do not recommend it for everyone. Indeed, the Vietnam veteran in my life left it unfinished despite praising the quality of the writing. Its reality, he said,

brought back too many memories.

The Prime Directive

by Judith and Garfield Reeves-Stevens
Pocket Books, 1992, \$18.95

"You have broken our most sacred commandment, James T. Kirk--and in doing so, destroyed a world. As of this day you are relieved of your command, stripped of your rank and all accompanying privileges, and discharged from Starfleet. May whatever gods there are have mercy on your soul."

Talin IV is dead, shattered by nuclear war--a war that James T. Kirk is accused of causing by violating the prime directive. Now Kirk is a haunted, hunted, infamous fugitive from a universe that hates him and wants him dead.

Sulu, Chekov, Uhuru and Spock have resigned in protest over Starfleet's refusal to hear them out and continue to investigation into a situation that feels totally wrong to all of them. Now, with nowhere to go, and nothing to do with their lives, Talin IV looms bigger and bigger in all their thoughts--despite the fact travel there is embargoed by Starfleet. Talin IV is where the answers are, and the whole crew has a lot of questions that desperately need answers.

There have been a lot of Star Trek books written --over 50 of them, not counting the original series in book form or the various Guide books. I've read most of them, and they have varied from barely disguised rehashes of old scripts "The Cry of the Onlies" to top-notch entertainment "Uhuru's Song" and "Tears of the Singers", for instance. Most of them have not even made it into hardback.

The Prime Directive is one of the half-dozen best Star Treks written to date. It is lively, touching, well-plotted and well-written. It definitely goes beyond Star Trek formula as a worthwhile novel in its own right. This one is well worth the reading even if you are not a Star Trek fan, and double fun if you are.

Servant of the Empire

by Raymond E. Feist and Janny Wurts
Doubleday, 1992, \$19.95

I don't usually read books in reverse order of their publication--but I am going to this time. I have just finished Servant of the Empire, and it is so good I am going to go back to the bookstore where I got it and buy Daughter of the Empire. I may even go so far as to purchase the Riftwar books, the background against which these two are set. That is how good this book is.

Mara, Ruling Lady of the House of Acoma, skilled player of the great Game of Council, mother of the

heir of Acoma, is barely out of her teens. Pulled out of the convent of Lashima just minutes short of saying her vows following the treacherous deaths of her father and brother, seventeen-year-old Mara finds herself thrust headlong into a world of intrigue and danger.

But young does not mean incompetent, and when Mara is able to arrange the utter humiliation and public suicide of her family's worst enemy, the Tsurani court takes notice. Among the Tsurani, though, a moment's carelessness can topple even the

most powerful. For all her flexible mind, Mara is still a product of her culture, conditioned to react in predictable patterns--until the day she is called upon to discipline an arrogant, red-haired slave called Kevin of Zun.

Everything about Kevin is impossible and unheard of to a well-bred, cultured daughter of the Tsurani. Through his eyes Mara is able to see her culture, her people and even herself from a whole new perspective, and new views can lead to new ways of thinking...and feeling.

Film & Book Reviews by David M Shea

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The Vor Game

by Lois McMaster Bujold
Baen, 1990, \$4.50

Having survived three years at the elite Imperial Academy, newly-minted Ensign Miles Vorkosigan wanted ship duty, or a job in Imperial intelligence, or something to which he could turn his peculiar talents. Naturally his first assignment was as weather officer at an infantry base--on the arctic circle. Naturally it didn't work out as planned: where Miles is concerned, nothing ever works out as planned.

If you don't already know Miles, you're missing one of the most goofily engaging character to appear in SF in the last decade. This volume falls somewhere after The Warrior's Apprentice and before Brothers in Arms. Just on general contrariness, my initial thought was, geez louise, give Miles a vacation and write about something else. Then I actually opened the book; and started laughing out loud on page 4, and page 7, and page 10 ...

Sunshaker's War

by Tom Dietz
Avon, 1990, \$3.95

Now ye recalleth ye Words of ye Prophet, even as he hath writ in ye twenty-seventh Chapter of ye Lantern according to Lan.

Wherein ye Prophet spake thusly, Lo there be a new Writer of some Talent, and verily he hath write a Pair of ye juvenile celtic Fantasies, the which were a commendable Read; and futher ye Prophet sayeth, it would be even a Shame to see ye talented Writer be trapped in ye Ghetto of celtic Fantasy,

and wasting ye Talent.

Now verily it hath come to pass, even as ye Prophet foretold: that ye Writer aforesaid, churneth out ye endless String of juvenile celtic Fantasies; and is becoming like unto ye Piers Anthony or ye Christopher Stasheff, and writeth ye same Book over and over again; and though he getteth Cash therefor, yet he wasteth ye Talent.

Here endeth ye Lesson.

Mad Roy's Light

by Paula King
Baen, 1990, \$3.50

The Guild, controlled by the alien Daruma, dominated trade in Saggiarius Sector. As one of the handful of human members of the Guild, Jennan Bartlett was familiar with the various alien races of the Sector. But not even she realized the amazing reality behind the Shenda religion, a reality which could rearrange the whole power structure of Sector space.

Okay, another C.J. Cherryh wannabe. If you're gonna imitate fine, imitate the best. But there's more to being C.J. Cherryh than Byzantine politics and forty-two random aliens. As a first try, this is adequate and readable, and similar vanilla adjectives; although the ending goes staggering off in an odd direction. Either a sequel is planned, or there are enough loose ends to knit a quilt; choose one from Column A.

The Short Stories of Mary Shelley

Edited by Charles E. Robinson
Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988, \$16.95

Mary Shelley's place in literary history rests almost entirely on her 1816 novel Frankenstein. That she wrote five other novels and a stack of short fiction is virtually forgotten. Evidently there's a good reason for this. Most of these stories are routine 19th Century parlor tales, written in globs of overblown 19th Century prose, virtually unreadable to the modern reader. Editor Robinson asserts that many of these stories were hacked out to accompany previously drawn illustrations in pseudo-genteel ladies' magazines. It seems quite plausible. Only a few of these pieces show even faint traces of SF/fantasy. This book, aptly published by an academic press, is of faint interest only as an historical curiosity, even for those few who have actually read the original Frankenstein.

Winterlong

by Elizabeth Hand
Bantam/Spectra, 1990, \$4.95

She was an empath, an autistic child who by neurosurgery and selective drugs, has acquired the ability to tune in to the visions of disturbed minds. He was an acolyte in a bizarre monastery. Somewhere in the crumbling city was the destiny which would bring them together in search of a green-eyed hallucination. (Yes, okay, it's a death metaphor: what else did you expect from Bantam?)

This reminded me most of Samuel R. Delany. (If it's any help to you, the particular Delany work which kept recurring in my mind was "Night and the Loves of Joe DiCostanzo".) There is the same flamboyant language; the same striking if incoherent imagery; the same sense that reality is not even an individual construct, but only a personal whim. I had the feeling that the author empathized with her characters, but failed to convey that effectively to me as a reader. As a work of art this is admirable, in a detached way, but I didn't really enjoy it.

Deadly Friend

Horrormeister Wes Craven shows his true colors herein, mostly red. Immediate caution: This movie contains too much gore for children or impressionable adults. It's also stupid and derivative. However, Craven at least knows the dictum, "If you're going to steal, steal from the best." A gifted youth working with AI (Matthew Laborteaux, ex-Melissa Gilbert's adopted little brother from Little House on the Prairie) uses his technology to revive the dead neighbor girl (Kristi Swanson) who was accidentally killed by her drunken father. Yeah, you guessed it: another remake of Frankenstein. For anyone looking to anticipate the ending, it is, in

fact, a rather faithful remake. Some of the splatter is actually amusing in a gross way; and Swanson is more engaging playing the living dead in slathers of blue eye-shadow, than as the cheerleaderish ingenue.

Meridian (Kiss of the Beast)

The "beauty and the beast" legend is a classic fantasy metaphor which has been in vogue lately. Disney's animated version was all froth. The TV series moved it to a modern setting, but the motif was a lush, if non-sexual, 19th-Century European romanticism. Meridian is a low-budget Italian knockoff which plays the story as a sort of neo-pagan farce. I sure hope it's intended as farce; I can't imagine anyone taking this seriously.

As the central figure, Actress Sherilyn Fenn is so wooden, someone ought to dust her off with Pledge. She's not even convincing in the screw scenes. Malcolm Jamieson, doubling as handsome villain and kindly monster, fares little better--and the "monster" make-up is far below the standard established by Vincent. The plot seems like cheap tissue, thin and full of holes. Not to seem totally negative, the castle is actually rather handsome and well-lit, a pleasant change from the cliché dark Gothic pile.



Book Reviews by Lawrence L. Touseh

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Dragon Fantastic

Edited by Rosalind & Martin H. Greenberg

DAW, 1992, \$4.99

Ever since I first saw the advertisement for Dragon Fantastic in Science Fiction Chronicle, I looked forward to reading it. After all, I had enjoyed Catfantastic so I could anticipate some quality reading.

This book contains 16 (dare I say delightful?) short stories featuring big dragons, little dragons, magical dragons, and even an electrical dragon. 299 pages of dragons. What a feast!

My favorite story in this anthology is "Home Security" by Karen Haber. Deciding on my second favorite is harder. Perhaps Laura Resnick's "Fluff the Tragic Dragon," Esther Friesner's "Take Me Out to the Ball Game," or Ruth Berman's "The Dragon's Skin." I just can't decide. They're all well-written. I even enjoyed Tad Williams' "Introduction."

Quick! Go buy the book. Drop the kids off at Grandma's house and send your spouse fishing (or shopping). Lock the door, take the phone off the hook and go get yourself an ice-cold pop. Ease back in your easy chair, kick off your shoes and open the book. You have gained 50 points!

Suisan

by Phyllis Carol Agins

Baen, 1992, \$4.99

There have been several books published over the last few years that are retellings of faerie tales. Such is Suisan, the retelling of "Sleeping Beauty."

The story centers around the dwarves rather than Suisan. Not the "Hi ho Disney" dwarves either, but ones with cares, problems and fears. The story starts with visions of her coming and the dwarves' fears of the changes her arrival will bring. Even after her arrival, not all the dwarves welcome her. Then other visions come....

Ms Agins gives us insights into the dwarves' minds and the reader is able both to relate and to react to them. The unexpected turns are used to good effect so, although the time frame is familiar, a lot of the story is not.

I picked up this book for some "light" reading, which it was. I enjoyed it, which is what really counts. It takes a competent author to take something old and familiar and make it into something new. Ms Agins succeeds with this story.



The Ship Who Searched

by Anne McCaffrey and Mercedes Lackey

Baen Books, 1992, \$5.99

Ever read a story that is so well written that you become emotionally involved over the characters? This, the third book in the Brain and Brawn series, is like that.

When seven year old daughter of an exoarchaeologist, Hypatia Cade, goes to play in her own make-believe excavation, she makes an important discovery. Unfortunately, she also contracts an alien disease that totally paralyzes her. To preserve her life she is placed in a mechanical life-support system and enters the shell program. Tia, as she prefers to be called, becomes a brainship attached to Archaeology and Exploration. You'd think that would be a nice, safe and dull job, wouldn't you? Well, you thought wrong.

The prior books, The Ship Who Sang and Partner-Ship are excellent books, and this one is no exception. I heartily recommend the entire series. Nowadays, when you hesitate to shell out six dollars for a paperback, it's nice to get a really GOOD book. I want to get my niece hooked on science fiction, and this series just might do it.

The Armies of Elfland

by Poul Anderson
Tor, 1992, \$3.99

The Armies of Elfland is a collection of eight short stories, including the Hugo and Nebula Awards winner: "The Queen of Air and Darkness." If you haven't read this yet, and you should, here is a good chance. It is certainly deserving of the awards. As for the rest of the stories, they're all well written and have good characterization. Most, if not all, have seen print before.

Other than the feature story above, my favorite was "The Valor of Cappen Varra." "The Gate of the Flying Knives" also is about Cappen Varra and was written for Bob Asprin's Thieves' World. "Fairy Gold" is a story of not and I hope that you find "The Barbarian" as amusing as I did. "House Rule" was probably the worst of the collection, and it really isn't bad.

I enjoyed all the stories which isn't surprising as Poul Anderson is one of my favorite authors. Except for the first story which is rather long, the stories are good for reading on your lunch break at work; just don't forget to go back to work.

Shadowrun 5: Changeling

by Chris Kubasik
ROC, 1992, \$4.50

Welcome to the future. The magic of myth is back and so are the elves, trolls, ghouls and dwarves. It's the year 2050 and the fifteen-year-old human Peter Clarris wakes in the hospital as a troll. He is not happy about it.

As a human he was a genius so he is expected to be a fairly intelligent troll. He decides to devote his life to relearn to read and then find a cure so he can be human again. Unhappy with his life he goes for a walk, is harassed by the police and is rescued by Fast Eddy, a down-on-his-luck thief. Peter enters the life of organized crime.

Peter is now twenty-eight and his research is finished. Then he is asked to kill a young lady who helped his father escape from his corp employment to another. He doesn't kill her so he and the young lady become hunted and the search for his father (a scientist) begins....

I've talked to several friends about Shadowrun 5 and we all agree:

1. It is a good fast-paced story with a logical sequence of events.
2. It is not as good as Shadowrun 4: 2XS.
3. We are all interested in the role-playing game, Shadowrun (any of you readers ever play it?).

Another thing in common with my friends is that none of us have read the first two stories, some-

thing we all wish to do. I plan to keep reading this series.

Born to Run

by Mercedes Lackey and Larry Dixon
Baen, 1992, \$4.99

"Misty" is one of my favorite authors. She has done several shared novels this past year. This one is with Larry Dixon, her husband and noted illustrator.

This is the story of Tannim, human mage and friend to Keighvin Silverhair of the Seileigh Court versus Aurilia Morrigan of the Unseileigh Court. Oh yes, and friends. The elves of Fairgrove (Maryland) love to race cars, but have the traditional problems with cold iron. To counter the problem, the cars are made of fiberglass and a magic metal that looks like steel. Tannim gets the help of Sam, a respected retired metallurgist to "legitimize" the metal and processing for the public.

Morrigan and company want to disgrace Keighvin and decide to drive off Sam. Instead they are driven off by Tannim's magic which brings her enmity. Meanwhile, Keighvin is trying to help Tania, an underage prostitute, get off the street and get her life together. Unfortunately the Morrigan notices.

I've never been disappointed by any of Misty's books and that includes this one. The story has a tight logical plot and is fast-paced. I do, however, feel that we could have gotten to know the characters better. A friend of mine disagrees with my last analysis, but agrees with me on recommending this book.

Summoned to Tourney

by Mercedes Lackey and Ellen Guon
Baen, 1992, \$4.99

This is the story about a bard named Eric, a psychic named Beth, and an elf named Kory (Korendil) and their re-location to San Francisco. Eric is having nightmares of Beth and Kory dead and San Francisco destroyed by an earthquake with shadow things called Nightflyers everywhere. Then Beth and Kory are kidnapped by a government researcher. What is Eric to do?

Another action-packed story of elves and their human friends on our modern world. This is apparently the sequel of Knight of Ghosts and Shadows which, unfortunately I haven't read yet. The narrative even mentions the elves of Born to Run, linking that story also.

I enjoyed it, even though I generally prefer "older" settings.

Pyromancer

by Don Callender
Ace, 1992, \$4.50

The adventures (and, of course, misadventures) of Douglas Brightblade, apprentice of Flarman Flow-erstalk--the Firemaster. The bad guy is Frigeon, an aeromancer called the Ice King.

Although the story is the "standard" young man makes good that we are all familiar with, there is more to it than that. In fact, I hesitate to tell any of the story because it is so utterly delightful. I'm not even going to say why it's delightful. You'll just have to read it for yourself to find out. You won't be disappointed.

This is Callender's first novel. Very highly recommended.

The Door to Ambermere

by J Calvin Pierce
Ace, 1992, \$4.50

The story centers around a gambler named Daniel who is in hot water with the local crimelord. Something about the crimelord's daughter. Meanwhile, in Ambermere a demon is summoned to rescue a princess but the incantation goes awry and the demon substitutes Daniel in her place. Oh, by the way, the demon doesn't go home either.

This story starts out jumping from place to place and from one character to another with little warning. I mean, do you REALLY notice that a paragraph is double spaced instead of single while engrossed in the story? It was distracting. Fortunately, the author finally gets everyone introduced to the reader and the story becomes more readable.

Despite the author's style at the beginning and even though there is nothing new but a few twists to old plots, it was a nice story providing some light reading and more than a little humor, which is probably why I liked it. Worth borrowing from a friend.

Film Reviews by *Mark R. Leeper*

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Batman Returns

CAPSULE REVIEW: Three angry costumed neurotics battle in a big, silly, lovable comic book on the screen. Two lesser villains from the comic turn out to be much more intriguing than the Joker on the wide screen. This is a terrific, surrealistic film. Rating: high +2 (on the -4 to +4 scale). WARNING: Minor plot spoilers in this review, almost all taken from the film's publicity.

A book may be very amusing with numerous errors, or it may be very dull without a single absurdity.

Oliver Goldsmith,
Preface to The Vicar of Wakefield

In 1983, for the 50th anniversary of KING KONG, engineers tried to inflate a fifty-foot gorilla on the Empire State Building. It was a real fiasco. It never got more than half inflate, looked absurd, and became a real embarrassment. When asked what he thought of it, a Japanese tourist said, "I love it! It's so American! It's big, it's silly, and it doesn't work."

Batman Returns is a film that could be made only in America. It's big; it's silly; it doesn't work. And above all it is lovable. It is a mammoth King Kong balloon of a film that is nearly as endearing for what doesn't work for what does. It is one of

those rare films that could end up appealing to art film fans and to Friday night fun-seekers. It is genuinely one of the most bizarre films ever made. Its explosions of surrealism and its warped characters make its predecessor Batman seem pale and lukewarm. Rather than one villain, this film offers three and manages to make two of them much more interesting than Jack Nicholson was as the Joker. In Batman the viewer knew how the Joker became the Joker. In this film the viewer goes the additional step of saying, "Yeah, if that happened to me, I think I'd become like the Penguin or Catwoman."

The film opens with a monster child being born to a rich household. Rather than keep this horrible little creature, his parents set him adrift in a basket in a sewer. There he is adopted by the penguins living in the sewer. ("What penguins in the sewer?" you ask. Shhh! Let Mr. Burton tell his story! Just accept it that there are a lot of intelligent penguins living in the sewer...with the clowns.)

Meanwhile, a big industrialist who pollutes the same sewer is planning to steal a giant electrical charge from the city. (No, don't ask about that one either.) Max Shreck (played by Christopher Walken) is the industrialist and he is really nasty to his mousey, frumpy secretary Selina Kyle (played by Michelle Pfeiffer). Between him and her lackluster lifestyle, she is getting ready to explode. Selina

comes home each night to her lonely apartment, calls, "Honey, I'm home," reminds herself that she is not married, feeds her cat, and listens to her mother's brow-beating phone messages.

Eventually when circumstances make Shreck see Selina as a threat he throws her out a very high window. Miraculously she is not killed and in some mysterious way is rescued by alley cats. (Hey, look, if the sewer penguins can save the monster baby....) Selina completely makes herself over as the super-feminist, militant Catwoman, complete with skintight vinyl cat suit. ("Life's a bitch; now so am I!" she says.) Suddenly she is wreaking havoc with a bullwhip and doing amazing athletic flips. ("How come she can do that now?" you ask. Shhh! Now I've warned you.) Variety aptly calls her "a kitten with a whip."

About this time the adult version of our monster baby emerges from the sewer with his army of clowns to make himself loved and to find his parents. He is nicknamed the Penguin (and played by Danny DeVito). Shreck decides to use the Penguin in a plan to discredit Batman and to have the Mayor ousted and replace him with the Penguin. He is going to create a crime wave and make the mayor look so bad that the people will replace him with the Penguin. ("If that scheme works, how come Dinkins is still Mayor of New York?" you ask. Shhh! Now I'm not going to warn you again.) Catwoman and the Penguin team up, knowing that with the Mayor thrown out they will be sitting in the catbird seat. After that the plot gets strange and a little hard to believe.

To say there are gaps in the plotting of Batman Returns is a gross understatement. This is a film that somehow survives major lapses in logic. You never know what is going to turn up in the sewer next without rhyme or reason. There seems to be whole rooms of furniture, troops of clowns, and colonies of penguins. Also in this world anyone who dons a weird suit suddenly becomes an athlete ready for for the Beijing Circus. We see Batman, the self-appointed vigilante, use lethal force on criminals in the street. Then later he lectures Catwoman on the importance of letting the law punish the bad. In another inconsistency Batman berates Alfred for revealing his identity to Vicki Vale, but carelessly allows Catwoman to learn who he is and later intentionally reveals his identity to Max Shreck. (It is interesting that the film does go back and explain a plot hole from the previous film.) Other places the plot assumes impossible capabilities for the Batmobile (it can be wider on the inside than it is on the outside). Then it assumes that every family in Gotham would make the same mistake of leaving the same valuable unguarded.

And with all these gaffes there is a lot to like in the new Batman film. The late Anton Furst's set designs from the first film have been made more dreamlike and often given an Edward Scissorhands

feel by the new production designer Bo Welch. There are numerous allusions and touches in the film. The Batman character was initially inspired, at least in part, by the idea of a crime-fighter as stealthy, dark, and mysterious as Dracula, the original bat-man. The first screen adaptation of the novel Dracula was the 1922 German classic Nosferatu, in which the actor who played the animal-like vampire was Max Schreck (whose name was slightly modified for the allusion, but it is still noticeable).

A rather nifty but nearly unnoticed allusion is a woman clown dressed in 18th Century French attire who delivers her lines in a sleepy monotone. Could this be an allusion to Glenda Jackson playing a manic-depressive playing Charlotte Corday in Marat/Sade? There are multiple allusions to Burton's best previous film, Edward Scissorhands. Much of the photography has very similar visual images. Statues in the snow, such as are shown at the old zoo, look a lot like Edward's topiary. The opening logo is over snow, not unlike the snow of the opening of Edward Scissorhands. Danny Elfman, who scored all three films, in Batman Returns has borrowed themes from Batman, but also style from his Edward Scissorhands score. Choral voices under the snow scenes show up a lot in this film as they did in Edward Scissorhands. One almost wonders, incidentally, with all the Christmas imagery if this film was really intended for a summer release. One nice visual touch is that what looks like a like of virile Batmen standing in line in one scene is a closet of costumes. The only thing missing from the Batmen are the chins. If Batman is a dramatic-looking figure in costume, it is the costume that looks so impressive, not him. You could put Rick Moranis in that costume and he would look dangerous.

Indeed, after all the discussion prior to the first film as to whether Michael Keaton could really play Batman, the role has once again turned out to be surprisingly undemanding. The suit gives Batman his stature, the script gives him a little complexity, and Keaton steps through the role fulfilling its demands without contributing anything extra. While that made him the best thing in the first installment, this time it just did not hack it. This is Pfeiffer's and DeVito's film. Living secretly in the sewers hatching his plans, the Penguin clearly borrows heavily from The Phantom of the Opera. Yet at the same time he can turn hot and angry in seconds, like Joe Pesci's character in Goodfellas. He has not in my memory had a role that allows him such rage or such range.

Until now I have always considered Michelle Pfeiffer to be a marvelously sexy woman who wears a lot of make-up and does not have a whole lot of talent. Sex appeal and make-up pulled her through Dangerous Liaisons and The Fabulous Baker Boys, but not for one moment of her acting have I ever considered her impressive. However, I can no longer

Imagine anyone else being better as the Catwoman. Her uncompromising fury makes her a male-chauvinists' worst nightmare. One moment she is pretending to be shocked that Batman would dare hit a woman, the next striking out at him for so much as daring to hesitate. Forget chivalry--this woman wants blood and will do whatever it takes!

There is a surprising richness of themes in this film. Batman's own story is distorted and reflected in the two colorful villains. All three have their origins in pain. All three have donned their costumes to work out their own personal neuroses. All three characters seem to live by the motto that in rage and solitude there is strength. Even animals are compassionate compared to the brutal humans. The two tortured villains are each saved in their moments of weakness by animals. The Penguin, like Edward Scissorhands, longs to be normal instead of a freak. Does Batman wear the animal costume to set himself apart from humanity and to make himself a freak?

To extend the sentiment of the Japanese tourist, Batman Returns could have been made only in the United States. Only in the United States could \$80M be spent bringing a comic book story to the screen, unembarrassed. One need only look at Barbarella or the Perry Rhodan film Mission Stardust to see how it could have gone wrong. I think America still leads the world in big, brash, silly films. That may not be much, but it is still something in which to take some pride.

While I thought the first Batman film rated only a 0, I'd give this one a high +2 on the -4 to +4 scale. You ain't seen nothing like this film.

Delicatessen

CAPSULE REVIEW: Weird and morbid comedy about life in some strange post-Holocaust future. Cannibals and vegetarians battle in a world where the only meat available is from other people. Meanwhile, life goes on in a strange apartment house over a delicatessen. Offbeat is putting it mildly. Rating: high +1.

The time is the future, perhaps ten years after it all went bad. The sky is thick yellow fog. Humans have two legs and frogs have four, but the only other animals left alive have six or eight. Legal tender is bags of lentils or corn. And something else has disappeared with the world we knew. What is missing is something like sanity. With so few animals around, society has been broken into two classes, vegetarians and those who have taken to heart the adage that one man's meat is another man's person, so to speak. The setting is an apartment house over one of the few remaining delicatessens. And only rarely does the delicatessen have meat. In the apartment there are the long-term res-

idents and the transients. The transients do not so much move out as disappear. And as their luck would have it, they always disappear just in time to miss one of the meat days at the delicatessen.

In the apartment building live a typical bunch of people. There is the supremely myopic cello player who has nearly given up on finding a husband. There are two men who make those toy cylinders that when turned upside down moo like a cow used to. Then there is the nice woman who hears voices telling her to commit suicide. She tries to oblige in complex and creative ways. Fortunately or not, her Rube-Goldberg-like suicide mechanisms just don't work. Into this old neighborhood moves an ex-circus clown ear-marked to be literally dead meat. Somehow he evades the butcher's knife and falls for the nearly blind cello player.

With many a supremely gruesome twist and turn, this film is a logical descendent of the British film The Bed-Sitting Room and the French Le Dernier Combat--two very strange slice-of-post-holocaust-life black comedies. And it perhaps is the most entertaining of the three. Some of its visual style is also reminiscent of Brazil. The style is mostly short gag scenes that eventually add up to a plot which in the final third is somewhere between mad-cap and frenetic.

This is a film for particularly morbid tastes in comedy. I give it a high +1.

Alien 3

CAPSULE REVIEW: Fury is a dreary, ugly prison colony planet, made up of "double-Y-chromosome" criminals who have rediscovered monastic life. To this planet comes Ripley and her alien. And Ripley's nightmare starts over. Alien 3 will probably kill the series. Director David Fincher's previous major credit is music videos for Madonna. Rating: -1.

In 1979 Ridley Scott directed Alien. Scott had previously directed the moody story The Duellists. The inspiration for Alien was the weird surrealist paintings of H. R. Giger. The world Giger creates has the feel of an alien culture, the feel of a mind incomprehensible to humans at work. In 1986 James Cameron directed Aliens. Cameron had directed Terminator. His inspiration was apparently to show how a company of marines reacts when faced with something like the alien threat of the first film. While many of the sequences are lifted from the previous film, Cameron brought complexity to the character of Ripley and had a reasonably complex plot. Now 20th Century Fox has made Alien 3. For a director they got David Fincher, who has had a successful career directing music videos and television commercials. The inspiration seems to have been an empty slot at the beginning of the 1992 summer release schedule.

I thought the first film was the best of the series and the second film was a step down. It borrowed whole sequences and ideas from the first film. Also it seemed to sidestep very lightly the moral issue of the earth people stealing and transforming a planet already colonized by an intelligent alien race. It is genuinely surprising and more than a little disturbing how many of the audience were rooting to see the aliens exterminated because they were hostile to humans and not cute and dewy-eyed. Unintentionally, Aliens was an intriguing test of whether the audience would still buy into attitudes that had caused major foreign policy failures in the past. (And the answer was an undeniable "Yes!" Audience cheered ideas as blatant as, "Let's withdraw and nuke 'em from orbit." Perhaps what it showed was that in the end we are just only pleasant to those we find appealing.) There were many who preferred the second film for its realistic treatment of marines in space.

The third film is the weakest of the three. On one of the ugliest planets ever portrayed in film, human criminals and an alien tear away at each other in the cinematic equivalent of a pit bull fight. The pit is Fury 161, an evacuated lead mine and prison colony. There the worst outcasts of the galaxy have been isolated and have formed a sort of monastic order living in the lead mining facilities. They have no weapons and, to make the place even uglier, they all have to shave their heads because the planet is infested with lice. On this delightful planet crashes Ellen Ripley (played by Sigourney Weaver), the future equivalent of Typhoid Mary. When death starts occurring on Fury 161, Ripley realizes what she has done but--for reasons never explained--still prefers to tell the inhabitants even while people are being killed. Most of the rest of the film is running and screaming through the ugly lead mine.

Fincher has filmed Alien 3 with a lot of superficial attempts at style. The foundry seems like one big dark and ugly basement. One or two scenes with odd camera angles, shooting up or down on characters, would be welcome. Fincher, perhaps used to short music videos, does not seem to know that eventually this becomes very tiresome. The plot takes a long time to advance and in the first half is short on action. Without sympathy for Ripley from previous films and some minor flashes of humanity from the prison doctor, the film is without sympathetic characters at all. The screenplay is by three people with two different conjunctions: it is by David Giller & Walter Hill and Larry Ferguson.

This is a film that I can recommend only to people into the "Alien" series as a series. (And since this is a third director with a third concept and a third style, this is much more loosely a series than it might be.) As a film it is no better than much of the low-budget productions that show up only on cable. I rate this one a -1.

Final Analysis

CAPSULE REVIEW: Psychiatrist finds himself involved with the sister of a patient and her gangster husband. Too much of the script follows well-traveled paths for the turns to be much of a surprise. Gere is acceptable as a psychiatrist, though the best acting comes from two smaller roles--a gangster and a detective. Rating: low +1.

There is a crime committed about a third of the way into this film. I turned to Evelyn and said, "Now tell me the plot of the rest of the film." To the credit of Final Analysis, it was only the plot of the next third of the film, but it was extremely predictable. By the final third of the film, interesting things are happening right up to but not including the again predictable climax. Not that Final Analysis is not a classy thriller, but far too much of the plot is like that of too many other films with very similar plot twists. Fans of classic thrillers, be warned.

Isaac Barr (Richard Gere) is a successful San Francisco psychiatrist often called upon to be an expert witness in legal proceedings. He makes what, having seen The Prince of Tides, we might call "the Lowenstein mistake," that is, he has the professional ethics not to get emotionally or sexually involved with his patients, but he is not so careful with their family members. He is intrigued by the strange dreams of his patient Diana Baylor (Uma Thurman), but is downright enchanted by Baylor's sister, Heather Evans (Kim Basinger). Heather is married to Jimmy Evans (Eric Roberts), a sadistic and rabid Greek gangster. Barr would like to rescue Heather from Jimmy the Greek. Then things start moving.

Contrary to some reviews, Gere is perfectly acceptable as a successful psychiatrist. He does not act like Judd Hirsch in Ordinary People, but his manner is not so absurd for a psychiatrist either. Basinger, on the other hand, is only a mediocrity as an actress--a dressed actress anyway. Perhaps the best acting is by Eric Roberts, whom can easily believe is meaner than a junkyard dog. Keith David does a great job as an angry police detective.

Some comments should be made about the opening credits. They are in the Saul Bass tradition of setting the tone for the whole film, not just throwing names on the screen. Screen credit go to Wayne Fitzgerald for the credit sequence. Director Phil Jones does a competent job with the flawed script. I rate it a low +1.

Memoirs of an Invisible Man

CAPSULE REVIEW: It is unusual to find a film of quality and style being released outside the summer fluff season. Generally pretty good special effects from ILM are the real star of this very lightweight

sci-fi (as opposed to science fiction) adventure. Rating: high 0.

Stories of people with the ability to make themselves invisible (and the power this gives them) go back to ancient Greece. Perseus had a cap of invisibility, Gyges made himself king with a ring of invisibility, H.G. Wells questioned just how powerful a totally transparent man could be in The Invisible Man. (Wells, incidentally, recognized that a totally invisible eye would not focus and hence would be blind. The serum in his novel leaves the lenses of the eye intact and Wells says, questionably, that his invisible man just has to take care that the lenses of his eyes are not seen.)

Early silent films would occasionally have people turn invisible, usually for comic visual effect. 1933 brought Universal's adaptation of Wells' novel and a whole series with it using the special effects of Arthur Edleson. Since then there have been only occasional films with invisible people. Mexico made a series of "Invisible Man" films; there have been two television series claiming to be based on Wells. Films like The Invisible Boy, The Amazing Transparent Man, and The Invisible Dr. Mabuse used the gimmick. The 1970s television series with David McCallum was an early application of bluescreen for the effect. The latest film version is Memoirs of an Invisible Man based on the novel by H.F. Saint and directed by John Carpenter.

Like most of the people Chevy Chase plays, Nick Holloway is in the wrong place at the wrong time. In Nick's case the wrong place is Magnescopics, a high tech research lab. The wrong time is when their fusion experiment goes awry. (Computer experts beware: you will not like the scene that shows how the experiment went wrong; Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea fans might like it, though.) Through some freak accident, large portions of the building are rendered invisible. So is Nick. What is the most pedestrian and predictable plot that could come out of this beginning? Yup! You got it. Sam Neill plays the villainous CIA operative who wants to get hold of Nick and use him as a weapon. Can one man with the power of invisibility outwit a CIA assassin who has a whole brigade of men in suits and sunglasses with guns? The suspense is terrible and the writing not much better. Of course, this is a part made for Chevy Chase since it involves a lot of falling down and knocking into things. One of the things he bumps into is Alice Munro (Daryl Hannah) who does not really take much of an active part in the story. She is there more to react and to give the audience some attractive to look at. They certainly don't have Chase to look at.

Industrial Light and Magic no doubt was anxious to see what their technology could add to Edelson's invention for the 1933 film. Edelson's approach was to put an actor in a black suit so that nothing

showed, then put visible pieces of clothing on the actor and film it against a black background. The negative would then be nearly transparent except for the visible clothing. Superimposing this on a scene of a room and then printing the result would give a look of empty clothing. Bluescreen--ILM's specialty--is a refinement of this process using video technology. ILM's imagination shows with some new invisibility effects, the nicest being a mask of facepaint visible from front and back.

The special effects are about the only thing to see this film for. Well, ..., perhaps there is a little original playing with the concept of invisibility, but not enough to make it worthwhile. I give this film a high 0.

Lawnmower Man

CAPSULE REVIEW: In Lawnmower Man, a mix of virtual reality and mind-expanding drugs turn a mentally retarded handyman into a psychic monster. The film borrows heavily from Altered States, Forbidden Planet, and Charly, and pays back in some nice computer graphics and an over-used revenge plot. Rating: +1.

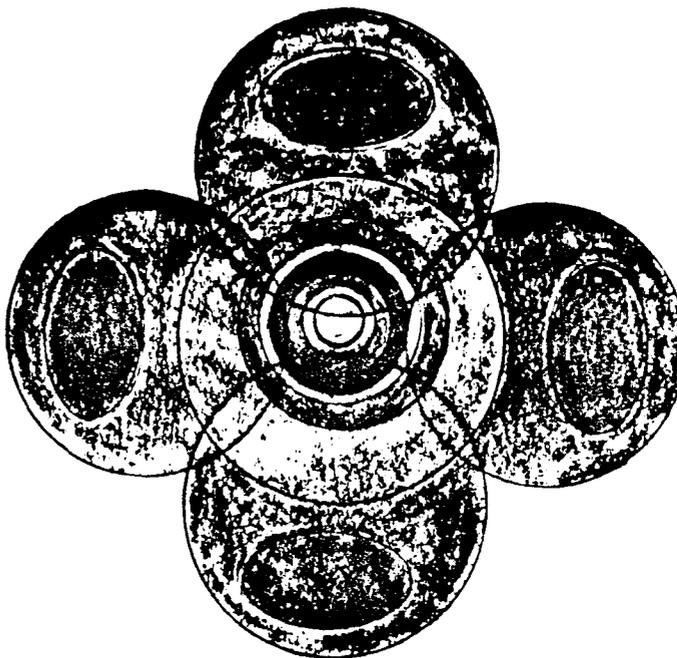
Dr. Lawrence Angelo (Pierce Brosnan) is one more Stephen Character being exploited by the evil government intelligence agency "The Shop". His experiments with drug-enhancing virtual reality not only make the effect more complete, it may actually be raising the intelligence of his chimpanzee subject. Unfortunately, the chimp does not want to find out. The ape picks the lock of his cage and is killed walking to freedom, zapping humans as he goes. Angelo continues with Jobe (Jeff Fahey), a mentally retarded lawn man.

In over-used King style (perhaps "pseudo-King", since King had little to do with the story in the film), Jobe lives in a world of people willing to torment him because he is so powerless. If only he had the intelligence and power to get back at his tormentors. But then the brain boost he is getting from the ultimate video game and psycho-active drugs starts giving him a super intellect as well as telekinetic powers. As Angelo's wife tells him early in the film, "It may be the future to you, Larry, but it's the same old shit to me." She obviously knows her Stephen King films. Other lines seem downright silly. "He learned Latin in two hours! It took me a year to learn the Latin alphabet." That may well be true, Larry, but I assume you were about four years old at the time.

If the plot is overly predictable--and believe me, it is--the computer graphics are spectacular. They may not always make sense. Jobe's new girlfriend sneaks into the lab to try the virtual reality equipment. While she appears to be the first woman who has been in the lab, the computer knows

how to visualize her virtual reality body as a female. The computer visuals make one wish this film had been shot in 3-D. Even shot flat, the visuals are quite a trip.

The screenplay is loosely based on the short story by Stephen King. (No, let me correct that: it is tightly based on a Stephen King story title. It has virtually nothing to do with King's story of a lawnman who worships the God Pan.) It was written by the director Brett Lawrence and the producer Gímel Everett. It is dedicated to the memory of the co-producer, the late Milton Subotsky. Those of you who are fans of British horror film will remember some classics, particularly anthology films such as The House That Dripped Blood, Asylum, Tales from the Crypt, and Beyond the Grave that were co-produced in the 1960s by Subotsky for his production company Amicus Films. His last film was typical for him: entertaining but not heavy on thought. I would rate Lawnmower Man a +1.



Tape & Book Reviews by Lan

Outnumbering the Dead

by Frederik Pohl

St. Martins Press/SFBC, 1990, \$?.??

In this short novel, Fred Pohl postulates a future in which death and aging have been virtually defeated. There are so many people living at the time of the story that they outnumber all the humans who have died by that time; thus the title. There are those rare people who are exceptions to the treatment for immortality, and this novel focuses on one of these: Raffiel, the actor.

Raffiel's plight is known, and the immortals idolize him. He plays roles with insight and vigor, knowing that his time is limited, and the treatments that he undergoes to extend his life a little longer than a human of the 20th century make him feel the hurt of knowing he must die all the more. Yet, he is the best, and he gives his all to his art as an actor is wont to do.

Fred Pohl paints an intriguing future and sensitively handles the role of Raffiel so the reader feels his frustrations, joys, and feelings.

Mars

by Ben Bova

Bantam/Spectra, 1992, \$20.00

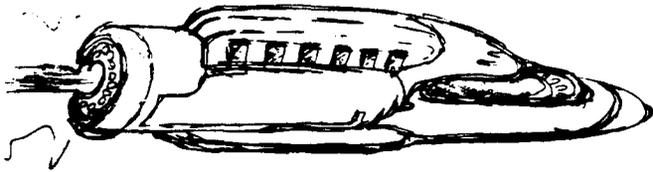
The Human race lands on the Red Planet. That's established in the second "chapter" of Ben Bova's Mars. Who are these people? How did they get there? What countries do they represent? Who paid for this

exploratory expedition? What do they expect to find? And what do these explorers actually discover? These are all valid questions, and Ben answers them all in the course of 502 pages.

Through flashbacks we find out how the world came together to finance this excursion to our only neighbor capable of producing life in a form recognizable to us. The rigorous training, and selection process which brought joy and sorrow to many applicants and their families, the motivations and feelings of the final group, the political and financial maneuverings that drove, pulled and stretched the trip into shape--all are described in detail, with insights into the characters and situations involved.

At the same time, the story moves forward on Mars: the work to establish the colony, the troubles they encounter, the problems with the explorations done by the people in the orbiting mothercraft, and the friction among the explorers--again described in detail and with attention paid to all the characters, including the Red Planet itself.

The focal character, however, is Jamie Waterman, an American, part Navaho Indian, carrying with him the dual--and often conflicting--backgrounds of science and legend. As a geologist, he knows that Mars is pretty much a dead world, but also knows under what conditions life might be possible. From his Navaho background he remembers a legend that Mars and Earth were once brothers, that each harbored life--and he dreams that he and his companions will find it. Jamie was not the first choice member of the crew, and that intricate situation is described well, along with all the political deal-



ings in the background. Jamie's interactions with his companions are realistically portrayed. They are not always pleasant because the six members of the landing party had already spent nine months travelling together with 19 other members of the team (who stayed on the mothership) to the Red Planet. Yet they must work together to survive, for Mars is an unforgiving world.

The detail is interesting and compelling, like a Michener novel. The panorama of Mars, the majesty of the world, its wonders and beautiful landscapes, as well as its dangers, are realistically described. Jamie and his companions are beset by life-threatening dangers for which a solution is sometimes obvious, but in some cases nearly impossible to avoid or resolve.

This book is definitely a Hugo contender for next year.

Prophet

by Mike Resnick
Tor, 1992, \$5.95

In this, the final book of the Oracle Trilogy, the Iceman finally comes to a final showdown with the young girl--now a woman--whom he had rescued years earlier. As in Oracle, he hires other bounty hunters to do some of the work in finding her, but ends up facing the woman who has been his nemesis, and in the long run, his reason for living.

The ultimate purpose for the Oracle's manipulation of events, people's lives, and planetary destruction is a valid one, though the reader does not find out until the final pages. Still, the reader is not cheated; all the facts were there, if you would put them together correctly. This novel is a fitting conclusion to the trilogy, and just as exciting to read, and satisfying to finish, as the others. Highly recommended.

Beachhead

by Jack Williamson
Tor, 1992, \$21.95

In his long lifespan as a science fiction and fantasy writer, Jack has visited many worlds. In Beachhead, his fertile imagination is coupled with the hard facts of science, and this marriage has produced a novel teeming with adventure and cold

reality. Mars is an unforgiving planet, but it can be coaxed into revealing its treasures.

Sam Houston "Hew" Kelligan is the son of a Texas businessman and millionaire, a seemingly reckless playboy who enjoys dangerous and death-defying sports. He is in love with Jayne Ryan, a woman who wants nothing to do with him or his money. Both are chosen for the eight-person team which is to establish a base on Mars. While the team prepares, the world loses interest and instead of the second ship being built--one that was to follow the first within months--its parts lay scattered on the moon.

Meanwhile, the Kelligan corporation becomes the sponsor for the Mars expedition, under the direct control of Marty Gorley, old man Kelligan's mistress' son. Through careful manipulation of media and news releases, Marty manages to blindside most everyone into believing that the Mars mission is a total success, and that the second ship is being readied. But the ship is not being worked on, and mutiny in the far colony has made life tough for the survivors. Hew has a wild idea of how to get help, something in keeping with his deathdefying nature. But will he succeed...and in time to save the lives of his colleagues?

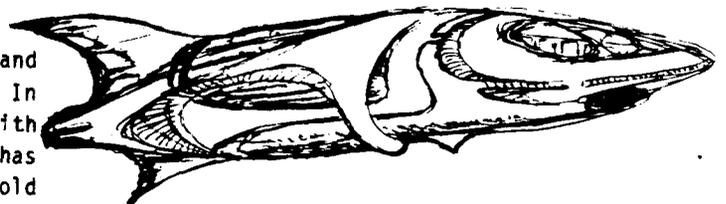
Williamson has shown he can keep up with the younger writers. Experience and optimism flow through the pages as he leads the reader in the first expedition to Mars.

Worlds Enough and Time

by Joe Haldeman
Morrow, 1992, \$21.00

I was a little apprehensive about reading this novel because it had been several years since I read the second book of the Worlds Trilogy (Worlds Apart), and more since I read the first book (Worlds). But I needn't have worried; Joe is an author who knows how to write, and like others who have stand-alone novels in their series (Joan D. Vinge, Lois McMaster Bujold, Mike Resnick), there is no need to reread the others to understand this one. The background is given as needed, and remembering the other novels gives depth to the situations; everything sufficient for understanding the conclusion to the Trilogy is in this book.

Maureen O'Hara leaves on the ship to establish a colony on a planet around Epsilon Eridani. She is one of the executives in charge of the mission, but



not the "top dog". As one of the executives, she has a computer model made of her personality, and part of the story is told from the point of view of O'Hara Prime. Through a series of incidents and commentaries, the story of the trip and the near-disasters unfold. Since the story is told basically from one point of view, though the computer model O'Hara Prime has a better overview of the situation, the reader gets a one-sided look at the entire operation. Still, O'Hara Prime manages to keep things in perspective because of the access it has to other information.

As for the story itself, Haldeman manages to keep things moving, piling disaster upon near disaster until the ship reaches Epsilon Eridani more-or-less intact, make planet-fall, establish the colony, and encounter some nasty native lifeforms, which are more than they seem.

Overall, I highly recommend this book, and will be considering it for a Hugo nomination in '93.

Will the Last Person to Leave the Planet
Please Shut Off the Sun?

by Mike Resnick
Tor, 1992, \$19.95

This is the latest collection of Mike Resnick's short stories, and one that should be on the shelf of all Resnick fans. It contains many of the stories from other collections, but has uniquely included some of the stories not published in the SF magazines. "Blue" and "The Last Dog" appeared in Hunting Dogs Magazine, "Was It Good For You?" was published in Pulsar!, and "His Award Winning Science Fiction Story" is known to long-time readers of Lan's Lantern where it first appeared.

The introductions to each of the stories are as interesting to read as the stories themselves, though each story does have an underlying theme, which follows a pattern that Mike had set down for himself when he started writing serious (and fun) SF a decade and a half ago. There is a moral parable to each of these pieces. Some are easier to pick out than others, but each story has layers to fit into which the reader can delve if s/he wishes. Even the fun ones can have a serious undertone when the readers digs into it. But whether you do this or not, the stories themselves are all interesting and deserve attention.

As always, I look forward to more work from this man.

Mining the Oort

by Frederick Pohl
DelRey, 1992, \$19.00

This is a book about terraforming Mars, though

not much of the action takes place on the Red Planet. The story involves the coming-of-age of Dekker De Woe who is a Martian (born in a human colony on Mars), and who wants to be like his father and mine the oort cloud, send ice and nitrogen-rich comets and asteroids into the inner system and dump them on his planet. The project is to terra-form Mars and make it a food-producing planet to feed the hungry stomachs on Earth.

Bolden, Dekker's father had been injured while working in the oort cloud, and retired, not on Mars, but on Earth. Dekker knew little about him, but Bolden pulled strings, and dipped into savings in order to bring his son to Earth where he could study, go to the Academy, and become involved with the oort project. The majority of the book deals with Dekker maturing, finding out that life isn't always fair, counter-clashing his culture with several different ones on Earth, and painfully adjusting to the increase of gravity.

Dekker unknowingly becomes involved with a sinister plot to free Mars from Earth domination, and it is his own convictions and beliefs, which had been built up through the story, that convinces him to do and act on what he thinks is right.

I was not as enthralled with the books as some others of Fred's, but it was one that I wanted to finish. The writing is good, as always, and the hints he kept throwing out about something that Dekker didn't quite get, made the plot move more quickly. But the grand sweep of Mars that I had read in Williamson's and Bova's novels wasn't there, and so that for me was a disappointment.

Still I highly recommend this book.

Virgil Finlay's Women of the Ages

by Virgil Finlay
Underwood/Willer, 1992, \$24.95

This is a superb collection of the artwork of one of science fiction and fantasy's early illustrators. Finlay's line drawings, his various methods of shading, and effective use of shadow--in short, his style--lent itself well to the black and white medium of the magazines of the day. His work pointed the way for many of the artists who work in the field today.

This collection of Finlay's art concentrates on the female. It is a feast for the eyes--whether you are male or female--to see the various renditions of the female face, the form and grace of a woman's body, and the clever techniques used to conceal the nipples and/or vaginal region which were necessary for the standard of the 30s, 40s and 50s. For those interested in SF & Fantasy art, or who just want to appreciate the master doing what he does best, this is a "must have" collection.



The Fantasy Art Techniques of Tim Hildebrandt

by Jack E. Norton

Paper Tiger/SFBC, 1992 (1991), \$??.??

This is another book which is a feast for the eyes. Jack Norton writes a brief biography of Tim Hildebrandt, which includes his brother Greg at the beginning of their careers. The thrust of the book, however, is Tim's art. There are lots of paintings and sketches, and a commentary about Tim's style and his methods of composition for his work. Hildebrandt offers some good insights into his art which would benefit both the amateur and professional alike. For those who appreciate artwork, Tim's comments add a greater understanding to his pieces.

Highly recommended.

Labyrinth of Night

by Allen Steele

Ace, 1992, \$4.99

Allen Steele throws his hat into the ring for the Mars novel of 1992 with his novel Labyrinth of Night. In this story the "Face of Mars" is the jumping-off point. Steele assumes that the Face exists, and the pyramids around it are the remnants of a star-faring civilization which had tried to colonize the planet. Inside is a labyrinth which tests for intelligence (for which failure is death for the attemptee). And various factions on Earth are anxious to find the end of the labyrinth, the prize which, they hope, will advance our civilization to the stars.

One particular faction is worried about the possible use of nuclear weapons on Mars, and they send August Nash to find out what is going on, and the complications he finds make for intriguing reading. The scientists unravelling the mysteries

of the labyrinth are being pushed to recklessness by L'Enfant, a power-mad military man. Meanwhile, the nanotechnological machines left behind have their own plan as to what they want done--what they had been programmed to do.

Allen Steele puts in a lot of gritty realism about living on the red planet, the dangers and delights, woven expertly into the tapestry of the story. It is a good solid story with action and romance, fights and torture, and enough science to keep this hard-SF lover pleased.

Secret Friend

by Sharon Porath

Zebra, 1992, \$4.50

Carrie Sutton and her teenage daughter Lee Ann thought they had recovered from the death their husband/father. They bought a house, Carrie got a part time secretarial job, and Lee Ann made close friends with their neighbors. But the house they bought seemed to be haunted--maybe by the former owner--but there seemed to be something which enjoyed watching Lee Ann undress, watching her young developing body, something which eventually took form and shape in Lee Ann's room and seduced her. Lee Ann thought it was her father; Carrie didn't know, but, worried about the changes occurring in her daughter asks for help from the school counselor, from her neighbor friends, the Burnetts. Together they work to find out if it is a true haunting, or something else.

The writing is very good and descriptive. One feels comfortable in the house where normal things occur. Sharon has lots of passages of cooking and preparing meals, having snacks, interactions with the neighbors. At first I was a little annoyed, but soon realized these played an important contrast to the chilling events that happened to Lee Ann and her mother. Sharon has described the feelings of the teenagers very accurately, and the conflict between mother and daughter as each tries out a new relationship, as well as wrestling with the "thing" that visits Lee Ann regularly.

I am usually hesitant to read and review a first novel by a friend, so I approached this one carefully. I needn't have worried. Sharon has written a suspenseful, interesting novel (which takes a nice twist about halfway through). I look forward to her next one.

The Unpublished Gunn, Part I

by James E. Gunn

Chris Drumm Books #40, 1992, \$4.00

(PO Box 445, Polk City, IA 50226)

There are four short stories included in this

collection of works that have previously been unpublished. Since 1948, James Gunn has been writing very good fiction--some of it radio scripts, some plays, some SF. Many have seen print, and many are among the best that I have read. Jim writes too little, but his work is always interesting, always thoughtful.

The four stories here--"Sane Asylum", "Judgement Day", "Broken Record", and "The Black Marble"--have central ideas and thought-provoking topics which probably should have seen print before now. That they took so long to be published is a mystery. Send for a copy and see what I mean. I am looking forward to the next selection of stories.

A Cordwainer Smith Checklist

Compiled by Mike Bennett
Chris Drumm Booklet #37, 1991, \$3.00

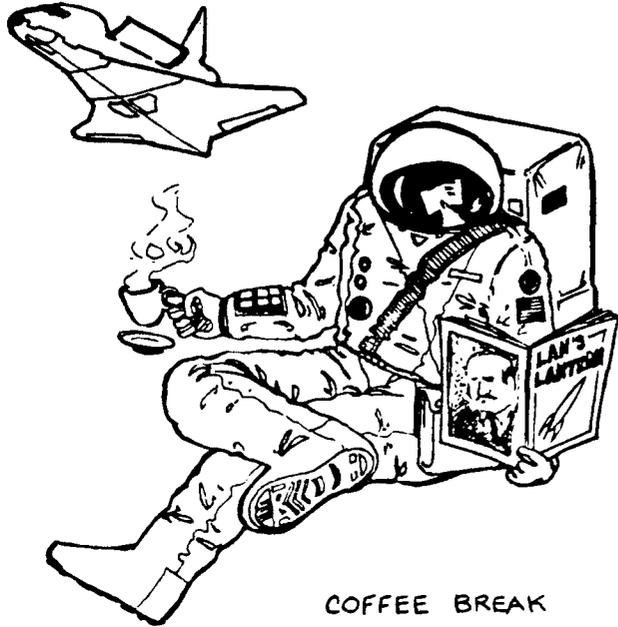
There are a lot of Cordwainer Smith fans in fandom, and this is the kind of thing that such fans do for the love of an author. This tribute compiles the novel and thirty-one stories that Paul Myron Anthony Linebarger, writing under the name of Cordwainer Smith, left in his less-than-a-decade foray into science fiction writing. It includes a lot of material written under Linebarger's own name, as well as his pen name. The entries are cross-referenced to collections and anthologies, complete as far as Bennett had been able to determine by publication date. I suspect there will be updates later, but for now, this is the definitive checklist for all Cordwainer Smith fans.

The Pixilated Peeress

by L. Sprague deCamp & Catherine Crook deCamp
DelRey, 1991, \$17.00

The various fantasy adventures that Sprague writes are lots of fun to read. With Catherine as co-author, they have a certain polish and realism for the female characters that seem to be lacking in the solo-authored books--at least until recently. Even at his advanced age of 85, Sprague is still learning how to write better and better.

Finding the beautiful Countess Yvette who was fleeing the men of Duke Gondomar who had overrun her country was only the beginning of troubles for Sergeant Thorolf. He tries to help Yvette, but only gets into more trouble and deep into intrigue of politics he wants no part in, and magic spells gone awry, and trolls, and life-threatening situations, and--well, you get the idea. The book is an interesting and fun romp through various fantasy, and in some cases realistic, adventures. Good, fast-paced reading.



COFFEE BREAK

De W. S. Mayhew

The Dream is Alive!

by Joe Ellis

TesserAct Studios, 1992, \$12.00 (+\$1.50 S&H)
(PO Box 18577, Fairfield, OH 45018)

When Joe mentioned his next project after his first tape, The Synthetic Filker (\$11.00 from TesserAct Studios, +\$1.50 S&H--one charge S&H for both tapes), I was dubious if he could pull it off. A song for each of the five shuttles? I thought they would be rather rather repetitious. And a symphonic suite in four movements? That would be tough to listen to. Boy, was I surprised.

The first side of this 60 minute tape does indeed contain a song for each of the shuttles Joe characterizes each by name, what the name conjures up, and the significant mission with which the shuttle is associated. "Enterprise" was the first, but it was the only one not to enter space. "Columbia's Children" makes reference to exploration and the River. "The Challenge of Space" replays the haunting story of the Challenger disaster, a fitting tribute to the seven who died. "The Dawn of Discovery" speaks of the return to space after the Challenger disaster. In "Atlantis Rising" the ship is characterized by the origins of its name: "What once cold water had destroyed/In scalding steam's now born...." With "Endeavor: Dreamlifter", "The youngest of five sisters....Carry us up where the dreamers fly free...", the hope and enthusiasm of the newest shuttle comes through.

Amazingly, the music fits each of the shuttles. The words are carefully chosen, and Joe sings all the songs. The melodies are haunting, and I found myself replaying the tape to hear them again.

Also on the first side are three other cuts which are about the space program. "On the Middeck" talks about the astronauts waiting for blast-off--a rather boring time, really--portrayed effectively by the repetitious music and short phrases used in the song. One feels the awe and majesty, the freedom in space in "No Strings Attached". The song was inspired by the first free-floating maneuvers in space. And "Vision of Tomorrow" (written by the 1984-85 third grade class of Huber Heights middle school, the winner of a songwriting contest sponsored by Jim Rowley, a finalist in the "Teacher in Space" contest offered by NASA--the only song on the tape NOT written by Joe) gives an optimistic view of the future--inspired by the space program.

Side two is an instrumental suite in four movements called "The Dream Is Alive," with all the instrumental (and other) parts played by Joe on his synthesizer. The first movement, "Dawn, Pad 39-A" opens with birds chirping and sunrise. The theme is stately and is carried by a variety of instruments with slight variations.

The second movement, "Countdown, KSC Control", sound rather comical, reminding me of a carnival or circus. Thinking about this, the "show" put on for the media takes on that sort of appearance in Mission Control, though there is an underlying sense of seriousness--portrayed by the steady beat of the clock. The theme itself is a variation on part of the first theme, but is definitely unique for the movement.

"Orbit," the third movement gives one a sense of serenity and peace. It is what I call "the Bolero movement", where the theme is passed around from one instrument to another, showcasing each instrument. One can also trace this theme back to the first movement, giving a unity to these three parts of the suite.

The final movement, "Re-entry and Landing, Edwards AFB," starts with strong chords and a gradual swelling in volume as the shuttle breaks orbit and begins its descent. About halfway through, the themes from the first three movements are brought in one at a time, pass through variations, and finally all are brought together into a climactic landing.

Joe did a marvelous job of putting this suite together. It took me several listenings to hear what he did, and I enjoyed every minute of it. And I still continue to listen to the entire tape. I recommend this highly to all, especially if you have any interest in the Space Program.



The Spirit Ring

by Lois McMaster Bujold

Baen, 1992, \$17.00

This multi-winner of the Nebula and Hugo Awards now turns her writing skills from SF to fantasy, and comes up with her first hard-cover released in The Spirit Ring. Fiametta is a good teen-age daughter of a Mage whose work in metal and the supernatural arts is well-known. Master Beneforte works well within the Catholic Church laws--most of the time, but occasionally he has dealt with the darker arts, if only for research and a measure of knowledge so to prevent being caught off-guard. Still, Beneforte and Fiametta are present when Lord Ferrente kills Duke Sandrino and forcibly takes the province of Montefoglia with the aid of a spirit ring--an unburied dead spirit slaved by an evil spell to a ring in his possession. Beneforte battles the enslaved spirit successfully, but dies from exertion during their escape and attempting to thwart Ferrente's thieving soldiers.

Meanwhile, the leader of the Duke's guards, Uri Ochs, is killed and between his and Beneforte's unburied bodies, Ferrente plans to produce another spirit ring which will make him more powerful. Uri's brother, however, comes to Montefoglia to be an apprentice to Beneforte, and gets wrapped up with the troubles of the province, Fiametta, and in finding out what has happened to his brother. Can he save the spirits of both Uri and Beneforte from being enslaved? His brawn and brains will help, but Fiametta must also lend her aid--as an apprentice mage, and as his beloved.

Lois weaves a wonderful tale of magic and realism into this novel. As she does in her SF novels, Lois uses a measure of humor, realistic and practical situations, and interweaving plots and characters to fabricate a wonderful tale of alternate history and fantasy. Highly recommended. If you've enjoyed her other novels, this one won't disappoint you.

Sheila Lake and the Universal Explorers:

The Planet of Glass

by Victor Edward Swanson

The Hologlobe Press, 1992, \$??.??

(To order, send SASE to The Hologlobe Press, PO Box 5455, Dearborn MI 48128-5455 for order form)

Sheila Lake is a member of the Universal Explorers team which span hundreds of planets across the galaxy. The team uses something called a "tuned-portal" which creates "gray space" through which the Explorers can move instantaneously from one point to another, carrying with them their personal gray-space through which they can return to their

starting point. After roughly three days, their personal gray-space dissipates, and unless they have returned to their departure point, they will be stranded. Tuned-portals renew this space continuously. There are other methods of transportation among the planet--regular spaceships and moltraport beaming which the general populations can use, but knowledge and use of the tuned-portals is limited to the Explorers.

This is background for this adventure of Earth-woman Sheila Lake who is a State Trooper in her normal life, and Universal Explorer in her off-hours. Someone, possibly a traitor, has stolen the secret of the tuned-portals, killed an Explorer, and is using this method of transport to enact other crimes. The basic story is good, involving many plot turns and complications. The problem is the execution of the story.

Swanson has a good flair for description, but violates the main directive of story-telling, which must be followed for an action story: show, don't tell. There are pages of descriptions of how things work, of details in operating various mechanical devices, of conversations which I think are meant to enhance character development but which only slow down the story. The author needs a good editor to tighten up a lot of scenes; long explanations of some operations (like how the tuned-portals work) could be imbedded in conversation, as opposed to direct lecture to the reader. Some brief explanations should be unnecessary (like the difference between an Earth year, and another planet's year). The long conversations between a ship pilot and "control" for take-off really slow down the reader. After a while I switched to my fast-mode reading to get past such spots, and found quick scene changes not marked by breaks in the text (much like Connie Willis does--not putting in a blank line for scene changes).

If aimed at a Young Adult audience, this novel might work, but the slow spots would deter a YA reader. If aimed at the adult SF reader, the slow spots and the overt explanations could be seen as an insult to the readers' intelligence. Given that Sheila Lake has implied intimacy with her boyfriend Richard Hart, I think the audience is the adult group, which would probably be harsher in their judgement of this novel than I am.

The basic story, the background, the straightforward action scenes, are done very well. The confrontation with the rebel forces had me turning the pages quickly (I stayed up till 1:30 AM to finish the last 100 pages). More books are planned using Sheila Lake; I hope that Victor Swanson finds a good editor (to whom he will listen) who can help him cut away and/or modify unnecessary material.

Dreamships

by Melissa Scott
Tor/SFBC, 1992, \$???.??

In the far future, there are ships that span interstellar distances using pilots to control the faster-than-light speeds. These pilots use a direct contact through computers in a virtual reality setting to work through the complexities of ftl. The most sophisticated of these computers border on artificial intelligence, and in Dreamships, this is a major movement called Dreampeace, which is working to determine if AI exists, and fighting for machine /AI rights.

The world of Persephone is set up by Scott to reflect gritty realism of a colony world with a hostile surface environment. The underground community is realistically portrayed from the elite levels to the scummy lowest tunnels. Reverdy Jian is a pilot hired to take a powerful woman named Mitexi to the planet Refuge to find her lost brother, who founded the movement Dreampeace, and created the program, Manfred, which Jian uses to traverse ftl space. Manfred is so well-designed that it could be artificially-created intelligence. Only Mitexi's brother Venya holds the secret--but he is insane, and creates more problems on the trip back to Persephone. And Jian, originally opposed to the Dreampeace movement, begins to waver after working with Manfred.

Scott spend time setting up a lot of background before the kernel of the story gets going, but all is necessary for the events that happen in the last half of the novel. I have not followed Melissa's work as I had hoped to since she won the Campbell Award in 1986 (the year I won my first Hugo), but I read good things about this novel which prompted me to read it. I wasn't disappointed. I'd like to say I will read her earlier books, but I can't promise it; I've too much on my "to be read" shelf already. But I will keep her work in mind.

Son of Monolith

by Michael C. Goodwin
Intergalactic Press, 1991, \$4.95
(PO Box 1516, Longwood, FL 32752)

A few years ago Mike wrote/drew cartoons based on the Star Trek universe, with a few other interstellar creatures thrown in. His first published book, Who Was That Monolith I Saw You With? attained a certain measure of success in and out of the fannish community. Mike's son Robert reached the age he could read, fell in love with his father's first book, and cajoled him into writing and drawing more. This is the sequel that Robert wanted.

With the cast of characters of Good Guys, Bad

Guys, UFO, Space Monster, Asteroids, and the Monolith, Mike pens some very funny cartoons and tongue-in-cheek situations for all involved. I laughed, or at least chuckled, at each one. This is a nice collection of humorous cartoons, well worth the price.

Dream Protocols

by Lee Ballantine

Collages by Richard Kadrey

Talisman, 1992, \$9.95 tp, \$40.00 hb Limited Ed.

(Box 321, Beech Grove, IN 46107)

(Also available from Chris Drumm Books)

(PO Box 445, Polk City, IA 50226)

Blood Routines

by Joel Ward

Illustrations by Mark McGinn

Chris Drumm Booklet #41, 1992, \$3.50

(PO Box 445, Polk City, IA 50226)

Sorceries and Sorrows (Early Poems)

by Jessica Amanda Salmonson

Chris Drumm Booklet #42, 1992, \$3.75

(PO Box 445, Polk City, IA 50226)

Books of poetry are very difficult to review, since most of what is written nowadays is intensely personal, and very little follows classical forms. In general, however, poetry falls into two major categories: one which is so personal and esoteric than a reader has little to focus or latch onto while reading it; or one which there is some focus and the reader can, with a little concentration, elicit some meaning for him/herself.

Blood Routines follows this first category. I could find very little in the poetical writings into which I could hook my experiences, so the book failed for me. Sorceries and Sorrows was much better. Salmonson used some conventional forms as well as topics which held common experiences. That made her poems much more "enjoyable", or at least understandable. There is a lot of pain in the writing, which I hope was very cathartic for her.

Dream Protocols seemed almost a cross between the two. Many of the poems seemed on the verge of comprehensibility, but too many times didn't have enough of an anchor to common experience for me to understand the thrust of the meaning. Occasionally a passage would evoke emotion and images from my own past and present, but there wasn't enough of that for me to enjoy the poems completely.

I can only judge these books from personal reactions, and Jessica's seems to be the best of the three. An added bonus with her booklet is that

there is a bibliography of her fiction and non-fiction writing on the second side (printed Ace-Double style). Her poetry would be, in my opinion, more accessible than the other two.

Purgatory

by Mike Resnick

Tor, 1993, \$19.95

Mike once again chronicles the gradual destruction of a planet to parallel the decline of an African country--this time Zimbabwe.

Man came to Karimou to hunt. One particular man, a female named Violet Gardener, came to develop the planet, and several in the sector of space nearby, for her own profit. She left behind a planet settled by Men, ruled by Men, but independent of the Federation of Man. The reptilian natives worked hard to gain their independence, but after doing so, made the mistake that so many of the races who were in their position made: they forced Men to leave before they themselves learned how to care for and repair the machinery on which they were dependent. Thus the downfall became inevitable.

The allegory is quite clear, but not enough people trust themselves to follow what history has taught them. Too many remain ignorant of the consequences of what they do, and think only of what will satisfy them in the immediate future, if not today. There is a lesson for all of us to learn here.

Fruits & Nuts in Symbolism & Celebration

by Mary Reed

Resource Publications, Inc., 1992, \$21.95

(160 E. Virginia St. #290, San Jose, CA 95112-5876)

This book is a fascinating look into the history and symbolism that accompany the various common fruits and nuts that we eat. Mary Reed (formerly Mary Long) is a fan who has done an enormous amount of research in preparation for this book. Some of the work went into writing articles for Festival magazine, and were incorporated into this book.

The book is arranged by fruits and nuts alphabetically, with references to their origins and ethnic uses in history and celebratory festivals. Included are appendices which give lists of fruits and nuts associated with days of the week, months, feast days and holidays, and other assorted bits of information and trivia. Although a tad expensive, this is a source book which is available nowhere else. SCA people and fans of trivia, or the origins of things, would find this fascinating.

Delusions of Grandeur

by Graham Leathers

Dodeka Records Ltd., 1992, \$11.00

(848 Dodge Ave., Suite 220, Evanston, IL 60202)

I met Graham for the first time at CHAMBANACON in 1992, and the following CONFUSION I saw his tape. There was no choice; I picked it up immediately, and have been enjoying it ever since. Yes, there are some problems, but the overall feel and audibility of his music and voice is positive. He sings clearly, you can understand the lyrics, the instrumentation doesn't overpower the vocals, and the songs themselves are true filk. On the negative side, Graham has a little trouble sustaining notes, and singing in the higher registers, yet who but a handful of the best filkers doesn't have such trouble. There is also a problem of placement--the first two songs sound quite similar--but that is an engineering problem. The impression I get from the tape, and from talking to him at the convention, is that he loves music and he is enthusiastic enough about singing and entertaining people with his songs that it is very easy to forgive my minor concerns. This one is well worth the money.

Ol' Yellow Eyes Is Back

by Brent Spiner

Bay Cities, 1992, \$9.95

Brent Spiner, who plays Data on Star Trek: The Next Generation, has had a varied background which includes singing roles on Broadway. On this tape he has compiled a variety of songs, many of them old "standards" from Broadway and film, which show his vocal versatility. Although his voice has a little too much tremolo for my taste, I quickly grew to like the tape enough to give it as a present to others. Spiner adapts his voice, tone and modulation to augment the lyrics of each song. He also enunciates and phrases the lyrics in such a way as to make sense out of them. The Mills Brothers' ver-

sion of "Carolina in the Morning" now makes much more sense. And in one Ink Spots number, "It's a Sin to Tell a Lie", he is backed by the Sunspots--LaVar Burton, Michael Dorn, Jonathan Frakes and Patrick Stewart, complete with a voice-over by Stewart.

Just by listening one can tell that Spiner had a lot of fun making this tape. His buddies from ST: TNG also had a good time helping him out. I highly recommend this--if you can find it. I had trouble locating a copy in February, though I have seen it at dealers' tables in convention hucksters' rooms.

Bedlam Cats

by Cynthia McQuillin & Friends

Unlikely Publications, 1992, \$11.00

(PO Box 8542, Berkeley, CA 94707-8542)

This is a tape for cat-lovers. Cynthia invited a number of filkers to submit different songs about cats for the album, and wrote a few herself. The styles vary widely from closely operatic to rap, and the topics, of course, vary just as widely. Some of the songs are fun, some serious, but I think the prettiest and most poignant on the tape is "Cats in the Dawn" by Heather Rose Jones, sung by Sharon Williams.

I think that interest for the tape may be summarized in one quick anecdote. As Cynthia was leaving the studio with her box of tapes, one of the engineers who worked on the project came running out waving some money. Even after hearing the recording sessions, he wanted a final copy for himself.

Cynthia has mentioned maybe doing another tape about cats. If you are interested, submit songs to her. I'm sure she would be interested.

Circles in the Grain

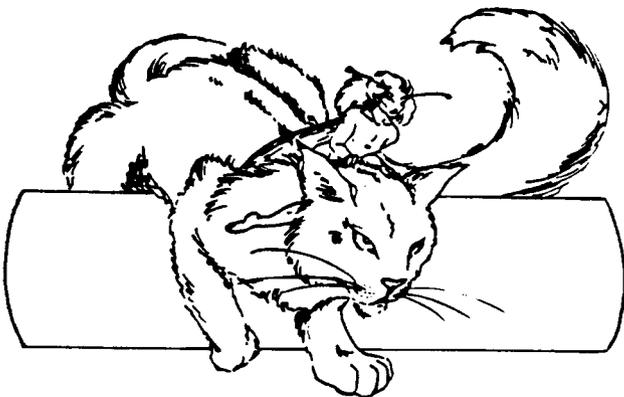
by Dandelion Wine

Dodeka Records, Ltd., 1992, \$11.00

(848 Dodge Ave, Suite 220, Evanston IL 60202)

Dandelion Wine is a group formed by Dave Clement and his friends in Winnipeg. Although one would expect Dave to sing the leads in all the songs, he doesn't. All members of the group, Dave, John, Tom and Cheryl sing lead, and the others give support with their voices and instruments. And the vocal support is exquisite. The harmonies blend very well and the instrumentation doesn't overpower them.

The songs are a mixture of filk, folk and popular music. Whether singing "From a Distance" or "This Island Earth" or "Green Hills of Harmony" or "Drink up the River", the wonderful blend of voices and instruments remains. This is a tape well worth the \$11.00 investment.



More Tape & Book Reviews

Eight Skilled Gentlemen

by Barry Hughart
Doubleday/Foundation, 1991, \$10.95

A book review by Don Wenzel

This is the third book detailing the adventures of the sleuthing team of Master Li and his loyal servant Number Ten Ox. Set in a sixth century China where bits of magic "from the old days" still exist, this book was an excellent read--m'nd candy of the finest quality.

Vividly drawn and peppered with intriguing characters, Hughart makes excellent use of the time and setting to steep the story in his version of sixth century China; alive and vibrant, rich in lore and history.

The book is narrated by Number Ten Ox with a quiet, yet sly wit. The writing throughout is very good and does an excellent job of evoking a sense of the Orient for the reader.

In case you haven't figured it out by now, I heartily recommend this book. I plan to find the others and read them when I get a chance.

Hook

Movie adaptation by Terry Brooks
Fawcett Columbine, 1991, \$15.00

A book review by Don Wenzel

My opinions of a novelization depends somewhat on which I've done first: seen the movie or read the book. If I read the book first, the movie suffers from a suspense point (obviously) but otherwise my vision and the movie's tends to be different enough to make it interesting to watch. In most cases where I've seen the movie first, reading the book afterwards is more a chore than anything else. That's the order in which I "did" Hook and unfortunately, that's pretty much how I felt about it.

Novelizations, by definition, tend to stay very close to the film. Hook is no exception. There were only a couple places I noticed with any significant difference. To the author's credit, I thought both were improvements. The first was the subversion of Peter's son by Hook. The book spends more time with this, giving a better justification for its brief success. The second was the scene in which Peter relearns how to fly. I recall the movie version being a bit pat and feel the book does a better job of pulling this off in a dramatic fashion.

One other positive note is the author's style. Not having read anything else by Terry Brooks, I

can't compare this to his usual style, but his tone and use of description lend themselves well to giving the book the same feel as the movie--that's a plus.

In general, there is nothing new or exciting or particularly clever about the novelization. It is difficult to say how it would read on its own, but I would imagine it would come out as shallow. It relies on the movie's images for its heart.

So, if you've seen the movie, you won't be missing anything by skipping Hook.

The Dream Is Alive!

by Joe Ellis
TesserAct Studios, 1992, \$12.00
(PO Box 18577, Fairfield, OH 45018)

A music review by Bill Breuer

Joe Ellis has a hit on his hands! Most fen know Joe and Terry from Filks and Cons everywhere. They have a low-key profile but they're usually surrounded by others who are attracted to their positive energy and wit. Joe has done many things in the past, but this time he has tackled a fantastic project.

Since I do not go to many filking events, I reserve the vocal portion to the reader/listener. But I am a fan of contemporary "New Age" sounding work, and side two is that and more. Joe has successfully embodied the human feelings, the power of technology, and the inspiration of the space frontier into this album.

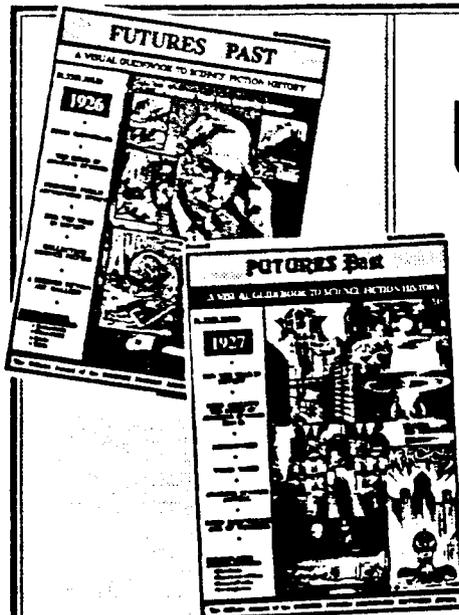
First Movement: Dawn, Pad 39-A starts off with an Earth based, environmental/nature touch, then leads you away from the sea and marshes to the impending feeling of a superimposed orbiter poised ready to travel toward humankind's destiny.

Second Movement: Countdown. This captures the feeling of the launch team/mission control from the eyes of someone sitting in the room. It swells with increasing complexity, a circus if you will; more machines coming on-line, increasing human and electronic activity, an awakening of the engines and lift-off.

Third Movement: Orbit is a mixture of feelings while spacewalking: human and machine, the enormity of the event.

Fourth Movement: Re-entry & Landing. The orbiter leaves space and returns. Inspired by passes over the crowds, the double sonic booms and a triumphant mission, Joe musically celebrates the orbiter's landing at Edward's AFB again with a haunting melody that gives you the same feeling of awe and inspiration that occurred at dawn before lift-off.

Joe's work is complex, yet interpretive. The synthesized sounds are well chosen and carefully placed. The listener gets lost with this work and carried away with the launch. Joe Ellis' instrumental stands squarely with many of the other similar composers: Demby, Stearns, and Serrife. I have placed his tape with my "Hearts of Space" collections. It should be marketed in museums and space centers. I would love to hear this on CD.



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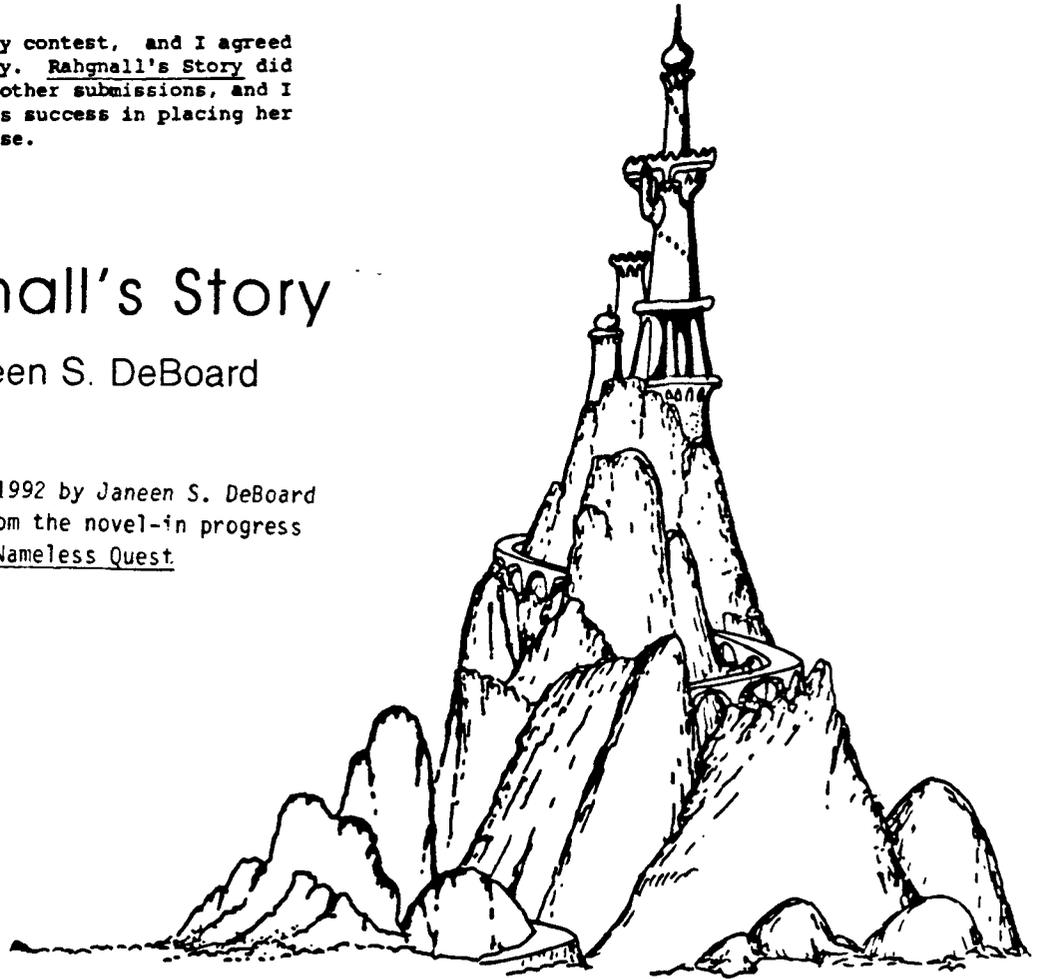
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CONTEXT V had a short story contest, and I agreed to publish the winning story. Ragnall's Story did indeed stand out above the other submissions, and I hope that Janeen DeBoard has success in placing her novel with a publishing house.

Ragnall's Story

by Janeen S. DeBoard

Copyright (c) 1992 by Janeen S. DeBoard
An excerpt from the novel-in progress
The Nameless Quest.



King Myles sat in his high-backed chair in a corner of the darkened chamber, watching the faces of his knights by the light of the half-melted candles scattered along the table. Their voices low and urgent, the men conversed and argued among themselves while their King listened.

"She'll recover, the surgeons say--"

"Ragnall broke her arm, nearly broke her skull."

"He was off his head, didn't realize--"

"Didn't realize? How could he not?"

"He's too fine a fighter to be held for one lapse--"

"That lapse could have cost us another fighter."

"Nearly did."

Myles stood up. "Knights of Silros--attend." The room fell silent as they all turned to face him.

"One of our ridders has struck down, without provocation and in a fit of anger, one of his own comrades-in-arms. The tourney field has no room for emotions. Nor does the battlefield. A fighter so easily enraged is a fighter without control.

"Worthless."

The silence hung heavy. No one moved. Finally Myles looked over the heads of his knights, and spoke to the herald by the door. "Send him in."

The heavy door swung open and Ragnall appeared in the torchlight of the hallway, head down, his

blood-red cloak wrapped close about him. He walked slowly into the room, glancing at the knights with sullen black eyes, and stopped in front of the King's chair. Here he stood quietly, studying the worn old stones of the floor.

"Ragnall of Silros, meet my eyes."

Ragnall's face paled, and he finally looked up at the King. So, you are not so hard and fearless as you would like us to think.

Myles glared down at his riddire, his only heir to the throne of his country, his adopted son. "All in this room are agreed: you have failed your Knight and your King. In rage you struck down one of your own. And one of your own she was, no matter how you may disdain any woman who takes up the sword or how she herself may have spurned your advances."

Ragnall shook with anger and embarrassment. How could he have known --

"Now none can trust you, none dare lead you, none dare follow you. The things you need to learn we cannot teach. You must find them on your own if you are ever to find them at all. Because of this, Ragnall of Silros, you are from this moment given the Nameless Quest."

Ragnall closed his eyes.

"You will not be told the thing you seek, for you are the only one who knows. Take your horse and

go from us, even now under cover of the night, and do not return until you have found what it is you need most in all the world."

Ragnall stood shaken, his face white, his eyes staring straight ahead. Myles looked at him, started to order him from the room, and found that he could not. After a moment he whispered one word, that only the boy could hear.

"Go."

Ragnall turned as the heavy door opened. He swept out of the room, his red cloak disappearing into the glares of the torches.

* * *

In the stillness of a late winter evening, Ragnall walked in silence through the dense forest of Comgal. The trapping had been fair this week; he'd found a dozen fat white rabbits and three ermine in his snares, and tomorrow he would go into the town of Malartaim to see what the furs would bring in trade.

There was a soft nicker as he stepped into the clearing. Capalqua stood watching him, ears up, still safely tied where Ragnall had left him this morning. But the tall grey stallion had broken the strings of the hay-net, spilling the last of the hay onto the ground and trampling it into the muddy snow, and though the large wooden bucket still hung from the tree the water in it was frozen solid.

Ragnall took down the broken net and felt the horse nip gently at his shoulder. He pushed Capalqua away and went to rekindle the fire.

As he waited for the flames to grow, Ragnall pulled his fur cloak close around him and sat down on a large rock. He picked up the saddlebags from the ground and searched inside; only a few pieces of bread and a little dried fruit were left. Well, there would be plenty of rabbit to go with it tonight. He wouldn't go hungry.

Capalqua nickered again. Ragnall took the small flat pan from the saddlebags, filled it with snow, and placed it over the fire. Then he set to work mending the hay-net.

Six weeks they had been gone from Silros. The last three had been spent right here in Comgal, the ally of Silros, a few days' ride over the northwestern border. He had hoped to ride farther, through the vastness of Comgal and into whatever lay beyond, but Capalqua had begun to falter in the unrelenting cold and Ragnall had been forced to winter here.

Never thought I'd be tougher than a horse, thought Ragnall. He had found that he rather liked the peace of the isolated forest. It was almost a relief to simply live off the land with no one to make any demands of him. But Capalqua was used to his warm barn and two generous feedings of grain each day, and was of little use out here with only



mountain and forest and snow.

Ragnall tied off the last strand of the hay-net. In another few weeks Spring would break and he would be able to continue his journey. He would not miss Silros. He had no family there; his father, once an honored knight of Silros, had been murdered in a far-off land by an enemy Tribeswoman years ago and his mother had died of grief soon after.

Ragnall had become the King's legal ward, though he had never formally been named heir. Now he would never allow himself to think of it again. Life was not going to be as he had expected, but he would turn his back on the past and start again in a place where no one knew who he had been.

He stood up, stretching his arms comfortably over the fire's heat, and then walked back to the tree with the hay-net. Making the horse back up out of the way, Ragnall replaced gathered the remains of the trampled hay and stuffed it back into the net. Capalqua reached for the muddy strands as Ragnall replaced the net.

The water steamed in the little pan on the fire. Ragnall carried the pan to the hanging bucket and poured the water in; in a moment the ice would melt and the stallion would have water to drink.

Ragnall returned to the warmth of his fire and drew his knife to begin work on the rabbits and ermine. There would be a good meal tonight, and an early start to Malartaim tomorrow.

* * *

"Front shoes only, then? And trim the hind feet?"

Ragnall stood in the snow-covered lane before the farrier's shed, holding Capalqua. "That's what I said."

The smith ran his hand over the horse's thick white coat. "Fine stallion, How old is he, ten, twelve, perhaps? I can tell with just a look every time, no need to open his mouth--"

"Five."

The man paused. "Five, yes, of course," he murmured. He glanced over at Ragnall. "I've seen you pass through before, but I didn't know you had a horse. Where--"

"Will this cover your service?" Ragnall handed him a large silver coin.

The smith studied the coin, his eyebrows rising. "That is will, sir. That it will. He'll be ready for you in an hour. Come with me, now, fellow..." He took Capalqua by the rope halter and led him into the shed, tying him near the forge. The horse stood quietly while the smith began stirring up the coals and laying out his hammers and rasps.

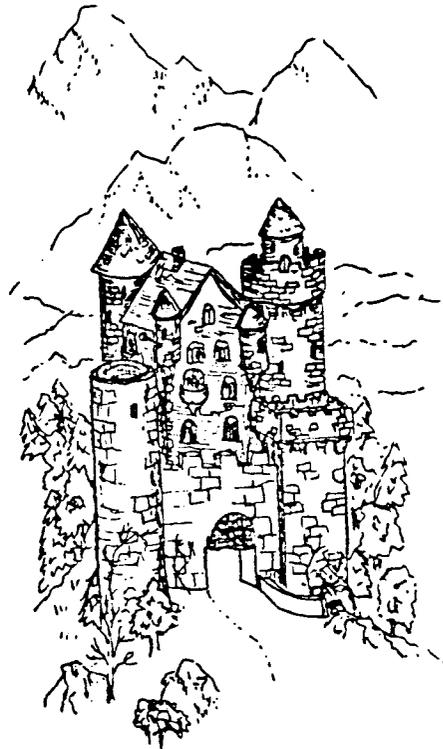
Ragnall turned away from the shed and started down the lane. The sky was a smooth dull grey, blending in with the snow-blanketed grey stone of the small houses and places of business. Snowflakes drifted down on the light wind as Ragnall followed the lane around a curve, stopping at the heavy wooden door of the tavern. He brushed the snow from his fur-lined red cloak, pulled the door open, and walked inside.

The place was comfortable enough; he had come here on each of his two other trips to Malarta'im and found it a brief respite from the solitude of the forest. He had not brought Capalqua to town with him before, not wanting to invite more questions, but the horse had needed his feet seen to and that was one of the few things Ragnall could not do for him--at least, not out at the campsite. Besides, the local people had learned by now that he wanted nothing more than to do honest trade and be left alone.

Ragnall sat down at a long wooden table near the hearth, away from the handful of other patrons. He'd done well with the rabbit and ermine skins; he would be able to load Capalqua with a good supply of honey, tea, cheese, bread and dried fruit. Five bales of hay could be stacked on the rough sled he'd put together, and dragged behind the horse. One more trip to Malarta'im would be necessary in two to three weeks, he judged, and by the time those supplies were running low he would be able to continue his journey.

The tavernkeeper brought him his usual meal: a dish of venison stew and a cup of beer. Ragnall gave him another of the Silros coins and the man left quickly, returning with a large plate of bread with fresh butter and honey.

"Anything else I might do for you, sir?"



Ragnall did not look up. "No. Thank you." The man slipped away, and Ragnall shrugged off his heavy cloak and began to eat.

"Fancy cloak you've got, young fellow."

The voice was old and slurred. Ragnall glanced toward the fire and saw an ancient, drunken man sitting at the edge of the hearth, leaning back against the stone wall. The old man took a long drink out of the battered tin mug he gripped in his wavering hand.

"I had a cloak like that once," he went on, finished with his drink at last. "Bright red, made from the best wools...only mine was lined with gold, and brooched with a gold wolf's head." He fingered his own worn and dirty brown garb, his thin frayed cloak held together with a broken iron pin. "I wonder what happened to it?"

Ragnall ignored the man. There was one such in every tavern. Soon he would be back in the peace and quiet of his campsite, with no one to bother him.

"Fine red cloak you've got, yes," the old man said, leaning up to look closer at Ragnall. "Pretty silver coins, and a sword of the finest make. And," he finished, tottering to his feet, his voice rising, "a big grey stallion! I saw you leading him through the streets today. You're--you're from Silros!"

Ragnall leaped up from the bench, hand on his sword-hilt, his voice a hissing whisper. "You're drunk, old man. Now go away, and do not come near me again!"

The man fell back, collapsing back onto his place at the hearth. "No harm, no harm," he pleaded. "I mean you no harm. I'm no threat to anyone..."

not anymore." He turned his face to the wall and hid his eyes with a shaking hand.

Ragnall turned away and sat down to finish eating. But the mumbling voice went on behind him.

"Not since the Quest--not since the King sent me away on that Quest. I was a knight, lad, didn't know that, did you? Ha! But I was--I was a knight of Silros."

Ragnall set down his knife and spoon.

"Sent me away, the King did. Because I killed that old Tribeswoman, out in their land where we'd been sent to bring the peace. I saw her from the edge of my eyes, raising that sword...how could I know she'd only brought it out to trade, and could barely lift it? It was a warrior's reflex, how could I be to blame? The other knights tried to take me back to Silros with them, but I could not go...the shame, the humiliation! I was better dead..."

A chill passed over Ragnall. He turned to look at the man, just as the tavernkeeper hurried over to refill Ragnall's cup.

"It's nothing, sir. I'm sorry. He babbles like this all the time--I'll have him taken out--"

Ragnall waved the tavernkeeper away. He sat very still, staring at the man on the hearth.

"Ah, Cairtin, Cairtin, noble lady that she was...and my little son, Ragnall...he should be a knight someday, but how could he with his father's shame hanging over him like a storm-black cloud? My killing that woman would have started another war, had I gone unpunished. I left for the mountains and told the knights to say I died at the Tribeswoman's hands...oh, the King sgreed, but sent them after me once more...said he would call me dead, but that I had not escaped the Nameless Quest."

The man sat up to look at Ragnall with hazy eyes, and let the tin mug fall from his hand to the stone floor. "Come outside with me, lad, would you come with me? There's something you ought to see, something I have out back..." Pulling the worn cloak around him, the old man made his staggering way to the door as Ragnall slowly followed.

Wading and stumbling through knee-deep drifts, the snow blowing now in the quickening wind, the ragged man finally stood before a low shed behind the tavern. He pushed open the creaking door of the shed and walked inside.

Ragnall blinked in the cold, dusty dimness. The shed held two cows, a calf, a few pigs and some chickens; nothing out of the ordinary.

"Here, lad..."

The man had pushed open the sagging gate of the corner stall. Not bothering with a halter, he led an old white stallion a few shaky steps by its mane and then turned to look at Ragnall with something like pride in his eyes.

"Tairisen. This is Tairisen, and he was the finest warhorse in all of Silros." He stroked the

stallion's rough coat, stained and dirty as it was, and tried to straighten the matted forelock. "Never was a braver horse...would have carried me to earth's end, had I asked him." He paused, then mumbled to himself again. "I suppose he did, at that."

The stallion stood with his head down and his eyes half-shut, lower lip drooping. His hooves had not been trimmed for months, perhaps years; they were long and cracked and curled up at the edges. And even through the filthy, shaggy coat, Ragnall could plainly see the horse's ribs and sagging backbone.

"This cold is hard on him, so late in the year," said the old man. "Could you spare him some hay, lad? A little hay for a fine old warhorse from Silros..."

Ragnall looked from the ruined stallion to the old and broken man, and a stillness settled over his heart. He knew who they must be, yet discovered that he had no wish to confront the aged man, no desire to berate him or demand to know why he had wasted his life and abandoned his family. A few last shreds of dignity clung to the man like bits of old straw in the stallion's tangled mane; and though Ragnall could have stripped those shreds away far easier than he had once stripped a dragon of its life, he found within himself the strength to let it pass.

He had stumbled onto the end of another Nameless Quest, one begun years before, and in so doing found the answer to his own. "Yes," Ragnall said to his father, "yes, I will bring you the hay."

* * *

A few hours later, Ragnall walked back up the snowy lane to the farrier's shed. He'd left plenty of hay and ground oats to see the old stallion through the winter, and brought a heavy wool rug to cover him on the worst nights. The old man now had enough Silros coins to keep him in comfort for a good long time and had blessed Ragnall over and over again before stumbling back to the warmth of the tavern.

Capalqua stood tied at one end of the farrier's shed, and nickered softly as he watched his master approach. Ragnall offered him a handful of dried apples. As the stallion ate, Ragnall made himself look at the horse's sunken eyes and thin drawn flanks. Capalqua was the result of centuries of breeding the finest warhorses ever known, yet he would have laid down his life dragging a sled in the Comgal woods for Ragnall.

That would not happen now. Ragnall knew what the King had hoped he would learn after the shame and humiliation of that terrible day on the tourney field, what he had needed most to find within his own heart.

Though he had lost knighthood and a kingdom, Ragnall had found the courage to go back. [*]

Contest Opens Doors for Aspiring Authors

Pete D. Manison

They're dreamers, but they're tired. They work hard, year after year, getting better at their dreams, better at communicating those dreams to others, but whether they admit it even to themselves, they sometimes get discouraged. Recognition seldom comes quickly in the dreaming business. Sometimes, they wonder if it will come at all.

Who are they? They're unpublished authors of speculative fiction--horror, fantasy and science fiction--and if it sounds like I know how they feel, that's because for ten years I was one of them. I know the effort it takes to reach deep inside for dreams no one else has dreamed. I know the hope that comes from mailing those dreams out to magazine editors. And I know the heartbreak when those dreams are returned, tarnished by rejection. I'm all too familiar with the doubt that is born as the rejection slips pile up and the idea of publication begins to seem as farfetched as those dreams of elves and starships.

That's in the past, though. Something happened to me three years ago, and I haven't once been visited by those doubts since then. Now I believe in my dreams, and I know they'll be shared by others, through publication, again and again.

What brought on this change? I can tell you in an acronym: WOTF. It stands for L. Ron Hubbard's Writers of the Future Contest, and in the nine years since its creation by science fiction legend L. Ron Hubbard, it has helped to launch a number of promising careers and given over one hundred and forty writers of speculative fiction their first taste of publication.

It's a simple concept, but a powerful one. The publishing business is driven by the cold equations of name value and track record--not a promising situation for the novice with neither. What if there were a place where none of that mattered? What if someone would judge a writer's work on its merit alone? What if that someone would then publish that work, helping to open doors once securely bolted from within?

What if...WOTF?

When I first entered the Writers of the Future Contest, my confidence was not high. I hardly suspected the opportunity that was about to come my way. A finalist award in 1989 got my story, "Mothers of Chaos," into volume 6 of the best-selling anthology of winners published each year by Bridge Publications, and from that moment forward, good

things began to happen. I found that attitudes had changed, that my work was now taken seriously. It would be an exaggeration to say that I became an overnight success, but more and more often editors would respond favorably to my stories. And now and then, when I mailed a story out, it would never come back. Instead, I'd receive a check in the mail, and later the story would be published.

For that alone, I would have been eternally grateful to the Writers of the Future Contest. But there's more. Recently, I learned I'll be returning to the WOTF anthology, this time as a bona fide winner. It's only happened a couple of times before, but the contest rules do not exclude published finalists from entering again. Which puts me in the unique position of knowing what my future holds: another Writers Workshop taught by a leading author in the field, another Awards Event, more book signings and radio interviews, and, once again, publication in one of the hottest speculative fiction anthologies of all time.

One day, I hope to be able to give to others what the Writers of the Future Contest has given me. For now, to all those people who are struggling as I once struggled, I can only say: Don't give up. There is hope, and if you try hard enough for long enough, you will succeed. Just believe in yourself. And never stop dreaming. [*]

For contest rules write to:

L. Ron Hubbard Writers of the Future Contest
PO Box 1630
Los Angeles, CA 90078



fannish news

CINCINNATI FILKER NEEDS HELP

I am a disabled fan in the Cincinnati, Ohio, area who is looking for a personal care attendant to assist me. The work is full- or part-time, including going to conventions (about once a month). I am looking for a male or a female who is very strong to assist with transfers. The job also includes personal care, driving a van, light house-keeping, cooking, and companionship.

The salary starts at \$80 a day, plus I have a room available (if desired) for this person; there is a separate area with a private kitchen and bath for those who work for me. Attendance and expenses at cons are paid for as part of the job. During the time off, the person is free to come and go, have another job, go to school, etc.

This is a great opportunity for someone who enjoys conventions and fannish life to have a job, a place to live, and a circle of fannish friends. Experience is helpful, but not essential. I look forward to hearing from anyone interested in this unique position. Thank you!

Contact: Renee Alper
6068 Tam Circle
Mason, OH 45040

AUTHOR JAMES E. GUNN RETIRES

Jim Gunn, professor of English at the University of Kansas, retired in May, but the University has asked him to continue to run the summer SF programs as long as the enrollment remains respectable. So any interested teachers should contact him at:

James E. Gunn
The University of Kansas
Department of English
Wescoe Hall
Lawrence, Kansas 66045-2115

YOUNG ADULT RECOMMENDED READING LIST

The Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society announces the release of a newly expanded version of its highly successful "Recommended Reading List" for young people. It is free to any and all who send them a self-addressed, long envelope affixed with 52¢ postage.

Their list gives the titles of hundreds of high quality works of imaginative fiction. It would interest any young adult or mature child who likes to read. It is also of use to parents, teachers and

librarians who may interact with young people. Previous versions of the list have been sent, upon request, to nearly two thousand eager readers in every state in the union and several foreign countries.

For more information, write to Galen A. Tripp at the address below:

Recommended Reading List
c/o LASFS
11513 Burbank Blvd
North Hollywood, CA 91601-2309

LOOKING FOR SHOES

Harry Andruschak is looking for a pair of shoes. Not just any shoes, but ones as in the picture here, the "Mary Jane" style to go with the kilt he has (also shown here, figure b). If anyone can help, please contact him at:

Harry Andruschak
PO Box 5309
Torrance CA 90510-5309

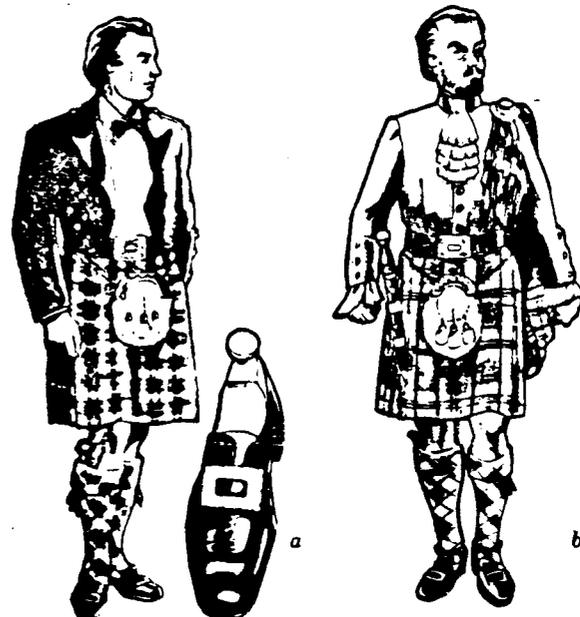


Figure 8. Evening wear. a) The Prince Charlie Coat set is the simplest evening jacket. It is most appropriate with black tie and may be worn with either a waistcoat or evening belt. The inset shows a patent-leather evening shoe with silver buckle. b) A more formal style. The high-necked doublet sets off the jabot, and the accessories include dirk and evening plaid. The "Mary Jane" evening shoes are a standard Scottish style—uniform dress in some of the Highland regiments.

PETITION FOR A HEINLEIN STAMP

Included in this issue of Lan's Lantern is a petition to the US postal Service to honor Robert A. Heinlein with a commemorative stamp. In the past only a few SF writers that we are aware of have been so honored, Edgar Allen Poe, for example. Regulations state that a person must be dead for ten years before they might be honored with a stamp. Robert Heinlein will be eligible in six years, so it's not too soon to start collecting signatures. As the petition states, there are many others who deserve this honor, and we hope they will be in turn.

If you would like to help us in this venture, please feel free to make copies and gather signatures. Take them to conventions and other fannish gatherings, and returned the signed copies to:

Petition
The Circle of Janus Science Fiction Club
PO Box 19776
Indianapolis, IN 46219

NEW SPECIALS PLANNED FOR Lan's Lantern

Lan is asking for contributions to two special issues of Lan's Lantern to honor Hal Clement and Wilson "Bob" Tucker. Both authors are fans, and have been involved with science fiction for well over 50 years. The golden anniversary of both authors is long past, but Lan still wishes to honor them with special issues filled with art, articles, poems, and reminiscences about these two well-known and well-liked authors and fans. The deadline for submissions is a flexible October 31, 1993. Please send to:

Lan's Lantern
George "Lan" Laskowski
55 Valley Way
Bloomfield Hills, MI
USA 48304-2662

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that I could not spare more time to take her on tours and trips in our area, but she was quite understanding of my commitments to the HUB program. During the day she had her own agenda for visits (Greenfield Village and the Detroit Zoo), while we took care of the evenings. On Monday we took her to Ypsilanti to the bar meeting at the Sidetrack. Unfortunately there weren't many regulars in attendance. I think the fact that we just finished the 4th of July weekend had something to do with it. On Tuesday I took her on a walking tour of Cranbrook Educational Community, though we did not cover some things in depth as much as I had wanted. She left early Wednesday morning, and I was sad to see her go. I hope that she can come to visit again, when I could spend more time with her.

The rest of the week was busy. On Wednesday evening Maia and I went to a picnic put on for the Galactic Cartographers Society as one of the members' houses. Sandy was a wonderful hostess, and her husband (who wouldn't tell his age, but has recently retired) managed to let everyone else do the work. We had a great time talking, barbecuing and telling stories.

Thursday night we met for dinner with Sam Long who was up from Springfield, Illinois, on business. Afterward we took him to Borders Book Store where we all spent money on books.

On Sunday, July 12, Maia and I went to a free concert at the local library. George Benson, the jazz saxophonist (not the guitarist) was playing with his group, and the place was packed. We got there early enough to save a couple of seats for friends Anne and Russ Anderson, whom we had met a couple weeks earlier at CONNUBIAL. The concert was wonderful. We all had a great time picking out the different tunes that each person was playing when it came time for his solo and variations on the main theme. In the first set, one of the librarians was asked to come up and sing with the group. I thought to myself, "Oh no, amateur night." However, the woman had viable credits--she had dubbed vocal parts in films for actresses who can't sing, including the title role for The Umbrellas of Cherberg. And she was indeed good, and added to the enjoyment of the concert. If only I could remember her name....

We had invited Russ and Anne back to our place for dinner, but they had other engagements that afternoon and evening.

CONFLUENCE

I managed to get a couple of days off for CONFLUENCE--the Friday and Monday of the weekend of the convention (July 17-20). We got to the hotel early enough to watch things get set up. I had a good time talking with a lot of fans, including Geoff

Landis, Ann Cecil, Nancy Janda, Joe Ellis, Charly and Kevin Riley, David Alway, Alexis Gilliland, Jack Chalker, members of the Dorsai Irregulars who were doing security, and many others. However, I spent most of my time in the company of a new writer from New York who was at Clarion two years ago, and whom we met when we went up to Michigan State to see Nate Bucklin. Not only does she write, she plays the viola. Mike KubeMcDowell was impressed with her as a person, writer and musician. Her name is Alexandra Elizabeth Honigsberg, and she has only been published in semiprozines so far. Alex has played at Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center; she has sung small parts in Opera (she is a lyric soprano), and has conducted practices, as well as a small orchestra at the Summer Festival Chamber Music in North Bay, Ontario. At 34 she is embarking on a new career of writing.

Alex is also very pretty, Italian, and reads Tarot. I spent several hours in her company talking about music, writing, conventions, and many mutual friends, which we found out we had.

Joe Ellis premiered his new tape, The Dream is Alive at the con. He gave me a review copy, and I've been playing it quite a bit. The first side contains one song for each of the space shuttles with some others, songs about the space program. The second side contains an orchestral suite in four movements which is called "The Dream is Alive". It is a wonderful tape, and I've been recommending it to anyone who is interested in the space program. (See the reviews this issue.)

RAMBLINGS 41.2

After CONFLUENCE, I went back to teaching, and was swamped with trying to keep up with all my activities. The garden was a mass of weeds, though I got in there to harvest some stuff every other day. Theme Day, the last day of the program, which was when the parents come up, came none too soon. I had trouble the last week with some of the seniors who decided to stop coming to class. The troublemakers were those who had decided that since they were seniors and it was their last summer, they were going to have fun. On the other hand, with the troublemakers out of class, only those who wanted to learn were there and we had a good time.

The following day (Sunday, August 2) was the final day for teachers' meetings. I turned in comments on all my students, and got everything else done that I had to do in order to get my final paycheck for the program. (Actually, I was lucky; since I worked here during the year, mine was direct-deposited the weekend before! The others had to wait until August 2 to get theirs.) We had a picnic to celebrate the end of the 28th summer of the program. And I was free to work on everything

else I've let go during the summer.

On Tuesday, July 28, Dave Stein gave me his article, "A Fan's Guide to Disney World", which he had promised to do for me, and which I promised to print in Lan's Lantern #40 and mail it out before Worldcon. The mailing went out on August 10.

I did have enough copies of #40 collated to bring them, along with #38, to the Galactic Cartographers meeting on Wednesday, August 5. The discussion was about the Hugo awards, and David Stein showed up to offer his expert opinions to ours. There was, unfortunately, a small turn-out, but I unloaded a few copies of the fanzine. And David, rather than having to wait until the next Ypsilanti meeting on Monday, was able to see his article in print sooner.

On August 8, Jim Yeomans threw a small birthday party for his wife Andrea, and we were delighted to have been invited. Maia collected a number of buttons with clever sayings about editing and working with deadlines, and that was part of our gift to Andrea. I visited Borders Bookstore to find something else for her. Since she loves music, I checked out the books in that section of Borders Book Store, and found an instructional guitar book. Andrea was learning to play the instrument, and this book looked very good for her. It started with some easy, traditional folksongs, and worked up to more complicated fingering and strumming techniques.

The party itself was lots of fun. There was a mix of a few fans, people from where Jim and Andrea work, and the people they run with. The conversations ranged over wide spectrum of topics, from running, the Olympics, politics, fandom, books, food, and so on. I had a nice, relaxing time in the company of new-found friends.

On Sunday Maia's work group had its annual party at the home of Suzanne and Bob Simms. They have a place on a lake which made it ideal for the party. I made both a hot (jalapino) dip and a mild vegetable dip for them. We were among the first to arrive (as usual) and helped set some things up. It was a hot, sunny day, one of the few we had this summer, so eventually the party moved off the back deck of the Sims' house to the lake shore. Most of the kids got in the water right away, and finally a couple of the adults braved the cool water temperature and the embarrassment of imperfect bodies to get into bathing suits and swim with the younger crowd. Aside from the snack foods--many of which were really delicious, Bob and Suzanne made the usual picnic fare of hot dogs and hamburgers. People ate far too much, but were pleasantly relaxed, once again, in the company of friends.

Maia and I made an excursion to the Cleveland Art Museum on August 15 to see a special exhibit on the artifacts from the tomb of Amenhotep III. It rained most of the time but we still had a good time. Some of the large artifacts were extremely

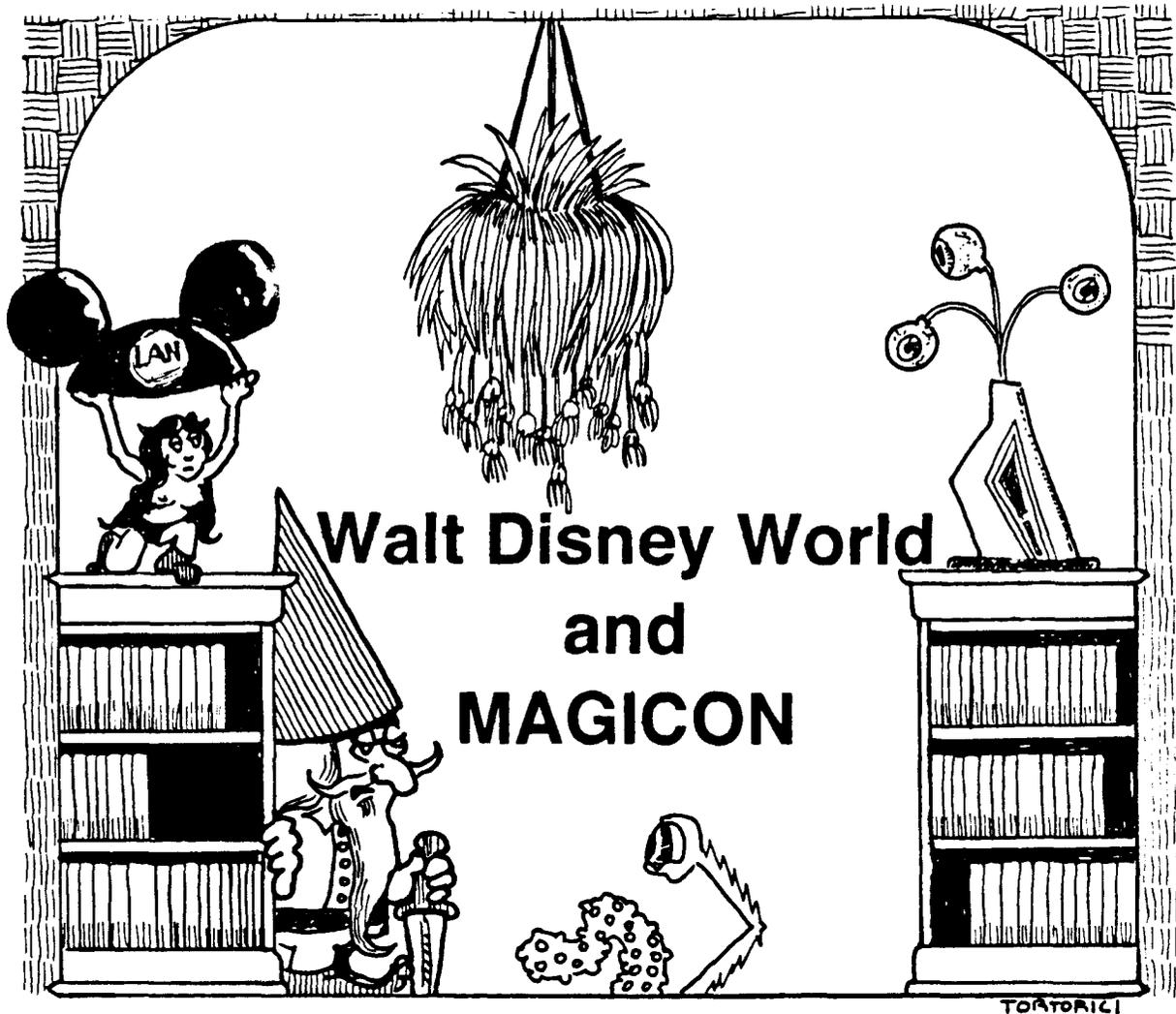
impressive, but I was more intrigued by more detailed work of the smaller objects on display. It is amazing that some of the fabric and wooden utensils and other things have lasted so long.

We also went to the Museum of Natural History to see the planetarium show about the stars in the times of the Pharaohs. Although interesting, it didn't give me too much new information--it just jogged old memory cells that hadn't been used in years.

In the late afternoon, Julie Washington, the founder and editor of the fan newszine Cleveland Ansible, came by the Museum to pick us up and show us "The Flats" and The Towers, the huge shopping complex that had once been the Cleveland Train Station. We had dinner in the food court, and went shopping until the place closed. Although we said we were not going to buy anything, each of us found something that we really wanted. I found a copy of the video The Twilight Zone, Volume 5 with "Kick the Can" and "Walking Distance" on it. I had been looking for it for several months. I needed it to complete the current commercial releases of The Twilight Zone. I found out a few weeks later that more episodes had been released--up to volume 14.

When we got to our motel, I noticed that one of the tires was very low on air in the evening, and I filled it up. The next morning it was flat. I put on the mini-spare, drove to breakfast, and we had to wait until 10 AM when a service garage opened up to get it fixed. I wasn't about to drive any great distance on the mini-spare. The trip home was uneventful, but the weekend was a pleasant diversion from the hectic pace of preparing for leaving for Worldcon.





Friday, August 28, 1992

Maia and I were ready to leave for Walt Disney World and the Worldcon in Orlando, Florida. We had one slight problem. Ed and Linda, our next door neighbors who were to drive us to the airport, were gone on vacation, and we were not sure if they would be back in time to drive us. We asked their daughter Jane, who was still on campus and working, if she could substitute, but she was not able to get off work early enough to give us a ride. So we worked up an alternate plan. Our friend Bill McIlrath drove us to the airport in our car and returned it; Ed and Linda would still pick us up on Monday, September 7.

This was a minor problem. The major one was the delay in flying out. Something was wrong with the plane, so much so that they got another plane to make the flight to Orlando. Thus, we got in an hour later than we had planned, and even later to the Caribbean Village at Walt Disney World where we were going to stay for the next five days.

The check-in at the Custom House for the Caribbean Beach Resort was very easy, except that the desk clerk gave us a lot of information all at

once, almost too much for our exhausted state. By the time we got to our room we were ready to collapse. We did minimal unpacking, and a hot shower later we were in bed asleep.

Saturday, August 29

We awoke at 8 AM, showered and dressed, and headed for the central area of the Caribbean Beach complex, Port Royale. Inside was a food court where we had breakfast, after which we caught a bus for EPCOT Center. The day was hit with rain and cloudy

DISNEY'S
CARIBBEAN
BEACH
 RESORT

skies (in fact it rained a little the first three days we were there), and people in yellow rain ponchos (the "Yellow Horde" is what we termed them) were everywhere. We stopped at the Communication Center and made reservations for dinner at the Sci-Fi Drive-in Cafe that night, and the Prime Time 50's Cafe for Monday night. From there we visited many of the exhibits.

We skipped Spaceship Earth since it was so crowded, and started with The Land, a journey through various methods of farming, and the challenges that Nature and Man pose in the effort to provide food for everyone. In the same exhibit was an audio-animatronic show called the Kitchen Kabaret, with hostess Bonnie Appetit, and foodstuffs with atrociously punny names urging people to eat correctly and nutritiously.

Journey Into Imagination was a fun place. Although primarily aimed at kids, we saw many adults, including us, playing with the various painting and drawing machines. Mafa wanted to see the Captain EO 3-D motion picture starring Michael Jackson, so we did. I actually enjoyed it; the effects were spectacular.

From there we started our trip around the World Showcase exhibits. After the first few, we saw that they were mostly repetitious--shops set up to sell similar products from the countries on display. However, the interesting features included some select items that represented each country, and the fact the the people working in each exhibit were from the country. The places we visited--France, Morocco, Japan, Italy, Germany and China-- all had wonderful films, some in 360 degree format, about their land and their people. The disappointing feature was The American Experience, which was extremely jingoistic and didn't fit in with the spirit of the other exhibits.

We didn't finish half of the tour of the world when we noticed the time, and had to make a mad dash to the MGM/Disney Studios park for our dinner. We made it in time, were seated in a car in the Sci-Fi Drive-In Cafe, ate popcorn and watched trailers from bad sci-fi movies on the screen until our (expensive but delicious) dinner arrived. We were warned not to "make-out" since we were in the back seat; it was a "family theatre" said our carhop on roller skates, and he "didn't want to have to call in the police!" The experience was great. Dave Stein had recommended it, and we were not disappointed.

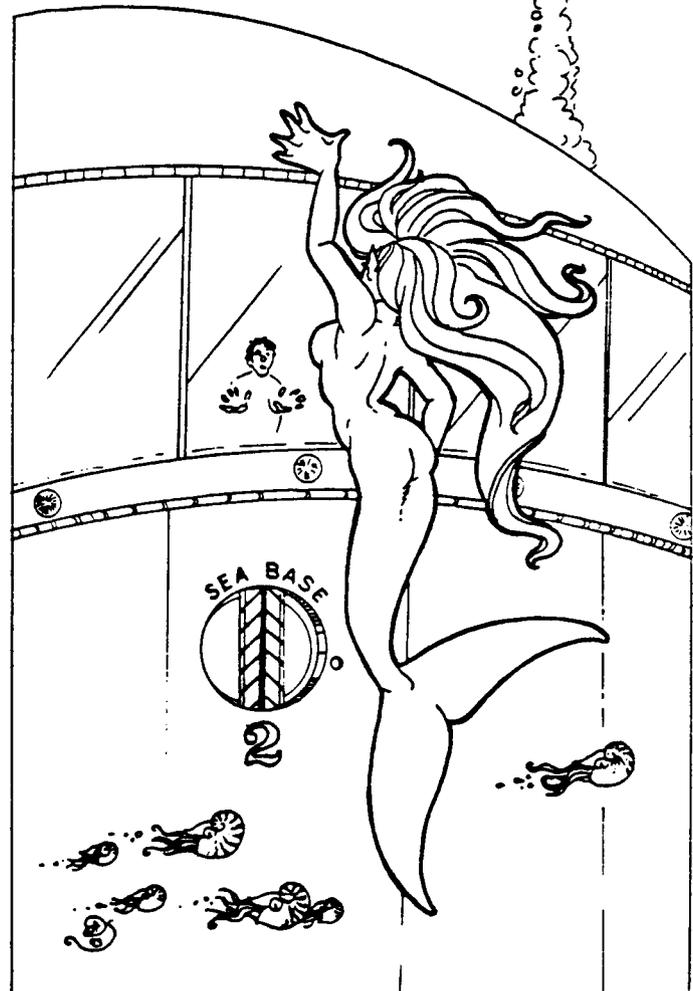
After we finished (and the trailers started to repeat), we headed back to our room, changed into our bathing suits, and headed for the pool (and hot tub) at Port Royale. The day ended up being nicer than during the rainy morning and afternoon. We did not stay up too late, since we had many more days of wonders to experience. As we dropped off to sleep, we concluded that the time we had allotted

for each park probably would not be enough, and we would have to make another trip to WDW later.

Sunday, August 30

We followed the same routine for breakfast at Port Royale, though we had a much better, sunny, morning. Back to EPCOT we went, with our bus driver telling us that EPCOT stands for Employees' Polyester Costumes of Torture. This time we got to ride through Spaceship Earth, ply The Living Seas, and run through the Magic Playland. I enjoyed looking at the exhibits in Living Seas. The dolphins were quite playful, and kept hoping to see a mermaid or two. The information about what the seas could provide, what we could use them for, was fascinating and interesting. I would have liked to eat in the seafood restaurant attached to the exhibit, but Mafa is allergic to seafood, so I didn't suggest it. Besides, we had different plans for lunch.

The World Showcase was on the agenda after that. Canada had a wonderful circle-rama film which made us appreciate our northern neighbor even more. The United Kingdom exhibit made us wish for another trip to England, and gave us a few ideas of what to see the next time we travel there.



At Morocco, we enjoyed the dancing and the close quarters of the streets; it made us feel as though we were in Morocco. Maia had done a report on the country in high school so she was particularly intrigued by the exhibit. We had lunch in the Marakesh restaurant. The food was delicious, and was served by Fadila who was from Casablanca. We talked to her about her experiences at WDW and in the USA. Fadila was there for a year, and after working in the exhibit for a few months, she was able to travel around the United States to see more of the country. Eventually she would return home to work in the tourist/travel industry. She admitted to NOT having seen the film Casablanca.

We continued our way around the World, hitting Norway and Mexico, and paused to witness the "Surprise in the Skies" afternoon show. Flyers, skiers with ultra-lites pulled by boats, and daytime fireworks all contributed to the celebration of 20 magical years of WDW. It was a spectacular show.

Eventually we found our way back to the "Future World" area of EPCOT, and visited the Horizons and Wonders of Life exhibits. Since we had a fairly heavy lunch, we decided on a light dinner at the Stargate cafeteria, and hung around until the fireworks started. We didn't have the best seats, but the laser-light shows and the fireworks were impressive. We got back to our room late, and decided to sleep in, though our minds and bodies had other ideas.

Monday, August 31

We woke up early. So, after breakfast we rode the bus to the MGM/Disney Studios park, noting that we had to fasten our seatbelts, return our trays to their locked and upright position, and remain seated until the bus came to a complete stop at the gate. Then take small children by the hand, gather all belongings, and proceed through the exit, noting that the sidewalk was moving at the same speed as the bus.

The Backstage Tour was interesting in seeing how the sets and perspective for various skylines are kept. Disaster Canyon didn't fool us, but it was nice to see some people a little frightened. The WDW actors employed to present the effects did a very good job in keeping the on-lookers jumping. We also had a good time with the Great Movie Ride, where our boat guide was instrumental in defeated the gangsters who hijacked our boat.

The Muppets 4-D excursion was an experience--the theatre reflected the bombs and cannonshots thrown out from the screen, and Fozzie Bear's water flower was felt by one and all.

Inside the Magic showed us how some of the live-action special effects are done, and we got a partial preview of a Disney film soon to be released starring Bette Midler called Lottery.

We ate at the Backlot Express for lunch, and spent a little time writing postcards. For desert, we stopped at Dinosaur Gertie's Ice Cream of Extinction. After standing in line for about a half hour, we got in to see the Indiana Jones Epic Stunt Spectacular, which was amazing--especially seeing some of the audience members get drafted for some of the scenes. From there we went on the Star Tours, then decided it was too hot to do things there.

We found a bus that went to River country, and we relaxed in the cooler water of the lake, though it was far too crowded for my taste. I went down the big waterslides a few times while Maia soaked in the shallow water. Eventually we got dressed and headed back to the MGM/Disney Studio park to wander among the studio showcases and see the Muppets on Location.

Eventually we wandered back to the Prime Time 50's Cafe, where our brother (waiter) Ghassan, checked to see if we had washed our hands, then let us order dinner. He made sure that we didn't fight, told us to keep our elbows off the table, and commended us for finishing everything on our plates (he showed everyone in the area where our table was that we had "Happy plates. They ate all their food and have happy plates. That's what I want all of you to do, have happy plates so you can order dessert!")

The restaurant was divided into several sections with a 1950's kitchen decor; the napkins were paper and in a plastic holder. We had cow-shaped salt and pepper shakers. There were TV sets playing food episodes from various 1950 and 1960 sit-coms. This was another of the "must experience" restaurants mentioned by Dave Stein, and seconded by Mark Bernstein. We had a good time, and the prices were fairly reasonable.

After a quick trip to our hotel room to shower and change, we headed to Pleasure Island for the rest of the evening. The entertainment was rather loud, but the dancing was very nice. We both got some sort of hat--mine was a visor with blinking lights, but the vendor was out of 9-volt batteries so I got it for less. We were headed for the Adventurers' Club, but it was closed for a special meeting until later. So we started to wander around a bit more, and I spotted a vendor selling rings. As I started toward the man I heard someone shout "Maia, Lan!" It was Michelle Smith-Moore. She was there with her husband Garth and her mother to visit the Adventurers' Club, too. We sat and talked until the Club opened, then wandered around inside looking at all the "trophies" that the "adventurers" had brought back from their hunts and travels. It is something that you need to see and experience to believe.

We sat in the Mask Room, where the eyes of some of them slowly scanned the room. One of the adven-

turers gave a schedule talk about the masks he had collected, and the two masks behind him came alive and traded insults with him. It was fun. We missed some of the other presentations, but Maia didn't want to stay inside very long. We would see Garth and Michelle again at MAGICON in a couple of days. We got some fairly decent places for the New Years Eve fireworks, after which we went back to the room and slept.

Tuesday, September 1

In spite of our efforts to sleep in, we were up at 7:30. After breakfast we took the bus to Epcot Center, then the monorail to the Magic Kingdom. As Dave Stein suggested, we saw the Walt Disney Story, which was interesting. The man had a vision, and managed to fulfill it and make others very happy.

We went through a number of the rides/exhibits: up and down Main Street, through the Swiss Family Robinson Treehouse and the Jungle Cruise in Adventureland, the Riverboat ride off Liberty Square, and I waited in line to go on the new ride in Frontierland--Splash Mountain. Maia took one look at the 40 foot drop into the water and decided not to go. So she sat down and rested while I traversed the maze through a cave to the log which took me on a watercourse through a Brer Rabbit story. The people in line in front of me were puzzled by the signs which read "Brer Rabbit", "Brer Fox", "Brer Bear", and so on, so I launched into teacher mode and explained southern-dialect English to them. I later questioned one of the sellers at the Disney Store about the film Song of the South, and there were no plans to release it.

We lunched at the Columbia Harbor House, then stood in line to experience the Haunted Mansion. It was worth a second trip through, but the line was still quite long.

In Fantasyland we experienced the Magic Journey film in 3-D, and took a ride on the Carousel. Maia was fading fast, so we went back to the room for her to take a nap, and I went swimming in the pool.

In the early evening we went back to the Magic Kingdom for dinner at the Plaza Restaurant. The waitress we had there was a wonderful person; she made us feel comfortable and we had fun joking with her. Then we stood in line for a looong time for the 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea ride, which was well worth the wait.

Tomorrowland was a disappointment. The Flight to Mars was an updated version of the Flight to the Moon that I had experienced at Disneyland back in 1960. The exhibits were very dated, and needed to be overhauled badly. EPCOT Center gave more a vision of the future than Tomorrowland did. Still, we enjoyed the Carousel of Progress, and especially the Dream Flight ride.



Once again we stayed late enough to see some of the Spectromagic Parade down Main Street (though I was more interested in finding a certain t-shirt than watching the parade; besides I thought that the demon from the Night on Bald Mountain costume probably could have been done better by a SF costumer), and the fireworks. Tinkerbell's flight from the Castle was impressive.

Wednesday, September 2

Since we had not finished seeing everything we wanted at EPCOT Center, we went there for most of the day. Breakfast was at the Land restaurant where a lot of the items were from the Land farming experiments. We visited Canada and Germany, had lunch at China, and went through the Motion and Energy exhibits. Then we rode the monorail completely around EPCOT, to the Magic Kingdom and back, and expressed a desire to return to WDW at some point when we could afford to stay at the Grand Floridian resort.

We dined at the Crystal Palace in the Magic Kingdom for dinner, and had a marvelous serving of chicken, mashed potatoes and vegetables. From there we returned to the hotel. Maia decided she really needed to rest so she went to sleep and I showered, changed, and headed back to Pleasure Island. I sought out the ring vendor first, and picked up a silver band to replace the silver wedding band that had broken in the middle of the summer. Then I went to The Adventurers Club to sit in the Mask Room again, and attend some of the other shows--the magic case, the tall tales contest, and the colonel's portrait. After wandering through the shops for a bit, I headed back to the room and called it a night.

Thursday, September 3

Today was moving day. After breakfast we packed, got a ride to the Custom House to check out, and hailed a taxi to take us to the Clarion Hotel where

we would be staying for Worldcon. The taxi driver was a science fiction fan and liked Ray Bradbury. We told him the story about him forgetting his name badge at the Worldcon in Atlanta in 1986 (where the badger at the huckster room door told him, "Bradbury, Schmadbury, no one gets in without a name badge!")

After we dropped off our luggage at the Clarion (it was too soon to check in), we headed for the Convention Center to get our name badges. There was a delay until everything was set up, but once the registration people started, everything went quickly. We didn't mind too much, since we ended up talking to the fans in line, one of whom was artist Laurel Slate, whose work Maia has used for the Charlie Card Calendar, and I have used in the Lantern. Still, we needed to hurry, since Maia had a 12 noon panel, and I had one at 1 PM. Hers was on "SF, the next 100 years" with Charlie Brown, Ellen Datlow (who didn't show) and Darrell Schweitzer.

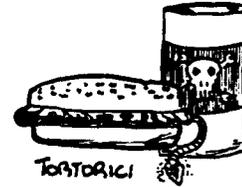
My panel was about "Collecting Fanzines--How and Why", with Mike Glicksohn, Bill Hedl, and Joe Siculari (the MAGICON Convention Chairman). I had not seen Mike since CONFUSION in January, and was delighted to be on a panel with him. We missed his annual Birthday Party because we had gone to MARCON that weekend instead, and we missed meeting his fiancée Susan Manchester. After the panel I did meet her--a charming lady, and she seemed to be a good match for Mike. The panel went all right, and I had copies of LL with me for display, and for the freebie table in the Fan lounge.

But I was unable to get to the fan lounge after that panel because I had another one at 2: "Here We Go Again--Cycles in History", with Claire Eddy, Brad Linaweaver, and John Maddox Roberts. I moderated and tried to keep things moving--actually, tried to keep things under control. There was a lot of audience participation and criticism. We were berated for staying predominantly with US and North American historical cycles, and ignoring Europe and the rest of the world. I invited more of the audience to participate then, and we ran out of time.

By this time Maia had checked into our room and gave me a key, and we went our separate ways. She needed to check in with Laurie Mann and publicity/communications, while I wandered around the huckster room, got rid of the fanzines, and eventually went back to the hotel, missing the opening ceremonies.

Maia soon came back and we walked over to the Peabody Hotel to meet with Stanly and Joyce Schmidt for dinner. Jay Kay Kline joined us, and we had a delightful conversation and a delicious meal. Stan assured us the the new publisher of Analog, Dell Books, was supporting the Campbell Award.

We got done in plenty of time for the VIP Party in the ballroom of the Clarion. I met a lot of people there, including Mike and Carol Resnick,



Laura Resnick, Barbara Delaplace, Michelle Sagara, Steve and Denise Leigh, Arlan and Joyce Andrews, Kevin Anderson, and many many more.

Maia retired early, and I eventually joined her.

Friday, September 4

We had the breakfast buffet in the hotel restaurant, then walked to the Convention center to spend the day having fun. I spent a lot of time wandering between the huckster room and the green room talking to people, and getting autographs. I eventually had books signed by Bob Silverberg, Ben Bova, Jack Williamson, and Joe Haldeman.

I stopped off at the Analog/Asimov's display, extended my subscription to Analog until about the year 2000, and picked up a nice t-shirt. I spent an hour or so talking with Steve Swartz in the Fan Lounge, and a few other fans. Before I knew it, it was time for Maia and me to meet with Peggy Ranson, Laura Resnick, Teddy Harvia and Martha Soukup for dinner. First we had to walk to the Peabody parking lot and find Laura's car. While wandering down the aisles a car stopped and Ginger Bicking got out and gave me me hug. I was so surprised to see her (the last time we met was two years earlier at CONTACT in Evansville, Indiana) that I forget to introduce her to Maia. I gave her my card and asked her to write me. (I eventually did get a note from her.)

We found the car, and went to a restaurant with a foreign name--I think it was Greek, but it could have been any number of Mediterranean or Middle Eastern cuisine. It was a pleasant meal, and everyone was wishing everyone else well and good luck for the Hugo ceremonies the next night.

I don't recall what Maia did that evening (I think she went to the films), I wandered among the parties in the Peabody. At the ASFA party I talked to Diana Harlan Stein and her husband David--Dave said that he had gotten a lot of compliments on his Walt Disney World article; people had found it much more useful than the one that appeared in the MAGICON progress report. Scott Merritt introduced me to Beth Hanson, a new artist whose work was very good (I concurred when I saw it in the art show the next day). At the Texas/San Antonio party I talked with Marie Miesel, Willie Siro, and some other people whose names I forget.

I found the consuite--a huge ballroom in the lower levels of the Peabody on the opposite side of the rooms where the filking was. I talked with Peter Thieson and Alta Weber, Jim Landis, R'ykandar

(who gave me the latest issue of his fanzine Low Orbit) and many other people. I started making my way toward the filking, and saw some people tuning guitars and other sort of "huckstering" in a separate room. There I encountered Deborah and Rick Weiss, the editors and publishers of The Filking Times. Two hours later I was tired, but still talking. I decided to head back to my hotel to sleep, and ran into Joey Shoji who introduced me to Larry Warner. I was delighted; I had been wanting to meet this man with the golden baritone voice for a long time. I promised that I would attend their concert.

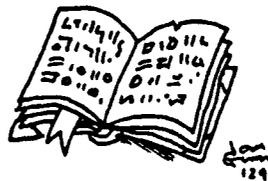
Saturday, September 5

After eating at the breakfast buffet, and talking with Angelamarie Varesano, June Edwards, and their friend Heather, it was back to the convention center for us. I talked with Mark and Evelyn Leeper and Kate Potts in the Green Room, along with a dozen other people. Somewhere along the line I made contact with Alexandra Honigsberg (remember her? CONFLUENCE?) and we arranged for a dinner excursion that evening. In the Huckster Room I finally made some purchases: The Rim of Space by A. Bertram Chandler, and The Ant Men by Eric North.

I ran into Kristine Kathryn Rusch who asked if I had received her note. We surmized (correctly) that it arrived while we were at Disney World. She just wanted to thank me for sending her copies of the Lantern. She enjoyed the perspective it had in relation to the SF field. I also spent a little time talking with Halina Harding, Jamie McQuinn, their children, and Dustin Wenzel (Don and Kathleen's son who was playing with them). We commiserated about the high humidity outside, and talked about things that had happened at Cranbrook.

I finally made a tour of the Art Show, and marvelled at all the very lovely items. Vincent DiFate's retrospective, and the retrospective of SF art were both magnificent. Larry Tucker and I walked through and we were able to point out which of the older pieces were covers of the various novels we had read while growing up. And I did see the work of many friends, including Diana Harlan Stein, Peggy Ranson, Ruth Thompson, Teddy Harvia, Nancy Janda, Erin McKee, Heather Bruton, and many others (whose names escape me). And the work of the professionals was breathtaking.

At 3 PM I was on a panel on "The Music of the Future" with Steve Antczak, Lee Barwood, and Thorarinn Gunnarsson. It was interesting, especially with some of the audience participation. One person suggested that very soon with all the computer power available, one might be able to program personal music which is completely random, but generally satisfying to the listener. I suggested that, following the cycles of musical creativity tied to availability of instruments, we should be getting a



huge surge of creative music because of computerization, electronic keyboards, and sequencers. That is happening in filk, and must surely be happening elsewhere.

Between that and my next panel I encountered Bruce Pelz who blamed me (and Mike Resnick) for the amount of money he and Elaine were about to spend on a trip to Africa. If Mike hadn't gone, and written up the travelogues which I published, they would not have considered such a trip, "So it's all your fault!" he shouted. I just smiled and wished him a good trip.

At 5 PM I had another panel, "The Future of the Worldcon, Revisited". Marty Gear, Mike Glycer, and Tony Lewis were on it with me, and they managed to keep us going for the hour. I don't remember all that was said, but I recall some of the Worldcon horror stories being told.

Afterwards, I headed back to the room to shower and change, then for the Peabody via the Convention Center for dinner with Maia, Alex and David Honigsberg. On my way back to the Clarion I ran into Marshall Goldhammer. We exchanged pleasantries, but I couldn't talk because of the tight timeframe I had. On the way back through the Convention Center, Maia and I walked with Susan Schwartz who, seeing Andre Norton, introduced Maia to her. Maia was thrilled, and when Andre saw my name badge, she thanked me for the copies of the Lantern that I had been sending her. "And I especially like the article about Abraham Merrit. He was one of the favorite authors I read while growing up.

The dinner with Alex and company was fun. Alex, Maia and I talked about a lot of things, and we were finished in time to make it to the Convention Center for the Hugo Awards Ceremony without trouble.

For One Brief Golden Moment...

Maia and I gathered in the Green Room as instructed by a letter from the coordinator of the festivities, Jill Eastlake. There we saw the award -- a very lovely creation by Phil Tortorici. The rocket was gold-plated this year, in honor of the 50th Worldcon, and a piece of the gantry metal from the first satellite launch pad was incorporated into the base. Attached to the base was a perpendicular "backing" piece on which was airbrushed a star-scape. Each award was slightly different since each was hand-made and hand-painted by Phil. (I nominated it for the Best Original Artwork Hugo.)

Julie Washington was supposed to have joined us, but signals got crossed and she was waiting in the main hall rather than in the Green Room. When she could not find us, she sat in the Press section with Allan Steele, with whom she said she had a great time talking. It turned out that she had a better seat than we did.

We marched into the hall, sat down and listened to Toastmaster Spider Robinson's witty remarks. Phil Tortorici and his wife Barbara sat with us, and we were behind Mike and Carol Resnick. The Big-heart Award was presented by Forrey Ackerman to Samanta Juede, who is the driving force behind the handicapped-access organization known as Electrical Eggs. The First-Fandom Awards were also presented, then we settled down for a 15 minute slide retrospective of the Worldcon. The obvious differences included not only size, but length of programming, for the earlier conventions.

Then Spider introduced Stanley Schmidt who was to present the John W. Campbell Award for best new writer. He mentioned that Dell Magazines, the new owner of Analog, had agreed to back the award as Davis Publications had for so many years. The award went to Ted Chiang. I was hoping for Laura Resnick (who came in second) or Barbara Delaplace, but was pleased with Ted's win.

There was a little confusion with the slide presentation and the Best Fan Artist category. An example of artwork for each nominee was flashed, and Spider was expecting the name of the artist. Likewise for Fanwriter--an article by each nominee was put up on the screen. Once that was cleared up, things went a little more smoothly. Brad Foster won for Fan Artist, and Dave Langford for Fan Writer.

Spider read the nominations for Best Fanzine and although I was hoping for the win, I was expecting either Mimosa or Trapdoor to win. When Lan's Lantern was named, Mafa and I were both surprised. So was Phil, although I interpreted his reaction as smug fore-knowledge (since he knew who all the winners were). I walked to the stage, watching where my feet were so I wouldn't trip up the stairs, and I didn't see what flashed up on the screen. Neither did Spider.

When Lori Meltzer handed me the Hugo, she said through her smile, "Accept it, say your 'thank yous', and we'll straighten it out later." She was discreetly pointing to the name plate which had "Mimosa, edited by Dick and Nicki Lynch" engraved on it. That apparently had also been flashed on the screen. When I walked over to the podium, I saw the winner card sticking out of the envelope, and it read "Best Fanzine, Lan's Lantern edited by George 'Lan' Laskowski". I gave a very brief thank you, saying something along the lines that I had not expected to win, so I did not have anything prepared. As soon as I got off the stage I told my escort to find out what had happened. If I had really won, I

would go back to my seat with the Award and enjoy the rest of the ceremonies. But if Dick and Nicki had won, they had to receive the adulation they deserved (i.e., the torture of going on stage and making an acceptance speech). I did not want to wait until the ceremonies were over to find out. In a few minutes Joe Siclari, the convention chairman, and Jill Eastlake came running backstage and cleared up the error, apologizing profusely for the mistake. Mimosa had indeed won. (I found out later that James White was sitting with them, and he said when the mistake occurred, their language was "quite unChristian".)

I told Joe that we should get them on stage immediately and clear it up, and I asked if I could give them the Hugo. He agreed, saying that it was the least he could do. So, as Gardner Dozois was making his acceptance speech, Joe called Spider off stage and explained the situation. When Gardner walked off, Spider and I walked on, and I heard a stir among the crowd; I think they knew what was going to happen. I did not hear exactly what Spider said, but when he announced that Mimosa had actually won, I smiled, mentioned and yelled for Dick and Nicki to come on stage. Dick walked up alone amid raucous applause. I gave him the Hugo, patted him on the back, walked offstage and let him have the spotlight. I'm not sure when I heard when he said that Nicki was in the restroom, but that happened sometime in there.

Since the mistake had been righted, I returned to my seat to watch the rest of the ceremonies. Mafa gave me a big hug and said, "I'm sorry you had to give it back. No wonder Phil had such a surprised look on his face!"

Dick, I found out later, said his part of the acceptance speech, then said Nicki's part since she was not back yet, and finally left the stage to thunderous applause. Just before the four fiction categories were announced, Spider said he had to pause for the people to change slide trays. Someone in the audience yelled to bring Nicki on stage. A few others took up the cry, and Spider agreed. He looked out into the audience, and the pair entered behind him. Each carried their own Hugo--I asked Phil about that, and he said the just in case (Ghu forbid) they split up, each would have one. I doubted they would; they have been married for 19 years.

Nicki timidly went to the mike and said, "Thank you". More applause as they exited.

Geoff Landis won for his short story "A Walk in the Sun". I was pleased, but was also rooting for Resnick's "One Perfect Morning, with Jackals." In the novelette category Asimov won for "Gold", which was fine with me, though I had voted Ted Chiang's "Understand" first. Janet Asimov accepted for him, and thanked everyone; "Isaac loved SF first and foremost," she said, and was happy to accept on his

behalf.

Nancy Kress won in the Novella category for "Beggars in Spain". Her acceptance speech was wonderful. Her first convention was a worldcon in 1980 where she watched George R.R. Martin win his Hugo. In his speech, she said, George told of his first worldcon where he sat in the back, and watched someone else win a Hugo, and expressed a desire to be up on stage getting one. She felt the same was then, and here she was. Today, someone else might be at their first convention or Worldcon, and thinking the same thing. "My advice to you ---GO FOR IT!"

Lois McMaster Bujold went up to accept the Hugo for Best Novel, her book Barrayer. In her acceptance speech, Lois said that she knew she had lots of kindred spirits in the audience because during the retrospective people were applauding books. "Last year the fans voted me the Hugo for their favorite novel; this year they voted me the Hugo for my favorite novel!"

Spider wrapped up the ceremonies with a few choice puns, then asked all the winners to come up on stage for photographs. As Maia and I got up to leave, we were suddenly surrounded by people offering me condolences and saying what a class act I performed in giving the Hugo to the Lynch. This left me dumbfounded. I did what I thought was right, what I thought anyone else would have done. Throughout the evening people kept saying variations of the same thing, that I handled myself with dignity and class in a very difficult the situation. Moshe Feder commented that I moved from merely being a Hugo loser to a spot in fannish history. While I talked to friends and fans, Maia edged to the front to talk to Spider and tell him that we knew it wasn't his fault, and we didn't blame him. I did get a chance to tell him that myself a little later.

Eventually I got back to the Green Room to talk to some of the winners and take pictures. Dick and Nicki were just glowing with happiness, and I could not blame them. They expressed sympathy to me, but I told them it was all right--it was an unfortunate mistake; they had won, and they deserved it.

As Maia and I mingled in the crowd, a very contrite Jim Satterfield came up to me and apologized for the mistake. It turned out that he was working on recovering things from his hard drive (which had crashed) when the call came from the committee when they were making out the cards for the ceremony. He read all the winners correctly from the mass of papers he had, but his eye slipped when he got to the Best Fanzine category. I had come in second, but he read it as first. "Mistakes happen," I told him, shrugging my shoulders. "It's all right; we got it straightened out right away."

Maia and I went back to our hotel to change, then hit the Phantom party in the Clarion. We ex-

plained what had happened to Heather Nachman, June Edwards and Angelamarie Varesano. From there we walked to the Peabody to attend the parties. We went to the Hugo Nominees Party and I got to tell the story to several people, always emphasizing that Spider was not at fault, and that Lori Meltzer and the committee deserve credit for their quick actions in correcting the mistake as well. Peggy Ranson, Teddy Harvia, and several others commented that they would have been hard-pressed to give it up after having the Award in their hands. I told them that having one two before this made it easier to give up. Nicki was very appreciative of my comments that I DID think they deserved the award, and that I had not really expected to win this year.

Maia and I separated here. She went to filking to tell the story, and I wandered the floors with Phil Tortorici hitting what parties I could. By this time I had the story well-polished. When I got to the San Antonio party, Willie Siros mentioned something I had not thought of: What would have happened if the same situation had occurred in a different category--like the semi-prozine category! As I thought about that, another thing occurred to me: what if the situation had been reversed, or it had happened to one of the other nominees in the fanzine category. I began to see what was meant by all the comments I had been getting. Then I got a little embarrassed at thinking how impressive my actions must have looked.

Eventually I wound down. I headed for the filking to see if Maia were still there, and ran into Tom Smith, who sang me his new song about the Road Runner/Coyote, from the Coyote's point of view. It was funny. I found Maia and we headed back to our hotel and the room.

Sunday, September 6

The next morning in the Green Room, Janice Gelb came up to me and told me that I was getting a lot more sympathy from this than if I had only lost in the voting. I had to admit she was right, but I think I did keep things in perspective. In the concourse area of the convention center I told the story one more time to Greg and Linda Dunn, Rusty Hevelin and some others, when Dale Johnson walked by with Michael Whelan's two Hugos. I shouted, "Hi Dale. I used to have one of those," which caused much laughter. Dick Francis and several others told me that I wasn't fast enough to run out of the auditorium before they caught me and made me give it back. It was nice to have friends who could see the humorous side to the situation. Other comments that I heard: someone had a button made which read: "For all I know, I could have won a Hugo!" Another person said, "This will embarrass Nicki, but a new euphemism for going to the restroom could be, 'Excuse me, I need to go win a Hugo!'" Evelyn Leeper fig-

ured that since I had the Hugo in my hands for about 10 minutes, I had won 2.000019 Hugos. (I used my TI-81 calculator when I got home and came up with 2.00001902587519 Hugos!) I certainly enjoyed all the remarks, and bore no ill-will toward anyone.

Once again, wandering through the Huckster Room, I bought a couple more books from Larry Smith, then ran into Caz's table. Caz dealt mostly with old magazines and Andre Norton materials. He had contacted me about the Norton issue I had done, and several people he knew requested copies. While talking with his wife, the announcement came over the PA system that Fritz Leiber had died. "At least," I said aloud, "he saw the special issue of LL that I did on him before he died, since I sent them to him in the middle of August." I mentioned that several times to people the rest of the afternoon. What I didn't know was that I had sent the package to the wrong address, and it was returned while we were gone. I then sent them out again to his widow with a note of apology.

At 4 PM I was in the filk room at the Peabody to hear Larry Warner, Joey Shojf and friends. It was a wonderful concert, and my resolve to go to OVFF was firmed up. I wanted to hear more of Larry's singing.

That evening we ate in the expensive restaurant in the Clarion, and it was delicious. I don't remember who was in the group, but the conversation was interesting. I think I had hit overload at that point, and the memory cells just remembered the impression of good food and pleasant experiences.

In the evening Maia and I went to the Peabody Con suite and spent a couple hours talking to John Stanley and Jeanne Mealy. I told the refined version of the Hugo snafu, and Maia added in a few other stories. Eventually we headed for the filking and heard lots of nice songs. Duane Elms and his bride showed up in their costumes from the Masquerade competition, and announced that they had won Best of Show!

It wasn't too much later that Maia and I went back to our hotel to sleep.

Monday, September 7

Rather than brave the buffet one more time, we bought items from the snack bar for breakfast, and made sure we were packed and ready to leave. It did take a while for the taxi to arrive, and we shared a ride to the airport with Bill Wu. Our conversation was lively and interesting until we had to part at the airport to catch our separate flights. We had no trouble, picked up our luggage at the carousel, and headed out the door. Linda Van Dam was sitting waiting for us at the door, so the drive back was quick and painless. In appreciation

for her picking us up, Maia and purchased some tea from the England exhibit which she gave her as soon as we unpacked. The next morning I put some tea from the China exhibit in Bill McIlrath's mailbox at school in appreciation for him driving us out.



RAMBLINGS 41.3

After Worldcon, school started with barely a ripple in routine for me. The nice part about it, aside from missing the meetings while I was at Walt Disney World and Worldcon, was that I didn't have to work in the dorm. Filling my evenings was not going to be difficult. I arranged to have all my tests on Thursday, with me spending time for help in my classroom on Wednesday evening. It worked out fine (except when faculty meetings were scheduled on Wednesdays). The kids seem to like it (especially when we didn't have classes on Thursdays; ergo, no test!).

My classes this year consisted of one Precalculus class first period, two Geometry back-to-back third and fourth periods, and Algebra IIB (slow Algebra II) seventh and eighth. They were mostly pretty good classes, though I saw how some of the students could be problems a little later. At the beginning, except for the 7th period IIB class, things went very smoothly. The class in question had mostly students who came from Algebra IB last year--the weakest class in ability that the teacher had ever seen. Even knowing that I volunteered to teach the class, and more than once I questioned my sanity in doing so. But as the year went on things managed to work out. The 8th period class was very

good and willing to work. Most of the kids in the 7th period class work, but many of them were sophomore girls who needed to grow up a lot more before they could think of becoming good math students. In both classes I had a faculty child, which could be either good or bad. The 7th period one was a real pain--she thought she was good in math knew how to teach it. Granted, she started as one of the better students in the class, but as the year went on she became one of the worst. As a teacher she has lots to learn (like organization, presentation of material, the order of presentation, etc). She had a very unrealistic opinion of herself.

The fac-brat in the 8th period class knew he was there because he didn't work last year. He applied himself throughout the year and did consistently C work

I have other fac-brats too, but there was no real trouble with them. One I had last year in Geometry, and she did quite well. This year in Precalculus Sarah struggled, but she ended up in the B range--very good for her considering her ability in math was not very high. She knew she could see me for help at any time.

I was scheduled for chaperoning duty--all day faculty are assigned this--for the first weekend. I attended the ice-breaker dance, which was actually very well-attended. On Sunday of that weekend, the family got together to celebrate my parents' 51st Wedding Anniversary. I put money down to rent the Cranbrook Senior Cabin during the summer and all my sisters and their families showed up. My brother couldn't make it because he was in North Carolina working. We also celebrated my father's 73rd birthday--a little early (his is the same day as mine--different year) since he and my mother would be on their way to Alaska on a cruise the following weekend.

On September 18, I went to a Claudia Schmidt concert in East Lansing, Michigan. My friend Andrea Yeomans had started to help out with publicity for the area folk group, Ten Pound Fiddle, and she asked Maia and I if we would want to attend. Maia begged off (details below), so I drove the 90 miles there on Friday afternoon and met Andrea at her apartment. Her husband Jim was to have gone with us, but he had just started school (going back for his MBA) and needed to study; Saturday morning he was going to be running in a race, so would also need to rest. Andrea and I went out to dinner, then to the concert. Anyone who has heard Claudia sing knows she puts on a wonderful concert; this was no exception. The big difference here was that Andrea had not heard her before. I watched Andrea's face during some of the numbers, and saw the joy and appreciation there. It was a wonderful evening.

On Saturday evening, Maia took me out for my birthday to see a concert: The Music of Andrew Lloyd Webber. Michael Crawford was to be the lead

singer, but he was ill and not able to make the performance. We stayed anyway, and were delighted with the music. Having Crawford there would have been an extra bonus; as it was, we listened and watched. We went home humming Webber songs.

On Sunday, Claudia Schmidt was supposed to have a concert at The Ark in Ann Arbor. I tried to get tickets by calling the place. I was given a number to call (via an answering machine) to reserve tickets, but was put on hold at the University of Michigan Student Union Office. I waited nearly 20 minutes, while every 30 seconds a recorded voice kept telling me that all operators were busy and to please hold the line and thank you for being patient. I gave up, and figured that since I had seen Claudia once that weekend, that would suffice.

On the following weekend, Maia and I had two obligations on Saturday. The first was a delayed "Labor Day Picnic" in our neighborhood. The Van Dams, who picked us up from the airport, usually organized a gathering of the neighbors on Valley Way (with other faculty invited who wanted to come) for Labor Day afternoon and evening. This year, it was pre-empted by a picnic for the dorm students, and ALL resident faculty had to attend. So Ed and Linda postponed the picnic until a more viable weekend presented itself. The 26th was the first available Saturday, so that's when it was. We stayed outside for about a half hour before the rain started to fall. Ed and Linda moved everyone into their place and finished food and conversations indoors.

Maia and I had other plans for the evening. Jean Jambas and Marshall Muller had been trying to arrange to have dinner with us since June, and we finally decided on the 26th. We headed for their new house and were given the Grand Tour. It's a lovely place, and we looked with envious eyes on the expanse of blank wall space. They were going to put up pictures; I envisioned bookshelves. The dinner was very pleasant, as was the company and conversation.

During the week that we returned from Florida, Maia got a letter from our doctor saying that she had two fatigue viruses: Epstein-Barr and cytomegalovirus. Individually they aren't too bad, but together they were the cause of Maia being constantly tired and wanting to sleep--but not being able to sleep all the time. She was unable to see the doctor earlier than her September 25 appointment, so she had to wait until then to get all the details. She returned home with a release from work for four weeks, possibly extending it to six. The final prognosis was Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, which seems to be a function of a deficiency in the immune system. Being a viral infection, there was nothing that could be done with drugs, so she needed to rest, let the virus run their courses, and begin to build her strength back slowly. It could take up to two years for recovery. We found out that several

other fans have it (CFS), including Sally Childs-Helton, who started to send Maia lots of information about the disease and ways of dealing with it.

Thus, when we went to CONTEXT the following weekend (October 2-4), I drove the entire trip, and Maia slept or rested in the car.

CONTEXT V

Maia paced herself at the con by taking frequent breaks; she went back to our room and rested every couple of hours, and thus was able to enjoy the convention more. We saw Joy, Maia's sister, and Dale and Lea. Lea was at the convention for Saturday, and participated from the audience at some of the program items. We invited her to have dinner with us in our room--we ordered a pizza and picked up softdrinks from the consuite.

Lois McMaster Bujold was one of the special guests, and she did a reading from the next Miles book which she was in the process of writing. Lois has gotten Miles into a very strange and extremely difficult situation from which it is going to take her several chapters to extricate him.

The GoH was George Alec Effinger, and he was fun. His wit and humor added a lot to the convention. I attended a Worldcon bid party in his room--San Antonio in 97--and had a great time talking with him and Debbie Hodgkinson. She and I were on a panel together about "Murphy's Laws for Fandom", an idea I picked up from Astromancer Quarterly, a pub-

lication of the Niagra Falls in 98 Worldcon bid committee. The panel and party both went off quite well.

On Saturday night I was drafted to judge the Costume contest, which turned out to be rather easy since there were few entries, and we had enough award certificates for everyone. Jim Overmyer and Dennis McKiernan were the mainstays of the judging --they had done it many times before.

I also judged the short story contest. After the reader/judges in Columbus read and made their assessments, the submissions were sent to me and I brought them back to Columbus with me for the convention. The first few that I read were quite amateurish, which made me a little nervous, since the winner was going to be published in Lan's Lantern. Then I hit the last four, all of which were much better. The winner was "Ragnhall's Story" by Janeen S. DeBoard, clearly the best of the set, though a couple others were quite good. (Her story is published on page 115.)

As before, I agreed to publish the winners of the Limerick Writing contest, whose poems are published here.

RAMBLINGS 41.4

We had a short week of classes from October 5-7. Yom Kippur was on Wednesday, so I had no Jewish students in class. Thursday was an in-service day, and the math department talked about the usual difficulty in finding a meeting time where most everyone is free to meet. We finally decided to use the third period of the school day on the last Thursday of the month--only three people taught then (I was one), and we could arrange for tests which could be proctored by teachers from other departments. Since

The Context V Limerick Contest

FIRST PLACE

A chafing young Amazon dear,
Complained to her agent o'er beer,
"I'll suffer the bugs,
And musclebound thugs,
But nix on the metal brassiere!"

--Carol Ottolenghi-Barga

HONORABLE MENTION

Here's to the Galactic Patrol,
Never known to miss a black hole,
They shoot their sperm in
Anything found squirm'n',
And add their offspring to their roll.

--Jeff Tolliver



WAITING FOR THE VET

I had designated Thursday as my test day, that became the meeting day. (However, we really didn't use it--people were too busy to want to meet.)

We also talked about other issues--semesterizing classes, looking into new textbooks for next year (the current Precalculus and Algebra books we are using will not be printed next year, and maybe the Geometry text too), and the school evaluation from three years ago. There was also some talk about visiting other schools and their math programs, but we had talk about that before, and nothing came of it then, so I had little hope that it would happen this year. We all hoped that the discussion of these and other topics would continue to take place throughout the school year.

Advisor letters to their advisees were due on Thursday as well. I didn't worry, since I had turned mine in two weeks earlier. Midquarter comments were due on Monday of that week (October 5); as usual, I had mine turned in earlier--on Thursday evening, after I had graded all the tests I gave that day, and saw who needed comments. As I did last year, all the students in my Algebra IIB classes got a comment, though that was difficult since I had so many in the two classes.

On Friday we had the Headmasters' Holiday which made the students very happy --a four-day weekend. The faculty were quite pleased as well (as soon as their meetings were over on Thursday). In the evening, Maia and I went to Mitch and JoAnn's new house in Brighton (about 45 minutes away).

CONCLAVE XVII and Parents' Weekend

The following weekend was CONCLAVE and Parents' Weekend at school. I asked Liz Huffman, who was in charge of programming for the convention, not to schedule me before 2PM on Saturday since I had to be at school to meet with parents. It worked out quite well. I was on three panels: an Asimov memorial, fanzines vs. electronic communication, and an interview with Lois McMaster Bujold, who was the Guest of Honor. They all went quite well, considering they were all back-to-back.

The interview with Lois was quite interesting. I had sent her a list of questions beforehand, and we had discussed some things at the pre-con party on Thursday night. Toward the end of the interview, I asked her something she had not been expecting: "Which of the Warner Brothers cartoon characters--Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, Porky Pig, and so on--would you pair with the characters in the Miles Vorkosigan books? You can use the Tiny Toon characters too, if you want." That stumped her and everyone else.

In spite of missing several hours of the con on Saturday, I had a very good time. My interest in filk was still on the upswing, so I spent lots of

time there on Friday and Saturday evenings. Andrea's debut with her guitar was well-received; Barry Childs-Helton (Fan Guest of Honor with his wife and partner in filk Sally) commented that she had come along very well for only having started playing it this summer.

I had some very good conversations with a lot of different people, including Kathleen Conat and Don Wenzel, Jamie McQuinn and Halina Harding, Marie Meisel, Lisa Leutheuser, Marshall Muller and Jean Jambas, Leslie Larkins, Tom Smith, Barry and Sally, Lois, and many more.

In the apazine MISHAP, I had asked Dave Alway about his distant cousin (by marriage) Susan Dundas, mentioning that there was a Dundas in my family tree. I met and talked with Susan, at CONCALVE, and found out that we were indeed related. Her father was the brother of my aunt. My mother's brother (my uncle) Joe married Alice Dundas (or was it Harrison? Alice's mother remarried, so there were two surnames in that family) over 44 years ago. So this meant that I was related to Dave Alway. It IS a small world!

OHIO VALLEY FILK FEST 8

The next weekend was OHIO VALLEY FILK FEST. During the week, I thought a little about maybe writing a filk for the song-writing contest. Tuesday evening as I got ready for bed, I came up with a probable tune and topic. Wednesday I wrote down some of the lyrics and firmed up the basic melody. Thursday I re-wrote all the lyrics and finished them. Then I dug out the guitar and found that one of the strings had rusted through (how long had it been?). I couldn't find any strings that night, but Maia purchased a set for me on Friday morning. I didn't have time to string the guitar until I got to the convention and then didn't have wire-cutters to clip off the excess wire. And the guitar would not hold its tuning. So when I finally did present the song, I sang it a capella. I needed more practice, but I did try.

The convention itself was very enjoyable. Maia was originally going to come to it, but she figured that she would be better off staying home and resting. She was due to go back to work on Monday (October 26) but her boss did not want her to return without a release from her doctor. Dr. Mary Goldman is a very good doctor, so she was booked up with appointments until Maia's regularly scheduled appointment on November 3. Maia tried to look disappointed when she told me she should couldn't go back to work until after November 3.

This meant that Andrea and I would share a room ourselves, which worked out quite well, after I calmed down from the 4 hour drive, took care of the need to take a shower and the intense desire to



string the guitar, tune it (and try to work out an arrangement for my song, which it turned out I was unable to do anyway). Andrea noticed this, and left me alone for an hour, then we talked (and talked--we talked an awful lot that weekend) and became very comfortable with each other's presence.

Andrea was a big hit with several of the people who had not heard her before. She was asked to join in on harmonizing with some songs. Perhaps the biggest surprise for me was the young, 8-year-old Acacia (Casey) Sears who sang "Lullaby for a Weary World" in the one-shots (accompanied by her father), and on Saturday night sang Bill Sutton's "Caretaker" and Joey Shoji's "Mommy, Can I Have a Spaceship?". The last I listened to in amazement, since she, with her young voice, managed to express age changes for the different verses sufficiently enough for me to notice. (I found out from Maia later that she was the one at the Chicago Worldcon last year who sang that song, not knowing that Joey was there to hear it.)

One of the main reasons I went to OVFF was to listen to Larry Warner, Kathy Mar, and other filkers. I didn't get to hear them or talk to them as much as I would have liked, but I cherished the time I did spend with them.

The Pegasus Awards were given out at the mid-night banquet. I was hoping for Joe Ellis to win for either composer or performer. He missed out on both. Marie Schneider was the Listener GoH, and she presented the awards "Oscar Style". She ad-libbed a lot, joked around and made references to close-ups on camera and so on. So, when Moonwolf was announced as Best Performer, He got out and did some one-handed push-ups. That was another of several highlights at the convention.

RAMBLINGS 41.5

I got a request from Mike Brim of CHAMBANACON to do the usual life-guard routine, the early Saturday morning panel, and write an introduction to Barry and Sally, the Fan Guests. I worked out the intro easily after talking to them at OVFF and mailed

that out. I agreed to the panel, but declined life-guarding. My sensitivity to chlorine had increased in the past year, something I regret since I prefer to swim for exercise over other activities. 20 minutes in the pool leaves me with draining sinuses and sneezing 6 hours later. I am willing to put up with some discomfort to get into shape, but I space out my swimming when I go to Vic Tanny.

Friday, October 30, Maia and I drove up to the Lansing area to hear Kitty Donohoe. We met with Jim and Andrea, went out to dinner, then to the concert. The four of us were supposed to hook up with Michelle Kennedy at the Kiva Auditorium for the concert. Michelle didn't show up until near the mid-concert break (she had gone out to dinner with her father and had trouble finding an unbusy restaurant). Kitty Donohoe sang in the first half, and it was wonderful. The second half was devoted to a group called Party of Three, who played Scottish reels and other fiddle and flute/whistle music. The third person played guitar. The music was interesting, but wore thin after a half-hour (it all sounded the same to me--it would take several listenings to distinguish among the various selections).

Even though it ran late, we had a very delightful time with friends, though Jim and Maia were exhausted by the time it was over. Andrea and I joked that the next time we'll leave Jim and Maia at their apartment to talk, and sleep when they got tired, while we went to the concert.

School was going as well as could be expected. Maia mentioned before that one of the joys of graduating from College was that she would no longer have to fill in little blue circles with number 2 lead pencils ever again. Well, I was doing just that. The new attendance sheets were all computerized on scantron sheets, so I had to "bubble in" absences for every class. And I had to bubble in the grades for each student for the quarter grades.

Since Wednesday (11/4) was the end of the first quarter, I had to write comments on all my students. Because of my policy of tests on Thursday, I was able to close out my grades a week before the end of the quarter, though I did give an extra assignment for credit to my slow Algebra IIB classes. Still, I got a good jump on writing comments, and I finished the last of them Friday afternoon.

On November 10, Maia and I went to see the second of our season's ticket plays at Meadowbrook Theatre, Mass Appeal. According to the brief description I had read about the play, I thought it would be similar to Going My Way, where a new priest (Bing Crosby) comes into a financially unstable parish to replace the current pastor (Barry Fitzgerald) and restore the faith in terms of dollars and spirits. It wasn't. A young deacon from a local seminary is taken in by an older priest who gives feel-good sermons and drinks too much, while the deacon is idealistic, and wants to shock the

parishoners into changing, and doing something active with/for their beliefs. The head of the seminary, however, has other ideas; because the deacon spoke in defense of two other seminarians who were gay, the head asked the deacon about his past sex life--and the deacon answers truthfully about experimenting with both sexes, and finding that it was not fulfilling. Helping people through the church was fulfilling for him, which was why he desired celibacy and the priesthood. He's washed out of the seminary, and the older priest makes a sincere appeal to his parishoners to help this young deacon. With that the play ends.

It had a lot of humorous spots, as well as the serious undertones, but I don't think really addressed the initial premise of getting the staid parishoners to do something. I have seen that this is also a movie, though I don't really have a desire to get it; seeing it once was enough. Anyway, I enjoyed it, but left with a nagging feeling that there should have been more, although the two actors were superb.

On Thursday of that week (Nov 12), we had our wonderful grade review meeting where we talked about kids in trouble. Nancy, the new secretary, acting on my orders, called to arrange for hot water and cookies to be delivered there for the evening. I told her that the lead time was 3 weeks in advance, something that her bosses did not know. (That's one of the things that I picked up from Barbara, the former secretary, whom the administrators did not ask to write out a description of things she did before she left; thus, Nancy was in the dark on a lot of things, but I tried to keep her informed.)

The biggest problem, which I anticipated, was that the hot water was only luke-warm, so I had brought my 30-cup coffee maker over and made sure everyone had some hot water. I found that I will have to do this earlier next time.

The next day was Career Day at Cranbrook for the Juniors and Seniors, drug and alcohol seminars for the Sophomores, while the freshmen helped set up the annual fundraiser Giftorama at Kingswood. I escorted a woman lawyer, the mother of one of the students, through three sessions. It was quite interesting, and I learned more about the profession, and am not as down on them as I was before.

In the afternoon, I went to the bank to take out some money and found that my paycheck had not been deposited as it was supposed to have. It took a couple of hours to find out what had happened, which did not put me in a very good mood, but because of Veteran's Day on Wednesday, the tapes for the direct deposit weren't delivered to the bank until Friday, and would not be posted until Saturday morning. Fortunately, I did have enough money so that I could go out to dinner with Andrea and Jim, and to a folk concert with Andrea afterwards.

On my home from Lansing, I stopped by the bank to check my account with the ATM card, and found that at 1:31 AM, the transfer had not been done. However, by 10:00 AM, I did have money, so I withdrew enough to pay some bills and go shopping. I hoped that this wouldn't happen on Thanksgiving--I would need the money for CHAMBANACON.

On Sunday, Mafa and I went to my sister Janice's house to celebrate her son Joshua's 7th birthday. We had a pretty good time, and it was nice to be away from campus--especially because Giftorama was going on. And I was happy to be away on Friday night, when they had the Champagne Opening. For a high fee, people come to the Opening, drink wine and champagne, and get first crack at buying the already high-priced gifts (mostly crafts) at an extra 10% higher. I stopped going to these openings after about 7 years of them. I really didn't want to be around that night (so the Folk Concert in Lansing was a good excuse) because the new road was open. It runs from Woodward into campus, and it is a deceptively safe, fast road. It is fast--it's new and wide-opened, but the curves are sharp, and in spite of the 15 mph posted speed limit, few people drive less than 25 on it (and get passed by students and parents if you do, even though there is a double yellow line down the center). There had already been some accidents on the portion opened for travel between the campuses when school opened (because people were driving too fast), but the new portion is more dangerous--you come down a hill to curve over a bridge, and if you go too fast, you can slide into the other lane, and into the bridge wall.

So, I didn't want to hear all the accidents happening because of the semi-inebriated rich folks who don't follow speed limits anyway driving too fast and running off the road. However, I was wrong. I talked to one of the guards on campus Sunday morning and asked him how many accidents we had on the new road over the weekend. He replied that there were no accidents--there were enough guards and barricades around that traffic was well-controlled--but some people were clocked driving at 45 and faster mph by the Bloomfield Hills police on the road and were ticketed. At least no one was hurt, and I guess the money raised was worth the inconvenience.

I had a faculty meeting Tuesday night. It was actually more exciting than the usual meetings we have. Lillian Bauder, the president of Cranbrook, talked about the various projects going on around campus, then listened to complaints for about 2 hours. She said that she was surprised to hear so many, especially at how weary we sounded. I didn't say anything; as you have read in my Ramblings in LL #40, I am convinced that all the complaints I had stated openly last year were held against me and caused me to be dropped from resident faculty.

I felt that I should keep a low profile this year so I would not be taken off the faculty completely for next year. With Maia in ill-health, we could not afford for me to be out of work. For us it would not be me just losing a job, it's also losing inexpensive housing. So I just sat and listened, heard Lillian say a couple of things I knew not to be true, and silently agreed with my colleagues who stated their positions on the various trouble spots in morale, workload, etc.

One other thing that the faculty was hit with was that we were all supposed to get chauffeur's licenses. When I renewed my license in August, I got a regular one instead of the chauffeur's license I have been carrying for the past 16 years. Since I did dorm duty, I figured that the chauffeur's license would be valuable to have; I drove the students to the libraries, theatres, shopping malls, etc. The law has changed such that anyone who drives kids for an institution (and there are other aspects too, like pizza delivery people who use their own cars) must have the appropriate license--a chauffeur's license. It cost \$20. Fortunately, Arlyce Siebert, the head of the upper school, said that she would underwrite the cost, and would even give us all a half-day off the in-service day on November 30 to get them.

The glitch for me was that I did not participate in any school activities which required me to drive students any more. Should I or shouldn't I get one? I asked the secretary about it; she checked with Arlyce, and told me that Arlyce said for everyone to get a chauffeur's license, including me, since I have the "potential" to be driving students.

Wednesday evening I had my usual extra-help session for my math students. One from Precal came in and about a half-dozen from my geometry classes. Most of them did well. Since it helped my kids in the past, I continued to do them. But for the test scheduled on Dec 3, I would not have a study session; Dec 2 was the first Wednesday in December, and I had a SF club meeting then. So most of the kids were on their own, which would do them good--I had two students who were attending them and pushing me to give them (and the others) problems which will be on the test, since they all made the effort to show up for the extra help. Well, I did somewhat--I used problems similar to what would be on the geometry test, but backwards. So one of them had memorized some of the steps and replicated them, but without any thought--that is, he had some of the reasons right, but the statements for the proof showed he didn't understand what was going on. He complained because I only gave him 2 out of 8 points: "These are the correct reasons--I checked with someone else; don't I get credit for them?" He had no understanding of logic of geometric proof, so I didn't expect him to see that the correct reasons mean nothing without the correct statements set

in a logical order. Oh well, this is one of the hazards of teaching a course where logical thinking is the central topic.

I continued to go to Vic tanny to exercise. I usually walk/run, use the machines, but don't swim much anymore (I use the jacuzzi and steam room, though, which are in the pool area, but my reaction to the chlorine is getting worse and worse). Since I have been having some trouble with the shin muscles being sore, I asked Andrea about what to do--she runs, and Jim is a long-distance marathon runner--and she suggested some simple exercises to take care of those muscles. It seemed to work; I had some aches, but much fewer than before.

In early November I got a large envelop from Pennsylvania. A woman named Lynn McMillen wrote to ask if she could write reviews for me in exchange for the fanzine. Lynn writes reviews professionally for the Greensburg Tribune-Review, a newspaper with 60,000+ readership. She had interviewed Julia and mentioned that in spite of all the SF & F that she has read, she still knew little about fandom. So Julia suggested she get in touch with me. I wrote a reply and sent her LL #38-40. She had also sent some sample reviews, and they are very good. It's nice to have a professional reviewer submit something (see her reviews on pp 88-95). Mike Resnick had also sent his latest travelogue to Africa, and that is in this issue (p 42). To me this meant that I had better get working on it.

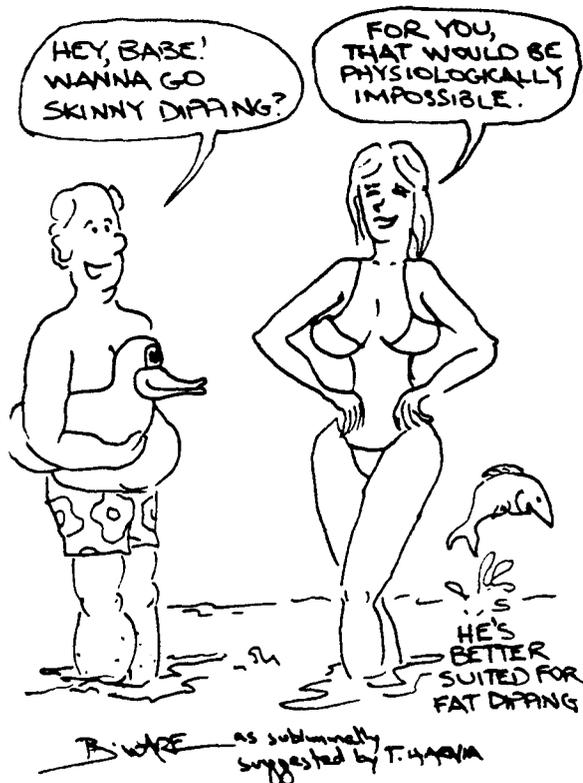
Thanksgiving was pleasant--we went to my sister Judy's for dinner, as usual and had a pleasant time with the rest of the family.

CHAMBANACON

From my sister's house we drove to Lansing and spent the night in a Comfort Inn with a hot tub in the room. In the morning we picked up Andrea and headed for CHAMBANACON. I had figured it would be easier to work the trip that way than to drive to Lansing in the morning and add an extra 90 minutes to the trip.

We had a great time at the convention. I didn't lifeguard and therefore was able to attend the late night filking. Nate and the Suttons were there, though I didn't spend as much time talking with them as I had wanted. We missed the Zahns, who have moved to Oregon. It was nice to spend that Friday evening with them and a lasagna dinner--and they appreciated NOT having turkey on the day after Thanksgiving. But, that tradition is gone now; we will have to start another one.

I had my usual early Saturday morning panel, and a few people wandered in. We talked about all sorts of things, and tried to determine that with the 13 people in the room if two of us had the same birthday. None did. Who said fans aren't unusual.



driving for any length of time, and Andrea was way too tired to take the wheel.

RAMBLINGS 41.6

When the time came for the winter vacation, EVERYONE was ready--students, faculty, administration. I was hoping to make good use of the time off by working on the video collection, the books that have been piling up, my classroom which needed a good cleaning, the Lantern, and some other things. I got a few of the planned projects done, but not everything. I had wanted to have LL out for CONFUSION, but didn't make it.

Maia's health improved very slowly. I had to take on more of the household duties, including more of the laundry (which we normally shared almost equally), cooking dinner, washing dishes almost every night, grocery shopping, etc. As before, I cooked large quantities of food, 2-3 times a week, and we ate leftovers the other days. Slowly Maia gathered strength, but was far from her usual self. She was off work for a total of 10 weeks, and started back gradually the week before Christmas. She had been able to get out and do some Christmas shopping, and did occasional runs to the library. But it was very rough-going for both of us.

Dave and Diana Stein had their annual Christmas party, and we attended for as long as Maia could manage. The snack food was good, the company delightful, and the gift exchange quite pleasing. We gave Diana some art books as reference material for her drawing, and Dave received a copy of the Buck Rogers serial.

Tom and Tara Barber also had a Christmas party--on the same Saturday that Andrea and Jim Yoemans had planned one. Maia accepted Tom and Tara's invitation, and I accepted Jim and Andrea's before consulting with her. Given the time and distances between the two, I decided to hit both.

We went to Ann Arbor to Tom and Tara's house first. I stayed for about a half hour before getting into the car to make the hour's drive to Lansing to Jim and Andrea's. Unfortunately, there was an accident on the freeway which backed up a couple of miles, and then traffic was re-routed around the accident. I got to the Yoemans' apartment an hour later than I had wanted, but I was glad I went. After a couple hours of conversation with Dennis Howard, Michelle Kennedy, and other attendees, and listening to Andrea's new song ("Without"), I headed back to Ann Arbor, telling everyone that I just told people at the other party I was going up the road for some beer; so I got sidetracked... I arrived at the Barber household close to two hours later than I had told Maia I would be back. She was having too good a time to notice that I was late.

I did an interview with Andy Offutt, which did not go off as well as we had hoped. Still we had a good time. I made up questions, and he ad-libbed answers--some of which were even true. I missed his GoH speech, though I have read it, and have it to publish. (Look for it in the next issue.)

Maia spent time in the hucksters room at Barry and Sally Childs-Helton's table. She offered to sit the table for them in exchange for space to sell the Charlie Card Calendar. Once again, the CONTRAPTION committee contracted to put together a calendar to raise money for cerebral palsy, a disease which Charlie Card, the son of author Orson Scott Card, has. The money goes to the CP fund, and NOT Charlie Card. It is just named in his honor.

Andrea sang well at the filks. She had a little difficulty with the guitar, but given the length of time she had been playing the instrument, it was understandable. And she was quite delighted to meet Nate. There was a new filker which she befriended--Graham Leathers from Winnipeg--who owes her several letters now. Graham was a hit at the filk, a new voice which was strong and clear. We all looked forward to hearing more from him. It also turned out that he was being recorded for a tape (which Bill Roper had out in time for CONFUSION--see the review on page 112).

Andrea, who was sharing our room, got in late Saturday/early Sunday morning. Since we were scheduled to leave about 1 PM, I went back to the room to check on her at Noon. She was up because she had just gotten a call from her husband. We all said our good-byes and headed home. I drove all the way. Maia's Chronic Fatigue Syndrome prevented her from

Christmas morning was a comfortable time spent with Maia. We had a leisurely breakfast and exchanged gifts. I got several little things for Maia; some of them she actually needed. The big gifts for her were an emerald pendant with a box-style gold chain and a watch from the Smithsonian catalogue with an abalone shell face and wristband. She got me a new keyboard for the computer, and a tape of Brent Spiner: 01' Yellow Eyes Is Back, a collection of old-style songs which were great to hear (see the review on p 112). The big surprise were the tickets to see Phantom of the Opera. We went to see it on December 29. It was wonderful. Kevin Gray was the Phantom, and his interpretation of the role was a little different than Michael Crawford, or Colm Wilkinson, but valid and very well done.

Christmas day was spent with my family. Gifts were exchanged, and I got some nice things for Tim, my brother-in-law whose name I drew for this year. Maia's gifts for my father were well-received too. My sister Judy and her husband drew, respectively, Maia and me, and we got some very nice things from them--including a copy of Beauty and the Beast. The kids all made out like crazy!

I finally got disgusted with the Renault Alliance. The driver's door didn't want to stay closed in cold weather, it was getting lousy mileage, the rear-window defroster didn't work, the tires were badly balanced so that they were wearing on the inside, the idle was set too low and in cold weather would not run fast enough to stay running without assistance (which meant that I couldn't start the car and let it run while I scraped windows), the air conditioner wasn't working, the emergency brake didn't hold, the brakes were starting to rub metal against metal, and finally it was having trouble starting. (There were other minor things as well, like the gear shift knob that came off periodically, the driver's side window knob which was missing, the cassette player that didn't work, etc.) I looked in the car section of the local paper at the nice deals being offered for buying and leasing new cars, and decided to get a new car. I leased a new Toyota Tercel, bright (Smokey-bait) red, with a four-speed manual transmission, a/c, AM/FM stereo cassette player (auto reverse), and cruise control. What this would mean for us was fewer long-distance and expensive conventions, and much less money spent on video tapes.

We leased it on December 26, picked it up on the 28th, and drove it to Columbus on January 1 to visit Joy and her family. Maia told her sister I got it for her for Christmas.

Maia and I went to our usual New Years Eve party at Chris and Becky's place in Whitmore Lake. I made some hors d'oeuvres this year, instead of my usual jalapeno dip with tortilla chips: ham and cream cheese wrapped around green onion. They were all



gone by the time the party broke up after midnight. We handed out the last of our Christmas gifts and received some in return. We had a very good time and didn't stay too late after Midnight, since we were driving to Columbus to visit Joy and her family on New Years Day. Andrea and Jim showed up for the party, and I found out later they stayed until about 4 AM before driving home.

The drive to Columbus and back in the new car was quite pleasant. The visit was fun and we exchanged gifts as usual. The family gave me a collection of audio tapes from the radio show X Minus One, which had adaptations of various short stories by many famous SF authors.

On the way back we stopped to see Lois McMaster Bujold in Marion. We gave her a couple loaves of cinnamon bread and spent time talking with her. She said that she will be working on the sequel to The Spirit Ring when she finishes the new Miles book. She had bought several books on Venice, where the sequel will take place. She also let us know that, if we had not heard through the fannish grapevine, she and John had divorced--amicably. He would be staying in the area to be near the children.

School started after the Christmas vacation, and I pushed my classes to be ready for quests on Thursday, then finished off some new material and began review for exams. Since I handed out review sheets on Monday (Jan 11), and set aside that whole week for review, the Snow Day on Wednesday was welcome, but not critical to exam preparation. The only irritation was the one student who avoided attending class for three days (she really needed the review and couldn't afford to miss--especially with unexcused absences), and the 6 students who skipped out on Friday, the last day of review. But that wasn't so much my problem as theirs, since it would only hurt them.

As usual, I had exams prepared well in advance of the exam day. Tuesday, January 19, I administered the exams, began correcting them, and stopped in the evening to attend Master Harrold...and the Boys at Meadowbrook Theatre. Maia did not feel well that

evening (and the rest of the week was difficult for her as well) so she stayed home. The play was slow in starting, but got better about halfway through. I almost walked out, and would have if there had been an intermission, but it was done in one act, and ended up being a very powerful statement about the race relations in South Africa.

I finished correcting and grading the exams by Wednesday afternoon, and was finished with comments that I had to write on Thursday afternoon. I turned everything in, and relaxed until CONFUSION on Friday. I waited until the mail came before going to the hotel to check in.



RAMBLINGS 41.7

TRANSCENDENTAL CONFUSION

The convention was fairly low-key for me. I enjoyed it, and enjoyed sharing the room with Nate Bucklin and Hope Leiberman. I had two mathematical conversations in the course of the weekend--with Mike Glicksohn and Bruce Burdick--about what the trig functions tangent, secant, cosecant and cotangent are with relation to the unit circle on the coordinate plane. Most other conversations dealt with catching up on news about the persons, trials and joys, ups and downs, and tribulations and happinesses.

I was on one panel about international fandom, and an immigrant from the Ukraine (whose name I've forgotten) was also included. Leah Zeldes Smith and Niel Rest were also there, and the panel went off quite well. The panel was (I believe) Leah's idea, but she asked me to moderate.

Maia was on one panel: "What To Do Between Conventions". The title says it all, though the panelists didn't cover everything that fans could do as fanac. I did make mental notes for a similar panel that I'll be on at MILLENNICON, and maybe CAPRICON.

I attended some of the filking--but most of the "good stuff" happened early in the evening and got slow after midnight. When Nate Bucklin, Tom Smith, Pete Grubbs, Steve MacDonald and Mary Ellen Wessels were there the place was lively. Others who performed were okay, but the spark of excitement did not seem to be there. The location of the room (opposite the bar and band) might have had something to do with that.

I had several extended conversations with Andrea Yeomans and Pete Grubbs. Pete is a teacher, an English major working on his PhD, who also plays in a band, writes music, plays wonderful guitar, and tells stories. He can keep an audience spellbound with his stories, which is why Andrea and I stayed up talking to him until after 4 AM on Saturday morning. I'm looking forward to the next time I see him, which probably won't be until OHIO VALLEY FILK FEST. He did, however, promise to send me some SF literary papers for possible publication.

When I returned to school on Monday morning to prepare for my classes on Tuesday (we had Monday off), I found out that the Academic Deans had once again changed the rules about comment writing--I had seven more comments to write. We HAD to include comments on students whose exam grades were a D+ or lower, regardless of how the quarter or semester grade turned out. I grumbled and complained, but did them. Others refused to do the extra writing, telling the academic deans that they were abusing their power.

The week went by fairly quickly. I handed out the paper assignments as I usually do, went over exams, and began new material. One student tried to turn in his paper early, but I showed him the criteria he missed--he had no endnotes or bibliography, nor did he have enough sources, so I gave it back to him to add those things. I admired his enthusiasm, and I'm glad he did turn it in early so I could make sure he did it correctly. (Andrej is a immigrant from Russia.)

We got the mailing from CONFRANCISCO which had the hotel forms in it. Since we were going to share a room with Lynn Margosian, I called her up in St. Paul, Minnesota, to talk to her. An hour later I told Maia that she would go along with what we would decide--a combination of close-to-the-convention-center and lowest price for a triple. So we mailed that out right away.

Saturday evening, February 6, Andrea had a small birthday party for her husband Jim. Maia had intended to go, but she had been battling her CFS as well as a sinus infection and a cold, so she decided not to chance the trip to Lansing. She stayed home and slept, while I went to the party. I had a good time talking with everyone, including Dennis Howard and Michelle Kennedy; in addition to some fans there were people from Jim's MBA classes. We got him a CD of Brint Spiner's 01' Yellow-Eyes Is Back, which I packed in a larger box using Werther's Originals candy as the "packing material". He liked both gifts.

On Monday, Feb 8, I went to the bar meeting at the Sidetrack in Ypsilanti to pick up our MISHAP-zines from Dave Alway. I hadn't been feeling good

all day, but had a good time talking to people while the tickle in my throat got worse. The next morning I could barely talk. I suffered through three days that week before someone mentioned to me that her husband sounded like I did, and it turned out he had bronchitis. So I made an appointment to see a doctor at the clinic on Friday, and called in sick. That Friday, February 12, was Fathers' Visiting Day, but I did not feel well at all; besides, the only times open when I could get in to see the doctor were during my classes. Except for the flu bug which was going around, I was healthy. Both the nurse and doctor commented on my blood pressure (110 over 80). I told them I was working out to stay in shape and lose weight. I mentioned that I was going to have a physical on March 17, and wanted to know how long I had to fast so I could have a blood test for cholesterol, the doctor suggested I have the blood tests done two weeks before the exam so the results would be in. I had those done on March 1, after fasting all day.

CAPRICORN

On the afternoon of the 18th I dismissed my 8th period class early, Mafa picked me up outside my classroom door, and we headed for the airport. It was CAPRICORN weekend, and I was the Fan GoH. There was only a small delay in getting out of Detroit Metro, but we ran into a little bit of trouble with the limo which was supposed to pick us up at O'Hare Airport. Eventually we got that straightened out, and Kathy Nerat (programming person and guest liaison) met us at the door. When we walked into our suite we were amazed. It was two levels, with the bed on the loft. It was very impressive. It was also a little impractical--the bathroom was on the first level, so if you needed it in the middle of the night, you had to be awake enough to navigate the stairs.

We had dinner with some of the committee and the Pro GoH, Terry Pratchett. The Artist GoH was Darlene Coltraine, who sat at another table with other committee members. I overate, and was determined to get into the pool for some swimming, or at least use the exercise area of the Pheasant Run Resort Hotel, but the remnants of the flu virus, and having too good a time doing other things dissolved that determination.

I was on 5 panels and had an autograph session. When Kathy Nerat sent me the form about program items, there was a section asking if I wanted to have an autograph session. I wrote "Yes, if you really want me to". So I got one. At my table was Mary Frances Zambreno, a fairly new author who had one hardcover published (young adult horror) a couple of years ago, and therefore out of print. She and I figured that we wouldn't get much business.



The third person was Terry Pratchett, and we talked to each other while he signed books for the hour.

At various times I talked with Bruce Schaefer, Marey Ellen Wessels (MEW), Jim Landis, Dave Alway, and other fans. I found out about three pregnancies: Jo Anselm Gehm (due in October, which unfortunately she lost through a miscarriage), Barbara Van Tilberg (pregnant with twins, whose husband does hand-painted t-shirts), and Sharon Forstchen (wife of author Bill Forstchen, who used to teach with colleagues who are now at Cranbrook). I spent about an hour talking about films, serials and videos with Dave Gorecki. Jill Smethells had dinner with us and we talked for a couple of hours then, as well as at times throughout the con.

Steve McDonald, a professional singer and filker from Kalamazoo showed up with guitar in hand. He and MEW have been singing together in bars around K'zoo. He brought his wife Susan to the con--her first one--and it seemed as though she had a good time. Susan and I hit it off quite well; she's a 4th grade teacher and we spent a good hour talking about teaching, our administrators and schools. Susan's sister (I've forgotten her name) and her boyfriend shared a room with her and Steve--again the first con for them--and she won best original costume in the masquerade dance as "The Snow Princess".

Saturday night I stopped to talk with a group of concommittee members, then Terry Pratchett joined us, and he suggested a game called "Amnesia". The group sends one person away, they decide what person, place or thing the victim is supposed to be, then the victim returns with amnesia and asks questions about him/her/itself. We each did this, and some of the choices were: Noah's Ark, Sherlock Holmes' pipe, Mr. Ed, the iceberg that sank the Titanic, Minnie Mouse, and Batman's butler Alfred. We had a lot of fun.

The trip home was a little drawn out. We were driven back to O'Hare Airport by limosine, arrived early, and the plane was delayed leaving for two hours. When we got to the car, we had to chip off a quarter inch of ice from the windows. It was after 11:00 when we got home and Maia went right to bed. I followed not too soon after, since I did have school the next day; Maia wisely had taken a vacation day to recover.

RAMBLINGS 41.8

Tuesday night (Feb 23) we saw Plaza Suite at Meadowbrook Theatre. The Neil Simon play was very funny and it was a pleasant evening. It might have been better if I didn't have a Faculty meeting that afternoon which ran almost 2-1/2 hours.

On Friday, I drove up to Lansing to "Residents' Night" at Ten Pound Fiddle. I met Andrea at the church where this concert was and got there early enough to save us seats at the front. Since she had a family dinner to go to, we didn't meet for dinner as we have done in the past. This concert featured several of the local singers donate their talents and all proceeds went to the Fiddle. It was packed.

Afterwards we went back to her apartment and talked for a few hours. Although I knew that we were good friends, I didn't realize how good until that evening. She told me that she knew what I had been going through with Maia--overextending myself to help her get well, and Andrea knew I needed to get away from the situation for a few hours. Since she enjoyed my company, she was very open to going to the folk concerts with me. On the other hand, Andrea had lost her husband to MBA school for the school year, so she too needed a friend to talk to, to do things with. It worked out for both of us, and our friendship deepened. I finally left about 2:30 AM.

During the next week my classes increased in size--well it was the Algebra IIB classes that got bigger. Five new students showed up, transferred from the regular Algebra II classes. That brought my class sizes to 14 and 18. In the slower-class sections, 12 was considered the maximum, though in recent years 14 was supposed to be the max. Now, the registrar just shoved them in. I hoped it would

be all right. My main concern was the 86 papers I would have to read, and then write comments on all those students next month.

On Tuesday, March 2, the Wilderness Expedition Co-leaders left for the Smoky Mountains of Tennessee. They would be setting up the routes that their sophomore groups would be taking starting Saturday, March 6. I lost 5 students that week--4 from my precalculus class, and one from geometry. On Friday, March 5, the sophomores left for their Wilderness experience, losing about 17 other kids from various classes. I had hoped that more would be gone from the Algebra IIB classes, so I could try teaching some other topics, but too many remained behind so I continued class as usual.

I did get an interesting comment from my department chairman on that Friday. He said that I was the only male member of the math department on whom hadn't had complaints about not being able to teach to the female students. I'm not sure what this says about me or the other male math teachers.

We went to Tim Ryan's House-Sing on March 6th. I had a great time listening to filk/folk music, even joining in singing with some of the sing-a-longs. Andrea premiered her new song ("Without") which was received with a good round of applause. She needed to enunciate more, something I have told her many times (she has it written on her music sheet!). Sue McLain did several songs on her hammer dulcimer, and Harry Smothers did his own version of "God Lives on Tully" to the tune of Julia Ecklar's "God Lives on Terra". It was different from the Bill Maraschiello version, and should be played in filk-sings. It needs to be heard by more people; it's hilarious.

The week of the 8th of March was both slow and hectic. Spring Break was coming and everyone, once again, was anxious for Friday to arrive. When it did, there was a big sigh of relief, and people went their separate ways for vacation. I had plans to do a lot of different things, which included working on the Lantern (which didn't get done), attending a convention, and having lunch with a colleague.

I spent time with the new Spanish teacher to find out more about her and her family. And she wanted to find out about mine. Her name is Kathleen Laskowski Camargo, and from the short conversations we had in school it seemed that we were related. Through some long conversations at lunch we determined that our grandparents apparently came over from the same region of Poland at about the same time; Kathy's settled in Chicago, while mine settled in Detroit. Her birthdate was three days after mine (which made her a Virgo, too), and more similarities came forth as we talked. It was like finding a twin sister. We decided to continue looking at our family trees, and develop a strong friendship. Besides, she needed someone to talk to at

school; her mentor and department chairman were not giving her the support she needed, so I also became her confidant.

There was a bit of excitement on campus with regard to the Wilderness Expedition. The 89 sophomores along with about three dozen faculty and upperclass co-leaders who were on the trip got caught in the "Storm of the Century". People needed to

keep in mind that this trip started for the sophomores on March 5, but the news media made it sound like they knew the storm was on the way, and went ahead with the expedition anyway. This was not the case, and tension ran high on campus for the safety of the 117 people who were hiking in the Smoky Mountains.

[[To be continued in LL #42.]]

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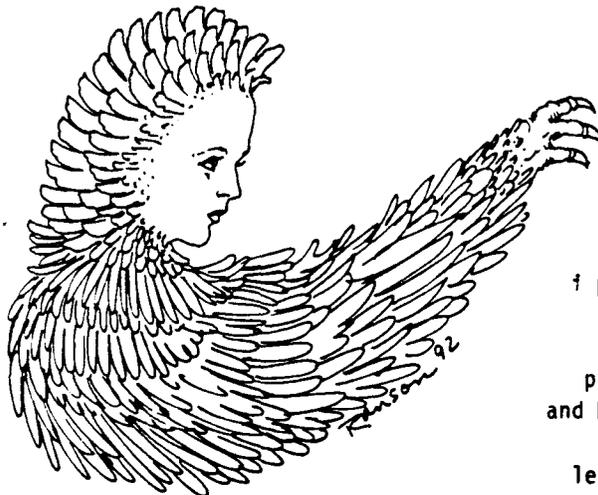
I also heard from the following people -- at cons, over the phone, quick notes and postcards, letters not published, etc. And I've probably missed a few people too. My apologies. Lan\*|

David Alway, Clifton Amsbury, Arlan Andrews, Doug Andrews, John Annas, Tom & Tara Barber, Ray Beam, Martha Beck, Rose Beetem, Gary Bernstein, Martha Berry, Sheryl Birkhead, Ben Bova, Richard Brandt, Dr. William C. Bruer, Jack Brooks, Lois McMaster Bujold, Bruce Burdick, Mary Piero Carey, Ann Cecil, Barry & Sally Childs-Heltons, Michael Chomko, Fred Cleaver, Kathleen Conat, Glen Cook, Karen Cooper, Helen Davis, Barbara DeLaplace (who is up for the Campbell Award again this year), Scott & Jane Dennis, Alan Dormire, Linda Dunn, Eileen & Tim Eldred, Joe Ellis, Jim & June Enlow, Gary Ferguson, Carl C. Fields, Dennis Fischer, David Foster, Steve & Sue Francis, Don Franson, Gil Gafer, Jo Anselm Gehm, Steve George, Mike Glicksohn, Alan Greenberg, Bob Greene, Liz Gross, Hal Hall, Mick Hamblen, Dr. Halina Harding, Terry Harris, Teddy Harvia, Eric Heideman, Rusty Hevelin, Lynn Hickman, Margaret Hilt, Arthur Hlavaty, Cathy Howard, Steve Hudson, Thea Hutcheson, Ben Indick, Tom Jackson, Fred Jakobcic, Mike Kennedy, Jeff King, R'ykandar Korra'ti, Mike Kube-McDowell, Rich Lamb, Geoffrey Landis, Gary Laskowski, George Laskowski Sr, Sophie Laskowski, Roy Lavender, Steve Leigh, Lisa Leutheuser, Becca Levin, Mary Lou Lockhart, Steve Lofton, Sam Long, Dick & Nick Lynch, Carol Lynn, Joseph T. Major, Shinji Maki, Mary Manchester, Jim & Laurie Mann, Kathy Mar, Kathy Marshall, Eric Mayer, Neil McAleer, Jamie McQuinn, Jeanne Mealy, Angela Medbury, Val Jamin Meyers, Judith Moffett, Anne Moore, Janice Morningstar, Kathy Nerat, Frank Norton, Terry O'Brien, Frank Olynyk, Elizabeth Osborne, Bruno Para, Naomi & Randy Pardue, Lore Ann Parent, Joe Patrouch, Bruce Peiz (who has sent lots of postcards about the conventions he's attended), Dolores Phelps, Greg Puryear, Mitch & Joann Radelt, Peggy Ranson, Mary Reed, Laura Resnick (who is also up for the Campbell Award), Mike & Carol Resnick, Ted Reynolds, Paula Robinson, Bob Rodgers, Doug Roemer, Jan & Tim Rotarius, Kristine Kathryn Rusch, Jennifer Sadler, Tom Sadler, Ben Schilling, Randall Scott, Anne Schneider, Bruce Schnefer, Bob Shaw, David Shea, Susan Shwartz, Pat & Roger Sims, Wally Smart, Jill Smethells, Tom Smith, Mary Southworth, Dale Speers, Dick Spelman, Pam Spurlock, David Stein, Diana Harlan Stein, Bill & Brenda Sutton, Sally Syrjala, Sylvus Tarn, Charlie Terry, David Thayer, John Thiel, Jurgen Thomann, Lisa Thomas, Ruth Thompson, Laura Todd, Phil Torricci, Ron Trout, Richard Tucholka, R Laurrafne Tutihasi, Anne M. Valley, Harry Warner, Jr., Larry Warner, Julie Washington, Tracee Washington, Eric Webb, Jean Weber, Henry Welch, Don Wenzel, Denis & Judy Wilmski, Frances Williams, Jack Williamson, Hanfa Wojtowicz, Ruth Woodring, Delphyne Woods, Andrea Yeomans, David & Carol Yoder, Brian Youmans, Jan-Erik Zandersson, and Joe Zimny.\*|

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CENTURION'S HYMN

by an unknown Roman poet
translated from the Latin by Anne M. Valley



Castor & Pollux
joined souls as if one flesh
Spawn of Jove
as I see Thee on Ensorscelled Stars
on this the Eve of War
I pray the battle with enemies mine isn't naught
Sacred Sons Holy ones of Jove's Seed Sired
by lovely Leda brought forth
please I pray Thee look down on me Thy Servant
and be with me now as I take up sword shield & mount
and if Death rides to me this day
let me be carried at Thy side on a Charger White
to the Halls of Jove

Narcoleptic Virgins, Phallic Icons, and Deceased Canine Festivities: Reflections on Worldcon

by E. B. Frohvet

Worldcon is like a small town. More aptly, it's a recurrent small town, like the village in Brigadoon. (Apropos of nothing, the source material on which Brigadoon is based is not, contrary to popular misconception, British or Scottish; the original is an old German folk tale called "Das Geheimnisvolle Dorf".)

Perhaps (bear with me, we'll find a correct simile sooner or later) Worldcon is more like a fair, a fete, like Andre Norton's Ithkar Fair. Like such an event, Worldcon is parasitic for the necessities of life--shelter, food, electricity, condoms--on the local community upon which it is imposed. And like a traveling circus, Worldcon comes in, puts on its show, folds its metaphorical tents, and moves on.

Certainly Worldcon displays every class of society to be found in a small town (save perhaps outright beggars and lepers). It has its useless aristocracy, whose sole function, like the Lord in LeGuin's The Beginning Place, is to be bowed and curtsied to. It has its self-important little clerks, scurrying about as if extracted from some Dickens novel; its hewers of wood and drawers of water; its wandering goliards. Worldcon has its merchant class, purveyors of all sorts of useful and useless things. (Seen at an armorer's stall: a sack of metal rings with the droll label "Some Assembly Required".)

There are those who are In and those who are Out. (A distinction marked largely, but not entirely, by the number of part-colored ribbons one is entitled to depend from one's badge. [Witness the case of the individual--if you are In, you will know whom we mean--who appeared wearing, literally, a sort of board about 10" by 22", festooned with a rainbow of forty or fifty ribbons: A display of such gratuitously vulgar excess as to be almost admirable.]) There are always some Outs desperately scrabbling to be In; and a very exclusive class of Ins drifting comfortably toward Out-dom, less by acts of volition than by a sort of centripetal force of fannish politics. Finally there are those, perhaps a numerical majority in some sense ("the herd" as one uselessly aristocratic Lady of our acquaintance puts it) who are not even aware of Out or In, and are therefore far Out as to be nearly, but not quite, In.

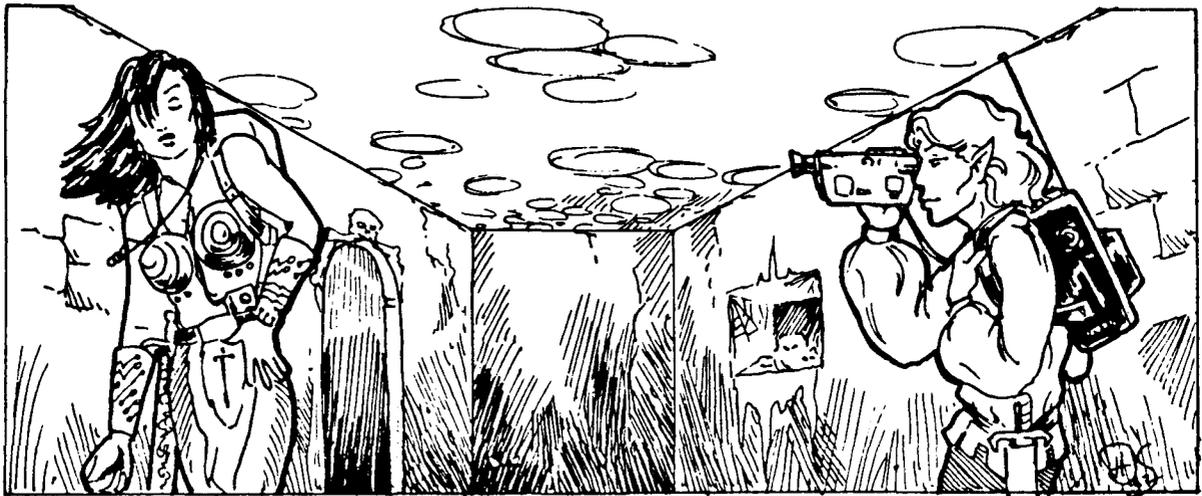
In viewing one's fellow attendees at Worldcon, one must be certain not to transgress against a desperately sincere air of Political Correctness. It may be PC to observe non-verbally the avoirdupoisally challenged, but definitely not PC to say

aloud, "Wow, is that guy fat!" On average, one will note a somewhat atypical volume of hair, both male and female; and a very disproportionate number of beards (the latter hopefully confined to the male contingent). It is not PC to address a fan with the words, "Yo, babe, does the word 'comb' ring a bell?" Given the distinctly informal wardrobe of the usual fan, the experience may resemble a Grateful Dead reunion. It may be borderline PC to gaze at young ladies garbed entirely in Saran Wrap or three-sizes-too-small body-stockings; it is certainly not PC to speculate (out loud, at least) on the presence or absence of undergarments. In sum, it is gauche to appear startled or disapproving of anyone's appearance or behavior. In the respect if no other, Worldcon resembles New York City. Picture a Grateful Dead concert in Central Park, and one will be getting close to the spirit of the thing.

In addition to merchants and artisans, Worldcon also possesses its inns and taverns. Despite Mr. Heinlein's famous remark, the food and drink at these sites is "free" ("free" in the sense that cruise ship food is "free", that is, included with the price of admission): what proprietors of such establishments want from you is more subtle than money, though they will generally accept that too, if you are foolish enough to offer it. Those who are impecunious, or just cheap, can fulfill most of their meal needs at Worldcon by just cruising from party to party, smiling agreeably, and stuffing their faces. The diet offered will be short on protein and high on salt, but survivable for a short period.

[A marginally relevant aside: at such parties, the blending of whimsical punches is a long family tradition. We happen to possess the last surviving recipe for Fuming Purple Simolean Fog-Cutter, which to the best of our knowledge has not been served at any con for several years, and probably not at Worldcon since DISCON II. (It's a long story.) In the interest of preventing this classic fannish beverage from disappearing altogether, applications for the secret recipe will be entertained from a limited number of conventions or bid parties. It is supposed that you have impeccable credentials, and a source of Dry Ice.]

Worldcon claims its own rites and ceremonies. The most conspicuous of these involves the distribution and veneration of phallic icons, probably fertility symbols most comparable to the Lares and Penates of a Roman household. The recipients of these curious objects are selected by a method which appears essentially random. Some of those who



receive these icons seem genuinely pleased. Some make only a token effort to conceal obvious boredom, and others do not even appear, sending helots to carry off the ritual object. The organizers of this bizarre event condescend to allow into the shrine large numbers of mere convention members, whose function is to applaud, and to give the virtuous the impression of having "voted". Invariably there are far more attendees than there are ballets cast.

There are other ceremonies, of course, such as the famous "Rite of the Narcoleptic Virgin", a pretty and touching ceremony (at least to those of

us of the heterosexual persuasion) -- but if you are in, you already know about it; and if you are out, you don't need to know about it.

Just watching the circus, with its clowns and animal trainers (both of which functions appear at Worldcon, though under other titles) is a childlike pleasure the adult never quite outgrows, so attending the Worlcon is a harmlessly foolish pasttime which always offers moments of fun to those who can avoid taking it seriously. (Helpful suggestion: Just as the Circus is a vastly more fun in the company of a child, Worldcon is much more enjoyable if you drag a mundane friend along.)

The Brass Pennywhistle Awards—Orlando '92

Convention Division

- The Grace Under Pressure Award: George Laskowski
(Honourable Mention: Connie Willis)
- The Obnoxious Twit Award: Larry Niven (for having the ill grace to actually show up)
- Best Panel: "Mortal Sins" (Roger MacBride Allen leading the audience in chanting at Pat Cadigan: "Lust! Lust! Lust!") (Honourable Mention: "Miss Manners Goes To Worldcon")
- Worst Panel: "Any Insufficiently Understood Technology..."
- Best Decision By The Voters: Glasgow for '95
- Worst Decision By The Voters: (tie) Locus, and Michael Whelan
- Best Restaurant: Capriccio's, in the Peabody (for having the courage to report that the chef really wasn't happy with how the wild-mushroom-ravioli turned out that day and would prefer not to serve them)
- Worst Restaurant: Ming Court (for failing to deliver the promised Saturday afternoon din sum)

- Best Buns Award (equal opportunity tie): the girl in the gold chain mail tunic; the guy in the leather G-string
- Most Authentic Fannish Tradition: F.L.S.F.M.R. & A.F.C.'s "Rite of the Narcoleptic Virgin" (by invitation only)
- Least Authentic Fannish Tradition: bad imitation piper band (Someone please tell the bass drummer that real piper bands do not wiggle their rumps in time to the music)

Party Division

- Best Party Punch: Niagara Falls, hands down
- Worst Party Punch: that hideous turquoise stuff at the Baltimore party
- Best Bheer: San Antonio/Friendly Texans
- Best Birthday Party: Glasgow/Helicon
- Best Munchies: Niagara Falls
- Worst Munchies: Atlanta
- Most Intelligent Party Conversation: Readercon
- Best Party Decoration: the stuffed 'possum at the '95 in '95 party

Matters of Minor Consequence

by Anthony Ravenscroft

I found a wonderful bit of investing advice, early in 1991. Someone had done a simple study, to test an old piece of folksy advice: Always bet against the crowd. They'd collected data from the stock market, and examined the sage advice of the experts in terms of what actually transpired. The researchers found that, in something like 65 percent of the cases, you'll make a profit--sometimes a large profit--if you do exactly the opposite of what Everyone Else is doing.

"But, Mom --Everybody Else is doing it!"

"And I suppose is Everyone Else jumped off a cliff, you'd do it too?"

Well, of course.

If you have children, you'll know who I mean when I say Everyone Else. For that matter, if you were ever a child (many people deny it), and remember the whole sordid experience, you'll probably recall the seductive influence wielded by Everyone Else.

I've always been sort of a contrary person. When the high school's dress code was finally rescinded, I didn't wear a regular denim wardrobe for a full two years. Once a clothing fad is dying, I find myself getting nostalgic, and make the change a bit behind everyone else. I like being different, and I do not like paying premium prices in order to do so. Fads are expensive things; the only way to not go wrong on the whimsies of fashion is to buy before it's popular, or when the warehouses are overstocked--this strategy requires me to be a bit (in its geometric sense) eccentric.

I predict wondrous things for the Nehru jacket and bell-bottom corduroys, worn with tasteful slab-soled shoes. At very least, such clothing is much more fun than "fashion du jour".

The reason I mention all this is that I've lately gotten tired of arguments over which awards are the "most valid". I wish this was something that would stay at least as far away from me as the Emmy and Grammy and Tony and Golden Globe and Peoples' Choice and so on ad nauseam. No such luck.

The two biggies I'm enduring at this time are the Hugo and Nebula. Both are, for one thing, mentioned on lots and lots of books. Not that there are a lot of books that deserve such an award, or indeed that have even received one or the other. The elevator to perdition arrived when I saw one paperback blurb touting the "Nebula-nominated author".

In Viet Nam, they tell me, the grunts called the Purple Heart medal (given for being wounded in battle) the "Slow Runner's Badge", suggesting that anyone with a modicum of sense wouldn't have gotten hurt in the first place.

I begin to believe that most awards can safely be considered slow-runner badges for the hapless recipients. After all, it's at least frowned upon to have people lobbying for any award, which hardly makes any sense if you care to examine it.

That's where the "validity" argument begins. Is the Nebula valid, and the Hugo invalid? The Hugo is, after all, no more than a popularity contest, chosen by a relative handful (I think the most recent was still less than 2,000 ballots), and those voting are distinguished merely by attendance at the Worldcon (besides the handful of mailed-in votes).

The Nebula ribbons, meanwhile, are handed out by professional writers of science fiction, which makes it a valid indicator of validity. Hah! And again: Hah!

Gordon Dickson is reputed to have said, "I got a Nebula because I write like an s.o.b.; I got a Hugo because I drink like an s.o.b." Well, if he didn't say it, he should.

These awards, generally regarded, are scarred by many problems, which would not only get them laughed out of any sort of mainstream journalism but trounced as freshman-level papers on fundamental sociology. At the root of the problem, any results are hopelessly skewed by a huge self-selecting bias. What this means is that anyone who wants to vote for the Hugo can follow the dangling carrot, fill out the forms, and cast a ballot. However, in such a situation, many people choose not to vote, and those who do follow through on the process are commonly biased by their very unity of purpose, which does not allow the data to be generalized back to the population at large.

In small words, it's like this: The folks who vote probably don't speak for the majority of readers.

So, you may ask, why isn't the Nebula better? After all, the Nebula is distinguished, and the members of the Science Fiction Writers of America are all, per the charter, professional writers. Who better to decide what of the year's output was significant?

But, again, note that there is nothing explicitly compulsory about the situation, either for membership in SFWA, or for the members to vote. Again, there are layers of self-selection that would seem to indicate plenty of latitude for a unified-seeming bias of the voting. Until writers are automatically shanghaied into SFWA membership, and forced to vote on the Nebula at threat of immediate harm, the award won't come near even a rudimentary statistical validity.

It's easy to fix. On the other hand, since the method is both so obvious and rudimentary, most of you would miss it. That's not to pick on you; it's simply that statistically-sound methods of sampling are hardly of day-to-day use for most people. Remember, I'm somewhat out of phase; I hunt down excuses to do statistics.

What you'd have to do is set simple criteria. First: Who should judge? You could select some general groupings, such as established reviewers, or tenured academics, or writers, or professional writers. In any case, the bunch (that's one of those sociology terms) you choose to make the fateful decision should be both defined and delimited, so that you can look at any one person's credentials and know immediately whether she/he is essentially fit to choose The Best Of The Year. Little questions loom large here. For instance, do Europeans count? How about Japanese? Or Yugoslavians who possess better English facility than most Americans? Is an author who's written two million-selling novels of a kind with one who has published twenty over three decades, none selling over ten thousand?

Worse, the list has to be exhaustive: Every single living person (assuming, of course you are only polling people who are alive) who fits the above-established criteria has to be included on the list, otherwise you personally are guilty of introducing bias before even walking out the door. If you feel that someone in particular simply doesn't belong, even though they meet the criteria, then all you have to do is redefine the criteria. Wheee; take one giant step backward.

The next step, if you've got a huge chunk of the Western world's population represented after your first definition, is to reduce the size. There are theoretically a number of ways to do this, but they mostly boil down to a simple principle: random, unbiased selection, so that your handful of personae truly does represent the feelings of the millions of unwashed SF-buying barbarians as well as it does the elite. One way or another, you will have to choose the names from the big list.

And that will fail, practically speaking. You see, experience has taught me that there's always some smartass who won't play along. They don't want to get involved, they're too busy, they're on the run for copyright infringement, whatever: they aren't cooperating. All it takes to screw up your data is one person. This is where sociologists spend most of their time, justifying how the missing data didn't really screw up the findings. Don't try it at home. Of one person bucks the tide, then you have to start all over again with a new random selection from the huge bunch you started with.

But, after overcoming all these hurdles--something not likely in itself--I would argue that the validity has not magically appeared. Validity is

not so easily won, and, I say, is for the most part meaningless. These awards, after all, are vague attempts at judging greatness from up close, and History is a comedian: no mere human can predict which of this year's stories will be widely anthologized into the middle of the next century.

Take the Nebula awards. They are not perfect. Wilson Tucker's The Year of the Quiet Sun was entirely overlooked in the Nebula awards. A few people felt so guilty about this that they gave the book a unique award: a Nebula for a novel of a previous year. This must lead everyone to ask: If it was such a good book, and everyone in SFWA knew about it, then why was a lobbying effort necessary?

No, I do not think that most folks, even in SFWA, are honest enough to withhold a vote on something they hadn't actually read. They will vote instead on the writer's past production...or conversation at the last cocktail party...or on what Everyone Else says about them and/or their writing...or on the sub-genre the work is reputed to inhabit.

To reform the awards, I would recommend empowering a panel of judges, all of whom are required to read every single entry in every category of the award, and to pass an oral examination in order to demonstrate the actual completion of their task. Then, and only then, might they be in a position to vote on the best. This means, of course, that there will be many more potential judges for short stories than for novels, but that's the way things go. This would also exclude from the judgeship those professionals who are too busy to read very much from others in the field.

It ain't likely, but this is my dream, after all.

While we're at it: Set up a Hugo Award for Best SF Music. When I listen to Queen's "'39", I can't help but think of a lament to the proud victims of the FTL time-dilation effect. And there's everything from BOC's "Psychic Wars" and "Black Blade" to "Red Barchetta" from Rush and "Needle Gun" by Hawkwind. BOC has also done such cyberpunk tunes as "Flaming Telepaths" and "Career of Evil". Or Aerosmith's "Spaced" (yes, as in pushed out the airlock) and "Season's of Wither". After we weed out the backlog, we can start nominating annual candidates, and make it a category where amateur filkers can go head-to-head with the pros.

More seriously, I want to split the big-time professional movies off of the Media category into a separate category, and ditto for television. Thereby, you'd be leaving a category for miscellanea, such as plays, or interpretive dance, or laser shows, or whatever.

Finally, create the Best Charles Brown and the Best Locus awards, and stop pretending that either of these have any serious competition, or will until well into the 21st century. Brown has worked very hard to create a unique magazine, and I am re-

volted by folks who think it should ever in any way be on par with anything else. That pseudo-democracy mocks the supposed purpose of the Hugo nomination and voting process of encouraging excellence. Locus is a category unto itself, and, if it's going to be allowed to continue receiving Hugos for what amounts to its mere existence, then Hugos should be granted just for that continued existence. So there. Nyeah.

As for the Nebulas...well, that is the realm of the Filthy Pro. Some day, I may join that lofty host, but until then it's above my station to com-

ment, except perhaps to say that their duty as educated arbiters is much more pressing than that of the mere fans who vote the Hugo.

As long as these awards are recognized as mere popularity contests, I hope they continue, as they remain a quick-and-dirty way to sort out the chaff. However, the day they are widely considered a precise benchmark of literary or genre excellence, then on that day the dream of speculative fiction as a force leading us to a brighter tomorrow will have faded beyond reach. [*]



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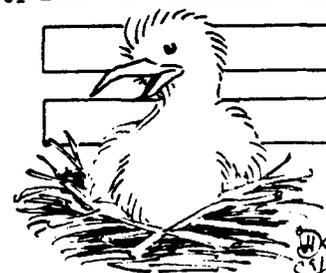
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A PETITION

ROBERT A. HEINLEIN was, during his lifetime, perhaps the single most influential science fiction writer in America. His works were not only great literature they inspired several generations to scientific, technological, and literary achievement.

Therefore WE THE UNDERSIGNED petition and request the United States Postal Service to issue a United States commemorative stamp honoring Robert A. Heinlein.

We further petition that this be one of a series of stamps honoring great science fiction writers, such as Isaac Asimov, Cordwainer Smith, James Tiptree Jr., Jules Verne, Leigh Brackett, and others, who have contributed so much to American society and culture.

Name

Address