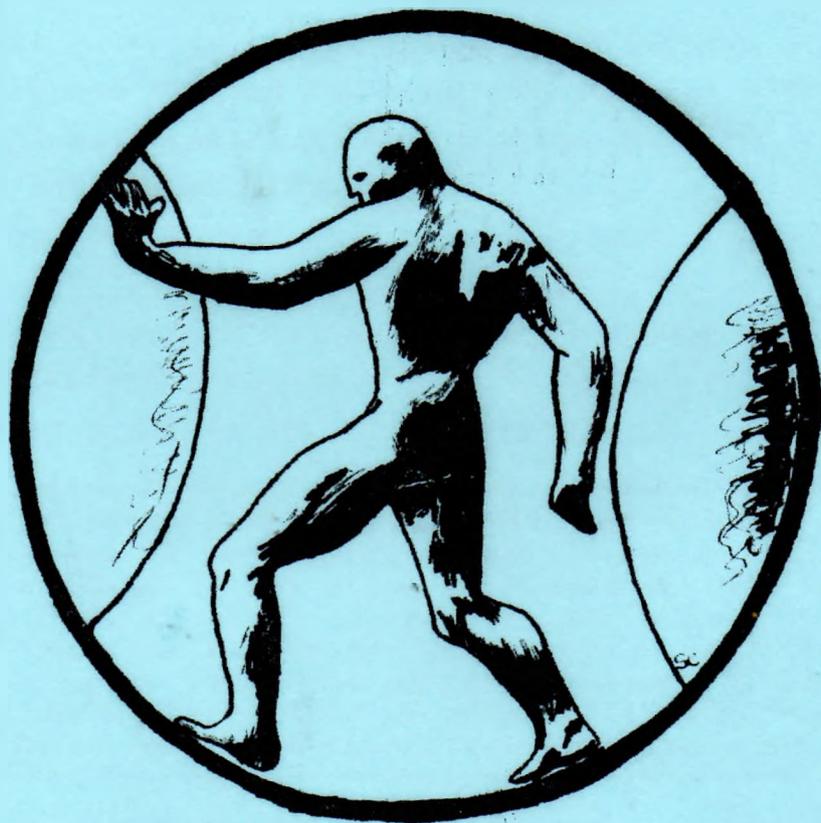


the  
**MENTOR**



" WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE. "

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR



MEMORANDUM

FILE



by either of the above clubs, mainly because of an upsurge of interest made manifest by the visit of the Hamiltons in late 1967. One of the main reasons that the public is apparently apathetic to clubs is not that they are indifferent, but the clubs were not using a foolproof plan of recruiting. At the moment there are four s.f. clubs that I know of, in Sydney, counting the FSS and the ASFA, and there is no lack of potential members.

In a large organization (say, of over 50), people tend to be regarded as cogs, and have no personal say in club activities, or how the club is to be run. It appears that, as far as the two new clubs are concerned, the outlook is entirely different.

With the extent of s.f. readership in Sydney now being revealed, I can see no reason why there should be any interference from any rival organization, since the s.f. population (underground as it is) is adequate for ten such clubs. Another of the reasons people are starting and joining new clubs is that they are trying to get away from the old feuds that gave s.f. fandom such a bad odour in the fifties and early sixties. All the young readers and fans that I know of, want nothing to do with the feuds of, the now, dead past, as far as they are concerned. I, myself, will have no part of any feuds, as I think that science fiction comes first, not clubs. What, after all, are clubs, but groups of individuals doing what they want together. If someone doesn't like it, they start one of their own.

I support any s.f. club that is trying to give s.f. a better name.

- Ron L Clarke.

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#### JOTTINGS.

There has recently been discussions, in which this mag has been mentioned, concerning spelling. Apparently some people don't think spelling words correctly matters in a personal type fan magazine. On the other hand, there are people who, it appears, read fanzines solely for picking out the spelling mistakes.

My policy is this : I endeavour to spell words correctly in THE MENTOR because I believe that a wrongly spelt word can be distracting to the reader if he notices it. It is to me, at least, if I come upon a blatantly misspelled word. This is my only reason for insisting on correct spelling.

I will repeat something I said in number ten - this is a NSW orientated fanzine. Contribs are welcomed from other States, but I think Vic fans should send their contribs to Vic mags, since they originate in that state. I will print Vic. material, however.

THE SECRET CENSORS.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION, it is contended, is one of the most essential features of a western-style democratic system. In the United States of America, for example, a relatively high degree of freedom from government suppression is assured by the Bill of Rights, appended as the first ten Amendments to the Constitution. Free expression, and the various other civil freedoms guaranteed by those Amendments, are jealously guarded by the U.S. Supreme Court, and it is unthinkable that those rights should ever be abridged by any U.S. Government. In any event, the Federal Government alone does not possess the power to do so.

British-style democracies, on the other hand, while valuing the civil liberties, do not guarantee them against parliamentary interference. Britain itself does not have a Constitution at all, and anything passed by Parliament and signed into law by the Queen cannot be questioned. Parliamentary sovereignty is pretty widespread throughout the (old) British Commonwealth, too. Most Commonwealth Constitutions are "soft" ones, variable by the various Governments almost at will. Australia's is decidedly rigid, guaranteeing virtual untouchability of its contents, but its contents relate only to the setting up of the Commonwealth of Australia, not civil freedoms.

And in Australia, Star Trek is censored.

The purpose of the preceding is to point out that while in America there is the possibility of having any particular infringement of a freedom declared unconstitutional, no such appeal is possible in Australia.

With respect to films --- to which this report will confine itself hereafter --- censorship is principally effected by the Customs (Cinematograph Films) Regulations, enacted under the Customs Act, 1961-1967. These Regulations --- in common with most of the Customs Department activities that this writer has come in contact with --- are authoritarian in the extreme; to emphasize this, it is proposed to quote them at length whenever such a quotation would be instructive.

Worse than the extreme authoritarianism, the censors operate in virtual secrecy. The censors do not publicly announce that they have banned a film (such a ban is mentioned somewhere deep within the Government GAZETTE, no doubt --- but nobody I know reads that). The censors have been quoted as saying that they have no objection to the importers divulging information as to banned films --- but refuse to do so themselves on the grounds that their decisions are not public property but are private matters between themselves and the importers of the films. The latter are usually anxious not to rock the boat and to avoid publicity about rejections to avoid a major confrontation. So neither the Department nor the importers will give

much information about bans, and consequently little publicity is ever given to the activities of our film censors. For instance, how many Australian fans know that the very first Star Trek episode shown in the United States, "The Man Trap", was banned completely from Australia unless they have compared a list of first series episodes with a list of episodes actually seen in Australia?

And extensive cutting of film is even less publicized than bans ... and is far more prevalent. This is inherent in the nature of a film : a film can be cut and put back together again (the makers do this, don't they?), scenes can be switched around, an ending can be changed (and has! Really!) --- all with very little effort, and the film can still make some sort of sense. It is difficult to conceive of a little man running around with a pair of scissors carefully cutting out purple passages, proscribed phrases, and wicked words from thousands of copies of a book... hence with books the choice is normally to ban completely or pass unreservedly, although sometimes it is worthwhile to publish a specially abridged edition of a book for Australian readers and, indeed LADY CHATTERLEY'S LOVER circulated freely in this country with That Word carefully expunged before the ban was finally lifted in, I think, 1966. So films can be cut rather than rejected entirely, and relatively little public opposition is raised against film censorship since as long as something pretending to be the original film is available to be seen the extent of the censorship is not realised. And indeed, cutting of film is the order of the day : while only one episode of the first series of Star Trek was banned entirely, there was nary an episode which didn't have some chop in it. (The second series seems to have been much better treated by the censors, although there have been some chops; but there were none completely banned.)

Regulation 9(1) of the Customs (Cinematograph Films) Regulations states that "The importation of a film, slide or advertising matter is prohibited unless a licence to import the film... has been granted under these Regulations by the Chief Censor or an officer on behalf of the Chief Censor and the licence is in force." The Regulations go on to say that "A film shall not be delivered from the control of the Customs until it has been registered," (R.11), and that registration will be refused if the Film Censorship Board set up under the Regulations and headed by the Chief Censor (of Films; there's another one for printed material) declares, or, on appeal, the Appeal Board declares :

- "(a) the film... is blasphemous, indecent or obscene;
- (b) the film... is likely to be injurious to morality, or to encourage or incite to crime;
- (c) the film... is likely to be offensive to the people of a friendly nation or to the people of a part of the Queen's dominions ; or
- (d) the film... depicts any matter the exhibition of which is undesirable in the public interest." (R.13.)

If I may digress from Star Trek for a moment, let me advise against any reader dismissing (c) too readily. While Australians --- even opponents of censorship, such as myself --- like to pride themselves on the political freedom in this country, there was an incident in 1966 when a British Panorama documentary--- made by an ex-Australian Broadcasting Commission glamour-boy, Michael Charlton --- on the Vietnam war, was very nearly banned under R.13(c) as being offensive to the people of a friendly nation - the U.S.A.- although it had, apparently, already been broadcast there! After a monumental piece of departmental blundering, the Minister for External Affairs (acting for the Minister for Customs, who had been injured in a motor accident) personally freed the film.

But pieces of Star Trek, we may safely assume, are not banned because it is likely to offend any of the Queen's subjects, or subjects of her allies. Why, then? Is Star Trek blasphemous, indecent or obscene? Surely not... the crew of the Enterprise have on at least two occasions (in "Who Mourns for Adonais?" and "Bread and Circuses.") affirmed the existence of the True God and His Son : "the Son of God", said Uhura in "Bread and Circuses". Nor is it indecent or obscene... Kirk has frequently refused to get into bed with strange women (although there may have been occasions where he consented.. but he was never shown in bed with a woman, at any rate). Injurious to morality? Likely to encourage or incite to crime? They couldn't be thinking of "A Piece of the Action", surely? That one, I'm sure, was uncut. Undesirable in the public interest? Oh, dear...

Well, I'm sure I don't know. The title of this report, remember, is "The Secret Censors".

As indicated above, the importers usually avoid publicity over bans. The exceptions are where too many episodes of a top rating overseas show lose footage on the censor's instructions. Then, little items have a habit of appearing... and this situation fits the one of Star Trek to a tee. The first I heard about Star Trek's censorship troubles was from the Sydney SUN's TV page, on Wednesday, 12th July, 1967... just six days after the first episode ("The Corbomite Maneuver") was shown. "I've been told unofficially that we'll be lucky to get through a handful of Nine's new science fiction series 'Star Trek' the way the episodes are getting hacked about," read the report. It continued, "Several episodes have been scrapped completely because they would have frightened the life out of most adults, never mind children. Others have needed so much cutting down - for similar reasons - that there's hardly enough left to run through the projector," and ended up with a lame comment about The Outer Limits : "I have a friend whose ten-year-old daughter hasn't slept a peaceful night since she saw those dreadful little ant men from Mars a few weeks back."

Seven days later (when the second episode - Part 1 of the Hugo-winning "The Menagery"- had already turned this

viewer into an ST-philiac ; especially in view of the raves that have been coming out of the United States for the previous half-year or so), my fears were confirmed. TV TIMES for 19th July, 1967, said : "Metropolitan and country channels have struck censorship troubles over Star Trek.

"The Commonwealth Film Censorship Board has banned four of the 16 episodes imported into Australia from the U.S.A.

"Some cuts ranged up to twenty five feet. Censor's instructions included such remarks as : 'Reduce close-up of creature's face and reduce groaning sounds.' 'Delete rabbit chop and number of blows.' Other instructions to the film-cutters included reduction of scenes showing agony caused by fire and more scientific dangers such as a 'neutraliser'.

"A spokesman for one importing organisation said : 'The rejections were made for several reasons. These included violence, sustained suspense and horror angles.'

"Star Trek is shown by TCN-9 at 8.30 p.m. on Thursdays.

"TCN-9 has lodged an appeal with the Censorship Board against the ban on the four episodes.

"Industry observers believe the channel may edit the banned episodes and resubmit them with 'offending' sequences reduced."

The resubmission would be in accordance with Regulation 22, which states that where registration has been refused, the importer "may make application for permission to reconstruct the film." The application "shall be made within fourteen days ... and shall be accompanied by a plan setting out in detail the grounds upon which the importer claims that reconstruction should be permitted and the proposed alterations, deletions or additions to the film." Then, without having to answer to anybody for his decision, "the Chief Censor may... alter or amend the plan as he thinks fit," or "the Board may... approve of the registration of the film reconstructed in accordance with the plan as approved, or as altered or amended, by the Chief Censor."

This is apparently what was done, for when I 'phoned the Channel some time after the story appeared to find out the titles of the banned episodes, I was told - after much passing around from stupid uninformed girls to stupider uninformed girls - that "the episodes have been resubmitted and will be played." Indeed; this would not appear to be true, since one episode, "The Man Trap", which surely must have been amongst those initial 16 episodes, still has not been played at this stage when episodes made two years later have been. I can make reasonable guesses as to the other three episodes - the ones that must have been successfully "reconstructed" - but first, a few other points should be made about the TV TIMES story.

(1) At the time this TV TIMES story was published, Star Trek was screened at 8.30 p.m. on Thursdays (later changed to 7.30 on Tuesdays when the kiddie-appeal was realised). Being shown at that time, it seems to me that TCN could have, and should have, given it an A.O. classification and shown

each episode in its entirety (although, had it, I would not have been able to write this article. Although the Regulations say nothing to suggest this (except that licences can be granted on whatever conditions the Chief Censor thinks fit), a recent incident does. From TV TIMES again, 24th April, 1968, "An episode of the adventure series The Champions which struck censor trouble will be screened in adults-only viewing time - one hour later than usual - on TCN-9 this week.

"The episode, titled 'The Interrogation', deals with brainwashing techniques so realistically that the censors classified it A.O.

"A Channel 9 spokesman said : 'This classification means that the episode can be shown in its entirety, uncut, as long as it is screened no earlier than 8.30 p.m.'

"In 'The Interrogation' - to be shown on Monday, April 29, at 8.30 p.m. - secret agent Craig Sterling (Stuart Damon) is captured after a mission in Hong Kong.

"He does not know where he is or who his captors are. He is imprisoned in a bare room illuminated by a single bulb.

"He is submitted to the most harrowing ordeal of his life.

"Nothing is spared by the interrogators in their efforts to break Stirling down, to smash his will and to make him reveal everything that has ever happened to him.

"He is mercilessly battered by questions, attacked with psychological tricks and lies, and even fed drugs to destroy his resistance and force him to tell his interrogators what they want to know."

Since this particular episode probably will not be shown on American television for some time yet, since the programme only commenced recently, I shall not reveal the ending - but, dear reader, as you watch this episode of The Champions (if you see it ; it appears that due to statements made by an ex-Dick Van Dyke co-star this week (as I write these words), violence may be almost banished from American TV as a reaction to the RFK slaying), keep in mind the Australian censors' attitude, and see if you do not think that the ending completely dispells any case against "The Interrogation".

The point is, though, that it seems possible that Star Trek episodes could be saved by this device, and it is a pity that they are not.

(2) The scenes "showing agony caused by fire" were not from "The Menagerie", as some people seem to expect. The scenes of Captain Pike's imaginary pain were shown - seemingly - intact. I remember making a mental note during the screening of "Arena" that it may have been from there that the "agony caused by fire" was cut, but right now I cannot recall if there even was any agony caused by fire involved in that episode. I wasn't taking notes 'way back then - perhaps those of you with longer memories than I can clear this up?

A couple of months after Star Trek began, I hit upon

one possible (reasonably untroublesome) scheme to detect the presence and extent of the censorship. I dug up (not quite literally) an ancient stopwatch (vintage BC, I think), and started to time the show. I would time it exclusive of commercial interruptions, and of ending credits - that is, those credits that come after the final bracket of commercials, superimposed over the dying seconds of the last scene where the Enterprise crew are having a good old ho-ho, usually over some insignificantly corny joke made by Kirk or the unwitting Spock, and then flying off into space, I count as part of the show, obviously.

Before examining my results, I should mention another limitation of the times I have recorded - Melbourne fan Ken Bull writes: "Be careful the way you time your TV programmes for comparison with other countries. Star Trek, like all U.S. films, is photographed at the cinema standard of 24 frames per second. In the U.S.A., Japan, and most of South America, the TV frame per second rate is 30. By means of special projectors which project every third frame twice, this 24 f.p.s. rate is converted to 30 f.p.s. without any change in the running time.

"However, in Australia, New Zealand, Britain and Europe, the TV rate is 25 f.p.s. In these countries the films are run through at 25 f.p.s. instead of 24 f.p.s., which gives them a 4% increase in speed. Therefore, when timing a film originally shot at 24 f.p.s., such as Star Trek, you must add 4% to your timing to get the original U.S. time. That's more than 2 minutes for Star Trek". So, about two minutes of any discrepancy between U.S. and Australian running times are not due to censorship.

I'm not going to add 4% to my figures for the purposes of this article: I would have to for any comparative table, though, were I to find anyone with the corresponding U.S. times (a further complication being the pre-emption of minutes of programme time by some local U.S. channels for local advertisements).

The longest episode timed by me was "Mirror, Mirror" (seen { in Sydney - dates will vary for other centres } on 20th February, 1968), with 46 minutes 54 seconds. This was not apparently cut in any way, not even the many-second scenes featuring the "agonizer". Apparently agony, where the source of the agony is unseen (or in the mind of the victim), is not objectionable. Note that the lack of cuts in the scene (previously mentioned) of Pike's agony in "The Menagerie" supports this idea.

Runner up in the length department is the episode played on 2nd April, "Journey To Babel" (like "Mirror, Mirror", from the second season), which ran 46.45. This did seem to be cut - but not heavily - where Kirk had his little scuffle with the Andorean delegate (to the interplanetary conference to which Mr Spock's parents were the Vulcanese delegates). This was a

scuffle involving a deal of knifeplay. The beginning of this fight may have been cut : first we saw of it was the Andorean (whose name was Thelev) being thrown over Kirk's head. The entry of the knife into Kirk's back seemed to be speeded up unnaturally, but not visibly cut - and, finally, Kirk's staggering to the wall-communicator, appeared to be slightly cut, compared even with the same scene shown in a preview the previous day (remember, Kirk was staggering around with a knife sticking out of his back - not a pretty sight, say the censors).

The longest episode of the 1966-7 season timed by me is "Charlie X", which ran 46.34. It was also the earliest episode we saw for quite a time, others, presumably, being held up at the censor's. It couldn't have been cut very extensively, if at all. This was before I started making notes about the shows on the scraps of paper I record the times on (it was shown 28th September, 1967) - but I recall that this was the one about the outer space juvenile delinquent who went around freezing anyone who did something not quite to his liking. (All right, not with his eyes; but that something was happening was most plainly seen in his eyes.) Anti-social and rather horrible if you happened to be a victim, yes; but not particularly visually gruesome. And this is what concerns the censor most.

From my timings, it is possible to guess what the four episodes were that were originally banned back in July, 1967, by a process of elimination. (Episodes for which I lack times because they were played before I began timing are, in order of screening, "The Corbomite Maneuver", "The Menagerie" (Parts 1 & 2), "Arena", "This Side of Paradise", "A Taste of Armageddon", "Yesterday is Tomorrow", "Galileo 7", and "Conscience of the King". I'm sure none of these were the offenders. It is interesting, though, to note that only five of these first nine played are from that first batch of sixteen... and evidently "The Corbomite Maneuver" was the first episode they could get through at all to kick off the series. That means all, from "The Man Trap" to "Dagger of the Mind" ... a total of nine episodes - probably needed some cutting (which answers my question about "Charlie X", which is one of them). And then, after "The Menagerie", the next episode was "Arena", which means that each of the five episodes between those in the "natural" sequence must have had to stay at the censor's for at least some cutting. And again, from "Arena" to "This Side of Paradise", there is a gap of five episodes - by which time the first of the earlier episodes were coming through from the censors.

(I missed two more episodes later, as far as timing is concerned, but these were due to my forgetting to switch the watch on after a commercial.)

The four episodes, I believe, are "The Man Trap", "What Are Little Girls Made Of?", "Where No Man Has Gone Before", and "Miri". The first has still to be seen - and I do not seriously suppose that it will be, unless it is freed some time in the 1970's. The others... well, they were shown so far out of sequence, and with such great cuts...

After the nine episodes mentioned parenthetically above, they went back to "Balance of Terror" (the four immediately-proceeding episodes have already been played), the "Shore Leave", shipped "Galileo 7", which had previously been seen, showed "Squire of Gothos", and then went 'way back into those first nine episodes for the first time to screen "Charlie X". Then forward to "Court Martial" through to "Errand of Mercy" (excepting the two in that grouping that had already been played). Then "The Alternative Factor" (which perhaps confused the censors as much as the fans) was skipped, and the last two episodes of the series were shown. Then back to the (near-)beginning again, and "The Naked Time" through to "Mudd's Women", "Dagger of the Mind" and "The Alternative Factor", cleaned up the first season's episodes except for the four mentioned. Presumably, the further from the "natural" sequence was an episode screened, the longer it had spent at the censor's.

Up until this time, the shortest times were for "The Naked Time" (45.04) and "Space Seed" (45.07). ("Space Seed" lost time when Con, the leader of the clones, hit Uhura for refusing to operate the viewing screen so he could see the results of his handiwork on Kirk, whom he had placed in a decompression chamber. The hand was seen to be raised, and then a sudden jump to an extremely ruffled-looking Uhura (I assumed he only hit her? This is one trouble with the censors - a cut can suggest something far more nasty than what in fact has transpired...)). "Space Seed" was also cut later when Con and Kirk had their showdown fight ... I can't remember precisely what was cut, though. I have no notes at all on specific cuts in "The Naked Time".) Now, however, "Where No Man Has Gone Before" (played 26 December, 1967 in Sydney) beat these by more than three minutes, with 41.53. This was cut to ribbons, especially in the "showdown" scenes on the planetoid at the end - but cuts came too quickly for me to make extensive notes on them (and I had to really concentrate hard to keep up with what was going on, what with all the discontinuities).

"What Are Little Girls Made Of?" followed on January 2nd, but this unfortunately is one where I missed a time after a commercial. I can estimate (and others I have spoken to agree) that this was even shorter, and poor ol' TCN 9 were really pushing around to fill in time after the programme finished. Previews of various things, an earlier than-usual news service (that is, the 3.30 headlines on

TCN usually make the following programme three minutes late, rather than taking the last three minutes of Star Trek's hour), and the ever present advertisements had a field day.

Next, "The Changeling" and "Amok Time" from the second season were shown, and the last, first-season episode (aside from the never-to-be-seen "The Man Trap"), "Miri" was finally seen. This ran to 44.26 - not the most censored episode, by far - but the most obviously censored of all. For example, Kirk's and Miri's encounter with the children was reduced to them approaching the ruined building the kids were hiding in, a short (say, two-three seconds) shot of the children running in a sort of Indian war-dance circle around them, and view of the heads of the two as they look at some unseen object on the floor with Miri saying, "She was just a little older than me." It was not until Juanita Coulson told me that I guessed that the "unseen object" was two corpses. Later, when the Enterprise landing party begins to show symptoms of the virus, and Janice Rand (what ever happened to her..?) shows Jim Kirk her disfigured legs, there is another cut. She tells him almost hysterically to look at her legs, and he does... but the legs are not seen by the Australian viewer. Later again, when the showdown between the children and Kirk comes, his fight with them is reduced to almost nothing... In footage cut, the cuts amount to less than two minutes in "Miri", but these three that I noted are all vital to the advancement of the plot, and make "Miri" the most obviously censored Star Trek (not to mention the most incomprehensible to Australian viewers) of all.

Robert Bloch's "Wolf In The Fold". the most recent episode aired as I write this, also suffered from the lopping of scenes vital to the plot. At the very beginning, where Kirk and McCoy have left the ...er, night club?... and are crossing the street, there appears to be a cut. At one moment, they are half-way across the street; the next they are on the opposite side and running back. In response to a scream, one assumes. Whether Kara's slaying was depicted visually or only represented by a scream, we did not have any hint of it until we saw Kirk and McCoy reach the body; so I assume that something like that was cut. Later, when Sybo, wife of Jaris, head man on the planet, was slain, the Australian viewer had no clue as to what was happening. One moment she was hysterically screaming "Rajik! Rajik!" (correct spelling?); then Scotty was seen to let her fall from his arms; then the circle is seen standing around discussing the fact that she is dead. Not until much later, when a character happens to mention the fact, did we know that the lights had gone out - which explained why her murderer was not seen in the act (which had been nagging on us since the event : everyone was there; why had they not seen either Mr Scott or someone else doing the deed?)

Yet, despite this scene being slashed to pieces, the episode works out at 46.18, which is a little over average. (Anything between 46 and 46<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> minutes can be considered to be normal, in the sense that few episodes are more than that, and most that are seen uncut.) So "Wolf In The Fold" must have really been long to start with. It was also seen out of sequence (although there seems to be a minimal attempt at sequential presentations in the second season's episodes), being the last of the 1967 episodes to go on air. The previous 1967 episode was four weeks earlier ("The Deadly Years" - 44.27 - but I couldn't pick any cuts), and the last before that, "Obsession", a further five weeks back. Generally the censors have been easier on the second series of Star Trek than the first. A couple, "Obsession" and "A Piece of the Action", have even received the hallowed classification of "Suitable for General Exhibition!" However, other episodes have been cut - although none as extensively as "Where No Man Has Gone Before", "What Are Little Girls Made Of?", "Miri", or (heh) "The Man Trap". Most have had only minor - if noticeable or annoying - surgery; "Wolf In The Fold" has been the worst as far as noticeability and annoyance goes.

The shortest second-series episode has been "The Deadly Years" (21st May, 1968), with 44.27 and, as I mentioned above, no discernable cuts. Next shortest was "The Immunity Syndrome", screened the week previously, with 44.31. I could not detect any cuts at all in this: suspenseful it was; horrifying it wasn't. Maybe the censors are just more successful at concealing their presence some times than others. Again, I refer you to the title of this piece.

Two shortest episodes of the second season where cuts can be detected are "Friday's Child" (45.08) and "The Gamesters of Triskelion" (45.13). In the former, the slaying of one Enterprise man by a Klingon right at the start is cut; further death-cuts occur near the end. The battle scene - where Julie Newmar's Queen is escaping over the hills, aided by the Enterprise landing party - is cut so that each death caused by an arrow is not depicted. The arrow does not connect - we are not allowed to see an arrow sticking out of someone's back. The arrow flies; the man aimed at falls to the ground. (This is why I was surprised to see the knife in Kirk's back in "Journey To Babel".) Deaths caused by phaser - depicted as a white silhouette of the victim followed by a wisp of smoke - are not cut; apparently a phaser beam is not as horrible a death as an arrow - although I am sure that a victim would find the two hard to differentiate between. Of course, a phaser-induced death has less immediacy to 20th-century viewers; yet, how come, then, the objection to "neutralizers" in the TV TIMES clipping? (And does anyone know what a neutralizer is? Have there been any so called on the show, or is it a misnomer for the phasers?)

"The Gamesters of Triskelion" also disliked

people dying with primitive weapons : Kirk's little duel towards the end was slashed to pieces, and although the floor is littered with bodies (well... three, at any rate), there is little to hint how they got that way, and whether they are alive or dead, except that we know that Kirk has been ordered to fight his three opponents to the death. Each time he began to get the better of an opponent, however, \*poof\* and he was suddenly fighting the next, with the previous one somewhere on the floor.

"A Private Little War" deserves some attention.

Juanita Coulson listed some five points for me to watch out for some time before the episode was shown, so I watched closely. The points were : (1) Spock's being shot in the back with a flintlock,

(2) Kirk's being bitten by that other-planet creature that looked like the gorilla from Gilligan's Island,

(3) Christine Chapel and Dr M'Benga slapping Spock at his own insistence,

(4) Nona being stabbed, and

(5) Tyree's revenge on Nona's assassin - he bashed his head in with a rock, or was trying to when Kirk stopped him.

Firstly, Spock's injury was not apparently cut at all. It was starkly realistic : a very effective scene, but Spock, when the shot came and he lurched forward, was some distance from the camera - and the whole thing was over in seconds. (I think the camera zoomed in for a close-up as he fell - but, in any case, the scene did not seem to be cut.) When that beast bit Kirk, it was on top of him and very little of Kirk could be seen ; although the fangs could clearly be seen going for Kirk's neck, the actual incision was obscured by the beast's bulk, from the camera's angle - and no cut was apparent in the film. Dr M'Benga slapping Spock was not cut, but there seemed to be some discontinuity in Christine's slaps. We saw them all in long-shot ; I felt that there should be some close-ups (or moderate range shots) too, though, and we didn't see any of these. But I wouldn't swear that there were any cuts there ; in fact, I would doubt it. Nona was stabbed behind the stabber's body - the knife was raised, fell, and taken away, but the point of contact took place behind her attacker's body, as viewed by the camera, and there were no cuts here. The same goes for Tyree's vengeful attack on his wife's assailant ; the action was obscured by Tyree, who was standing over the fellow, and between him and the camera. Throughout the episode, in fact, the action seemed to be suggested rather than depicted - and that's the way the censors like it.

The only thing that was cut<sup>was</sup> in the short scene where Nona treats Kirk with an animated plant known only to some cult she belonged to. By placing the plant on Kirk's wound, and her own hand on top of that, they were mystically "joined" and both wounds were healed. For this to work, Nona

had to have a wound on her hand, and she had none. Tyree slashed it neatly, and the ritual proceeded. What was cut for Australian audiences was the moment of incision : the hand was outstretched, followed by a quick cut of the film, and the hand was withdrawn, a sizeable slash covered in blood evident. But the whole of that episode was 46.11, which would seem to point to that being the only cut.

There are other examples ... but the reader gets the idea. The whole thing is a study in cultures. Blatant cuts in imported films due to "excessive" violence are common in this country (although homegrown films, not being subject to Custom's censorship, are a lot freer in this regard); but totally nude women have appeared on Australian TV from time to time (again, in homegrown programmes ; Customs wouldn't allow that, but the only authority empowered to censor local productions, the Broadcasting Control Board, is relatively easy going). In fact, the Broadcasting Control Board's function is exercised more in the nature of post-censorship ; a (now-famous) "park-scene in the first episode of the Seven network's You Can't See Round Corners, in which the hero was up to his elbow up his girl-friend's mini-skirt, was prohibited from ever being played again following numerous protests after its first screening in late 1966 on ATN-7 in Sydney. (A ridiculous ban, because the girl suddenly stood up and said "No!" - and ATN fought tooth-and-nail on that ground, too!). And while "Let's get the hell out of here!" at the end of the beautiful "The City on the Edge of Forever" raised a lot of eyebrows in the United States, it sounded like perfectly normal conversation in this country where coarse allegations of illegitimacy in the course of dramatic productions have become so commonplace as to have lost their impact.

And yet, Star Trek is censored in Australia. What more shocking indictment than that could be directed against the Australian Customs - the Secret Censor?

- Gary Mason.

\* This article is reprinted from the forthcoming  
ST-PHILE Number 2, published by Juanita Coulson  
of the United States.\*

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Thought For Today : Is the SSF Foundation the seed  
of a second Empire?

ENTITY.

That day in 1963, as he entered that impressively tall structure with its impressively tall facade, none of these thoughts crossed his mind. He was twenty-two, unemployed and more engrossed in the task of gaining employment than in what kind of job or of what its potential for advancement would be. The paper still under his arm, for in its finely printed columns were fifteen biro-bracketed "possibles" on which his hopes rested if the present attempt to gain employment failed.

Thompson entered the elevator and was rapidly removed to the twenty-third floor. Here, at door 2308, Cary hesitated ; what should he do? Flash his diplomas, certificates and recommendations as well as the advertisement in the man's face and say confidently :

"I'm the guy for the job, whatever it is!"?

By God! Why had he forgotten to study up that Carnegie last night? Every other night he read himself to sleep - usually two or three pages - by that useful manual. Just when he most needed its advice he had had to fall asleep without its aid!

He opened the door. Inside, the plastic walls - green laminate with colourful, striking motifs drawn upon its smooth surface, glowed gently but clearly to illuminate the entire ante-room. Cary gained the impression that the modernistic lamp was only for general symmetry. These walls he had read about and realised their usefulness the moment he entered the room. Air-conditioned conventionally, the rest of the building was comfortable but cold ; the walls, however, regulated their cooling effect so as to just cancel the summer heat and humidity.

The room was rectangular, and furnished tastefully ; the chairs modern but comfortable. The door by which he had entered was faced by another in the opposite wall. Broken only by the two doors, and an interruption of ten feet where a long glass window replaced the plastic wall, a foot-wide shelf ran the perimeter of the room. The large window was of one-way glass and completely opaque to Thompson. Spaced one yard apart along the length of the ledge were a series of slots surrounded by metallic battens. Beside each of these and fastened securely to the shelf was a small device similar to a Braille typer. In an open container beneath the shelf and directly below each slot were several cardboard cards ; white, unmarked and slotted at each end.

Thompson also suspected the room to be soundproofed for, as he had entered he had distinctly heard the clattering of a typewriter from some room down the hall

The door closed, he could hear nothing. The very creak of his painfully new shoes seemed explosive. There was no one else in the ante-room.

A sign above the farther doorway caught his attention.

"Using the scribes provided, fill out the cards as to your names, qualifications, weight, the position you require and the results if you have them of any vocational tests, in that order. When you are finished, drop the card into the slot and retire to one of the seats provided. You will be quickly informed as to whether you have been accepted."

There was no signature, no title or any other symbol of authority at the bottom of the sign. Nevertheless Cary complied with the instructions and again began to uneasily turn over in his mind the strangeness and emptiness of this unconventional ante-room.

"Congratulations, sir. You have been accepted. Please report promptly at eleven o'clock tomorrow morning to 117 West 47th Street. Your pay will be one hundred dollars per week, after a weeks probationary employment at seventy dollars. If you desire to leave at any time during that week you may, and will, regardless of when this should occur, be paid your entire first week's salary - seventy dollars. After this week however, you are bound to remain in our employ for three months, until the contract which you will have to sign unless you are to be discontinued as one of our employees, has expired.

"Thank you, sir, and good morning. In the case of your having forgotten, the address is 117 West 47th Street and the time eleven a.m."

This oratory, in commanding masculine tones, seemed to have been relayed into the room via a loudspeaker concealed one of the motifs on the walls. Suddenly however it began again :

"Congratulations, sir. You have been ....."

but was followed by a soft click and summarily concluded.

Cary realised he had heard only a recording and this made him even more curious as to the identity and purpose behind this mysterious manner of engagement.

On his feet, and convinced the secret lay behind the second door, he strode to it and grasped the handle. The door was securely held and there was not even a keyhole in its smooth surface, broken only to permit the small, plated handle to emerge. A rubber strip around all four sides of the door prevented Cary from even getting a glimpse under the doorframe of the mysteries beyond. Not knowing what to do next he returned to his home to wait and wonder.

Nevertheless, according to the instructions given to him, he was at the unimpressive, dirty grey three-storey building at 117 West 47th Street by ten minutes to eleven the next morning.

He glanced down the brass plates beside the doorway :  
"Bencor Pty. Ltd."

"W. Pottleger & Co., Importers."

"T.J. Rayne, Transport Agent."

Below these, another plate, still blank.

The floor numbers were listed beside the names and, still unsure of the identity of his employer, Cary began his quest in the ground floor offices of Bencor Pty.Ltd. The name of the firm at which he had undergone the strange ritual of acceptance eluded him, as in fact it did not exist. The address of its offices and their peculiarities were unrecognisable to the proprietors of T.J. Rayne. On the second floor in the office of W. Pottleger Cary also found no recognition.

The plate below had been blank but for the address : third floor, rooms 33-35. To these he determinedly retreated. If they were empty or their unostentatious tenants knew naught of his mysterious employers, Cary would return, footsore and disheartened, to pursuing less mysterious appointments.

As he was about to knock at door 33, whose drably appointed exterior bore no nameplates, no gilt titles and no statement concerning the firm beyond, unlike the entrances to the three other offices, Cary was suddenly struck by an eerie awareness.

It wasn't that he expected promotion, An awareness, acute yet curtailed off from sight of other, more pressing, more certain emotions, had been with him from the moment he had read the short advertisement in the "positions vacant" column of the morning paper. Its "opportunity for advancement" had been unnecessary for him to know, even if only subconsciously then, that he would, he must advance.

Not that he, an average man of average height, average build, average education should merit this because of his being all, or any, of these averages ; not even because he was himself, Cary Thompson.

No, he would rise, possibly meteoritically due only to the fact that he was destined to do so, only because he was the man to rise.

But he was also grimly aware that this crazy scheme, this weird plot he had enacted, although conforming outwardly to normalcy, to "average", of which he was a champion, was wrong. Something imminent and feared rather than realised, seen or known, was apparent. What? And Why? He seemed to sense that the answers, if only indirectly observed, were beyond this door. Was he, an average man, willing ; was he able, to comprehend ; to understand them ; or would he succumb to them ; to his own fear of them?

Cautiously he reached for the handle. Suddenly the door opened, its lock clicking, unnervingly loud. Cary leapt back, his reflexes cat-like due to his almost fanatical participation in athletics. Beyond the open door lay a room not unlike the ante-room in which he had first met with the strangeness now a major part of his existence. Only the ledge with its slots, scribes and cards was missing ;

two modernistic desks, one each side of the further doorway, taking its place.

Once again he had entered a deserted room, to be ominously faced by an impenetrable glass screen. On impulse instinctively framed, he began to hammer at it with his fists until, calming himself gradually, he sank into the chair beside it.

Why, he asked himself : why should an empty room excite him ; why should an opaque window - an otherwise ordinary sheet of glass, antagonise him? He had lost control yet was controlled, but by what? In his right mind he would no more have hammered at that pane than he would have leapt from a towering bridge .... why did that thought - of leaping from a bridge - why? Could it be that he was destined - was he about to be forced to? Could he? Would he commit suicide as quickly as he had attacked that window? But that awareness - that belief so strong beforehand. Why had he believed it? In his right mind he would not conceive his own future and so devoutly believe in it?

In his right mind!

What was he in now? He was calm - relative to the hatred he had felt minutes before ; but his entire frame was quivering involuntarily as if in apprehension. He leapt to his feet as before and strongly grasped the second doorhandle. Its movement was so free that it threw him to the floor.

Before him, beyond the door still vibrating softly under its impact against the wall, lay darkness. A void, to which the glow of the walls behind him did not extend.

Walls? Thompson had stepped into the void and suddenly the ante-room had disappeared.

It was only then, as like a drowning man he relived the latter part of his life, that he realised he had been the only participant, the only living creature in the episode. From his point of decision after reading the paper, Cary had been oblivious to the world, only his purpose had received his attention and thus, only vaguely had he realised the world around him to be uninhabited. The only human voice he had heard had been on a recording. But who had switched it off?

It was night, he was on a wide highway ; so wide and dark he could no more see its sides than he could discover where he was. He was walking through a fog, a fog he knew he could penetrate, a fog he realised was only in the recesses of his befuddled mind. Control over those he did not have, he was walking only because his reflexes were sufficiently developed to continue in their regular pattern. He knew he was only a walking machine - he tried to shout ; he knew he was shouting but no sound emerged.

In the distance, towering into the sky, the shadow silhouette of a bridge lay in his path and, beyond it, at the meeting of the black earth and grey sky, a cluster of lights - a nucleus of brilliance.

He was ascending without the aid of a handrail the curving arch leading to the centre span. His steps, regular and shattering in volume were taking him steadily upwards. He stopped - the black oil of the river lay far below. He fell - into the darkness, to a forever-impending death.

- Michael Black.

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### Speculation.

We can trace s.f. back to the first writer of truly outstanding s.f. and fantasy - his story held the adults and children of his age enthralled, and even today his stories still hold us spellbound, for slightly different reasons, perhaps, but still we read them. We take rockets and aeroplanes for granted today, but then they were still unplanned and considered impossible; we also agree that life on other planets is probable because of our greater scientific advances and technical progress.

Technology was, as we know it, unknown in those times, so how is it that Jules Verne came to light with the inventions and backgrounds that he did? We have many fine writers today, but one can't help wondering if their works will wear as well as the old master's has done.

This man had little of the data that modern s.f. writers have at their fingertips, yet his works are credible - a little florid maybe, but thoroughly readable even in this day and age. H.G. Wells's "War Of The Worlds" was also a marvellously written work that has enduring quality. How many writers of today have this same magical touch, a quality that cannot be learned - a gift that can only be used by those who love the power and majesty of the wonderful world of worlds?

A world that can bring enjoyment to millions, and last long after the men who created that particular combination of words are dead and gone from the earth.

So we, the vast audience of these men, sigh with envy and pleasure as we lose ourselves in their works.

It will be interesting to see how many of our idols today will still hold our interest in fifty or sixty years.

- L.S.

Jose Luis BORGES.

by Ronald E. Graham.

One of the greatest delights which can fall to the lot of a reader is to discover a new author whose writings have such sheer lift, such beauty, and such power that they open up an entire new world of imagination and recreate the much sought "sense of wonder" so often talked of in SF circles and so seldom found.

Great was the delight of your reviewer, therefore, when he came across a copy of Jose Luis Borges' "Ficciones". Reading it was a thrill akin to reading Ray Bradbury's "Martian Chronicles" for the first time. A superbly skilled and soaring imagination coupled to literary skills of the highest order has resulted in the appearance of a new talent star of the first magnitude in the SF sky.

The author of "Ficciones" ("Fictions"), Jose Luis Borges, South America's greatest writer, is an Argentinian born of Scottish forbears.

Usually thought of as a scholarly and brilliant poet, he is, however, primarily an essayist and short story writer, and is now being recognised throughout the world as one of the most intriguing literary minds of our times.

Born in Buenos Aires in 1899, he was educated in Europe, returning to the Argentine in 1921. Here with characteristic enthusiasm he pioneered "ultraismo", the Spanish equivalent of the German "expressionism", which in poetry closely approximated the English and American "Imagism".

An able and gifted linguist he has translated Gide, Kafka, Faulkner, Whitman, Melville and Virginia Woolf and has an intimate knowledge of the literatures of France, Germany, England, Spain and the United States as well as those of his native South America.

In 1961 he shared, with Samuel Beckett, the Formentor Prize (The First International Publishers Award) and this success drew to his work the attention of many not previously aware of it. His fellow writers, particularly, have been quicker than most to appreciate and recognise his outstanding talent. Still comparatively unknown in English-speaking countries, only three of his major works have so far been translated - those being "Ficciones", "Labyrinths", and "Dreamtigers". These, nevertheless, are sufficient to indicate the originality of his imagination, his extraordinary learning, the astonishing range of his literary references and thought, and his characteristically dry, precise and yet vivid and almost orientally rich language.

His writings, while totally different, remind one almost irresistably of Ray Bradbury, the same type of soaring imagination, the same poetic prose, and the same obsession with a few themes only - different themes certainly but the similarity is substantial. Practically all of his stories are constructed

around three themes - circular time, recurring creation, and the labyrinth. All three of these themes can in fact be consolidated into the broad one of circular time (time which over the aeons constantly repeats itself as opposed to the concept of linear time where event follows event in a never ending sequence without recurrence).

His poems are considered by the critics to be enchanting, moving and emotional, but his prose, while being all of these, is predominantly intellectual and it seems therefore that he allows his personal feelings more freedom in his poetry than in his prose.

One of his obsessions is that every Creator is, in turn, the creation of another Creator. This fixation appears often in his works, and at the end of his poem "The Chess Game" (an allegory of life) he says "God moves both players and pieces - What God behind God begins this web of dust and time - of dreams and tears".

The Philosophy of Omar Khayyam evidences itself throughout his writings and he has without doubt been tremendously influenced by it. In one of his essays he offers the suggestion that the soul of the thirteenth century Arabian poet merged into the soul of Edward Fitzgerald and thus enabled the latter to produce his inspired version of the Rubaiyat.

The narrative power of Borges is very compelling and in reading him, one is constantly aware of his daring and audacious thought and surprised by unusual adjectival juxtapositions :-

"In the depths of a corridor an unforeseen wall halted me ; a remote light fell from above. I raised my confused eyes : in the vertiginous extreme heights I saw a circle of sky so blue that it seemed purple. Some metal rungs scaled the wall. I was limp with fatigue, but I climbed up, stopping only at times to sob clumsily with joy. I began to glimpse capitals and astragals, triangular pediments and vaults, confused pageants of granite and marble. Thus I was afforded this ascension from the blind region of dark interwoven labyrinths into the replendent city" , or again,

"He was the solitary and lucid spectator of a multiform world which was instantaneously and almost intolerably exact. Babylon, London and New York have overawed the imagination of Man with their ferocious splendour ; no one, in those populous towers or upon those surging avenues, has felt the heat and pressure of a reality as indefatigable as that which day and night converged upon the unfortunate Ireneo in his humble South American farmhouse".

What humour there is in Borges' work is mostly of an ironic variety. The lasting and overall impression that one receives is that of a lucid and logical perfection. Borges himself says :-

"In all my works there is an intellectual part and another part which I myself think more important. The feeling of loneliness, anxiety, futility, the mysterious nature of the universe and of

time ; all this, I believe, is the more important side of us ; certainly it is of me!"

So much for his literature : what of the man himself? Now approaching 69 years of age he is said to be a hard man to get to know. Michel Berveiller, a lecturer in Comparative Literature at the Sorbonne gives this word picture of him :-

"He is a large man, full of vigour and charm. His laughter has a strangely youthful, almost childlike ring to it, but it comes from a face that - though fresh and rosy enough in colour - is terribly lined."

"His eyes are of a very pale blue, have been useless to him for the past ten years. For reading and answering correspondence he relies on his mother, who, despite her age, is an extraordinary dynamic but very possessive woman."

"One of Borges' minor passions is walking. This he does not only tirelessly but alone. Stick in hand and beret on head, he strolls through Buenos Aires, which he knows by heart."

"His attitude to books is strangely "physical". It was consummated, so to speak, in 1955. Peron fell from power, and Borges was elected Director of the country's National Library. No job in the world could have suited him better. He is a man who lives entirely for ideas, a man who can love Ariosto, the sixteenth-century poet, as other men love a friend who has saved their life".

"Until quite recently, when his work began to reach a wider audience, this evasive man was so shy that he could hardly get out a whole sentence in public. Now, however, he has become very communicative. Even so he is incapable of listening and manages to evade any questions that are put to him. He is preoccupied with the sequence of his own thoughts, with whatever field of ideas he happens to be concentrating on at the time".

"Literature is his burning passion. Most of the other arts leave him cold. Painting, he says, has always bored him, and music, with the notable exception of tango rhythms, leaves him unmoved. His only other passion was, when he could see, the cinema ; and this shows itself in the highly visual character of his writing".

"Conversation with him might be about shears or shoes or the Atom-bomb, but it will last only five minutes : then back he goes to literature, his tongue quick and unflinching with quotations."

"His memory has been developed to an extraordinary degree and he speaks French, German and English, in addition to Spanish and Portugese, with polished and flawless perfection. His sense of humour too, although not greatly evident in his writings, is highly developed. One might call him a "gay pessimist". In no way does he give the impression of being an unhappy man. If anything, one feels rather that one's presence is boring him ...."

drive (the alien equivalent of 'Rawhide') which is headed by Spider who gives him the g-g on the whole business. He finds Friza only to promptly lose her again and then finally arrives at Branning-on-Sea (the big smoke), a savage city whose inhabitants follow the old human trait of destroying anything and anyone who is 'different' merely because they are different both physical and mental.

After various battles Mr. Delany leaves our hero still in quest of Friza.

- Frank Blamey.

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The R & R Dept.

Gary Woodman

Science Fiction Ass'n., Monash Uni., Clayton 3168.

Dear Ron,

John Foyster's mentioning of the 'Normanhurst High School' days of THE MENTOR set me wondering. I was sort of under the impression that you were an 'oldie' ie more than thirty or so. However if you were at NHS only ten issues ago, you must be pretty young - hey! Unless you were a teacher!

All this highlights my lack of information of your past (ne'er mind the sordid details). The only things I have in my file regarding biography of Ronl Clarke is that you were once at N(B)HS and you have a wife, sister or mother who draws pretty good illos. So without sounding as if I am trying to blackmail (or at least greymail) you, could you please give me a potted biog. of yourself. (\*\* I might think about it. After that crack in TM 11 about 'using older fen as we can' and the apparent fact that you think that I am 'about 30'..... Please note that TM was in suspended animation for a couple of years (unspecified), I could be any age. See the lead article this issue re TM's past history. -RLC \*\*)

Cover illo - takes a little concentration to appreciate it but once SEEN it is damn good.'

Phoenix is more my type of meat - rare (blood running out, etc., etc.,). Or even raw. However, your phraseology is unreal as applied to archaeologists (presumably Aussie) bunged in the 'middle of the bloody Dead 'Eart'. Fortunately, it is at least as good as the first three pages of Michael Black's last effort. The fiction in THE MENTOR has uptil. No.11 not impressed me (although it did not make me chunder, which is something) and I am glad to see you introducing some STF instead of SP(ew)F.

Although I am not (openly) a comic fan, it is heartening to see an Australian industry (albeit miniscule) being built from a group very close to fandom. Maybe one day Austfen will have a say in professional SF.

Michael Black's story seems to concern a bloke waking up with a hangover (or was that just Michael?) and falling off a ferry (whatever that is - MB is obviously a Sydfan). Tony Boucher

others he really can levitate.

- Michael O'Brien.

LORD OF LIGHT. by Roger Zelazny Doubleday. US\$4.95.

I've just finished reading "Lord Of Light" for the second time in the past week. The first time around, I had done a bit of research on the various and sundry Hindu gods and their assorted cronies and attributes, to enable me to more fully understand just who was who, and why he or she (or it) was able to do whatever they were doing in various places through the book.

The reasons for research in the first place was because I'd little or no knowledge of the people the author had elected to write about, as I soon saw when I made my 1st attempt to read his book. Once a bit of information on such as Kali & Yama is obtained, the book becomes more personal.

For good dramatic effect, the author has written the first chapter in the present; then starting with the second chapter, to about the last three chapters, he flashes back as it were, to put the reader more fully in the picture, and in the last chapters, brings the story to full ending.

A powerful writer, this author has penned a very readable sag , in a credible fashion, which leaves one wondering as to why nc-onehas ever written about the subject before and in such a way. I must admit that I enjoyed the book more on second reading, but it is certainly a must for anyone who enjoys science fiction, or just a damn good adventure story.

- Scorpio.

\*\*Follows a review from Melbourne - Ed \*\*

THE POWER or "My Ghod, Pal and his pals have done it again".

The Damon Knight review of the book is bad, so I haven't read it. The film is bad, but unfortunately I didn't get to read any reviews, so I got to go, and suffered.

The film starts with this nice young man-cum-hero and scientist showing somebody from the Government around a place where they are investigating pain. Good stuff, this, but it soon subsides and we get on with the story proper, which is a pity.

It turns out that all the members of the committee of the institute doing this research have done a questionnaire, and it is found that one of them has a very high (unmeasureably?) I.Q. and has all the makings of a super-type-man. For some reason, they are unable to tell which person it is (if

if they could, the story would end there), so they conduct a twitty test with a piece of paper and a pencil. The test works which proves that somebody there has the power of mind over matter ; so what happens ; fade to a shot of the hero trying, and partly succeeding, to seduce the heroine. Off go the lights and they are kicking around on the floor when the phone rings. The woman on the phone wants to know why her husband hasn't come home from work yet, so our hero dresses up and goes to the building to find out what's happening. They find the man has been killed in a centrifuge by excessive "G" forces, his eyes have popped out and all good stuff like that.

After this the film becomes worse (which is almost impossible) and (skipping most of it during which the hero escapes death on an Air Force firing range, in a lift well, and being chased by a big black car) until we come to the part where there is a show-down. The super-man-villian reveals himself (he is the government man mentioned at the beginning) and attempts to kill our hero by sheer will power, the idea being that man can be killed by pain which causes heart failure (or something like that). The hero is just about to die when he musters all his strength and kills the villian by mind power ; it turns out they are both super-men ....WOW!!!

The villian is done to death and the hero walks out into a cardboard sunrise in hand with the girl.

The end and I stagger out, almost done to death by the film. Gak : 'Undersea Kingdom' was as good.

P.S. The effects weren't too bad.

- Leigh Edmonds.

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FANZINE REVIEW.

Michael O'Brien

SCIENCE FICTION TIMES No.455 June 1968  
PO Box 216, Syracuse, N.Y. USA 13209

This newszine started off as FANTASY TIMES in 1940, and is the oldest fanzine in existence. It has a bright imposing look, and the lead story is about Pat Terry and the "Melbourne Minicon". This has good stuff in a slick and readable form.

I received this in lieu of the late SFWEEKLY, and I don't think it's a bad exchange at all, despite the monthly schedule of the new 'un. Subscription is \$5 p.a., but worth it.

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I've been reading this particular newszine for the last couple of years and I've found it very interesting and good reading, with up-to-date news and book reviews. From the last fews issues, its future looks better than ever - RLC.

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REVIEWS.International Science Fiction.

Vol 1 No 1. Nov 1967.

For some months past, we have been assailed by advertisements which assured us that "a new concept in science fiction publishing was here! Seldom if ever can one recall a more persistent series of blurbs concerning the projected appearance of a magazine. This Welkin ringing series of clarion calls were as misconceived as the magazine. "Yea verily the mountain hath laboured and brought forth a mouse."

Old Fred Pohl's conception is a miscarriage which indeed is almost an abortion. The gruesome details follow:-

Firstly - A rambling editorial about a ramble the editor took to a European film festival, where, if his writings are any guide to his abilities as a film critic, he was misguided enough to act as a judge of sci-fi films, Ghu above, the mind boggles (or bogles) at his tenacity.

Secondly to Thirteenthly-Twelve stories from seven countries. Briefly details as follows.

RUSSIA. (1) "Wanderers and Travellers" - Arkandy Strugatsky. An introspective little conversation piece - not really science fiction, in fact hardly fiction at all.

(2) "Perpetual Motion" - Illya Varshavsky.

A trite little story about mankind's gradual subjection to the Robots - all quite familiar, but having nicely judged sardonic overtones.

(3) "Komunulus" - Illya Varshavsky. A very intelligent type robot, disliking the idea of dismantlement, runs amok, kills its designer and goes quietly daft. Obviously Asimov's Laws of Robotics have not yet hit Russia.

GERMANY. (1) "The Epsilon Problem" - Helmuth W. Sommers and Ernst Vleck. Nasty story of converting mentally defective children into weapons of war, to deal with extra terrestrial B.E.M.'s on B.E.M.'s own planet. All brought to a halt by a moral goodie on the grounds that is no longer essential. I repeat, a nasty story - left a nasty taste in my mouth.

(2) "Monster" - Same authors. If Charles Dickens had decided to collaborate with Thomas Hardy on a science fiction story, then this is the dreary sort of yarn they might have produced.

If those two are representative samples of Teutonic science fiction, then it does not cause astonishment that little is seen in translation because these two stories both stank like a vulture's crutch.

FRANCE. "Uranus" - Michel Ehrwein. A small gem of a story. A terse offering on a most offbeat theme. A well drawn picture of the last human couple, both male - both homosexual. Michel Ehrwein is a name to watch for.

AUSTRALIA. "The Disposal Man" - Damien Broderick. A yarn written to Mr Broderick's usual standard, with which you are all probably familiar.

ITALY. (1) "Rainy Day Revolution No.39" - Luigi Cuzzi. Flippant vignette of a quasi-revolutionary, quasi-democratic society.

(2) "Witchcraft for Beginners" - F.C. Gozzini. An equally flippant vignette about an invisible man who hounds his visible sibling.

Both very weak - but I laughed and laughed - humour seems conspicuous by its absence in s.f. these days.

HOLLAND. "They Still Jump" - J.L. Mahe. Whimsically sardonic story about a suicide contest between the Eiffel Tower and the Golden Gate Bridge. One feels that it is cheating to attribute this to Holland as it was written and published in Esperanto. Still this is only a minor quibble.

ENGLAND. (1) "Ecdysiast" - Robert Presslie.

(2) "Big Tin God" - Philip E. High.

Both reprinted from New Worlds 1963 vintage and with the French story "Uranus" show up the rest of the contents of the magazine as being rather poor.

Now if one follows Sturgeon's dictum that 90% of everything is garbage, this is a fairly average quality magazine.

However, if on the contrary one feels strongly that fair value is a just entitlement for money expended, then it is not. As an experiment, certain teething troubles can be expected in the presentation, and the idea of an international s.f. magazine is certainly worthy of support by us all.

If Mr Pohl pulls up his editorial socks we may yet see something worth having.

Finally

One should mention the special feature entitled "Science Fiction Around the World" which is divided into three short essays - from Russia, Julius Kagarlitsky gives a very full summary of the situation which is most intriguing because we get very little news from this quarter. From Italy, Luigi Cozzi writes another good summary which is most readable, if not as comprehensive as the Russian's. From Germany, a pompous ass named Walter Ernsting includes in a large scale advertisement for his out-of-this-world works. Amongst the incredible things he tells us, is that he personally "established German Fandom 13 years ago", The only comment one can make about this outrageous claim is that, the lively intelligent fans I met personally in Germany in 1945 - ten years earlier - must all have been time travellers.

- Brian Richards.

THE R & R DEPARTMENT (Letters).

Eric Lindsay  
Paulconbridge, N.S.W.

Dear Mr Clarke,

I would like to comment on one point in Pat Terry's article on androids. The book "The Psuedo People" by William Nolan is also published under the title "Almost Human" by Souvenir Press in 1966. I was surprised that Mr Terry did not mention this as I know this practice of publishing the same book under different titles is a sore point with him.

\*\*\*\*\*

Leigh Edmonds  
St. Kilda, Vict.

Dear Ron,

By all means use that article in MENTOR (THE). It was to be used in AUSTRAL FANTALES .....

\*\*\*\*\*

David Gray  
Salisbury, Qld.

Dear Ron,

Many thanks for the July issue of THE MENTOR which I enjoyed and will support, mainly because you are closer to home....

I thought the magazine well thought up and well laid out and full of potential...I would like to make some comments on my ideas as to the policy of this sort of magazine, you have left the policy of the mag. wide open and suggest that the format will be experimental, so that leaves me an opening.

Firstly, let us not kid ourselves SF followers are a minority group although more intelligent than the usual reader of mainline fiction, and our group comprises of chemists, doctors, engineers and many ordinary self-educated and deep thinking people. We read not only for relaxation but also to gain knowledge and understanding from a type of literature that today must contain much authentically based scientific, social and religious (philisophical) material. SF offers to the public the only constructive, entertaining and moral teachings in fiction forms today, in other words the story with a meaning and a lesson to learn. The majority of the authors that write the material for SF, are learned, mature and responsible people as against the hack writers of the pornographic

slush that many main-line authors turn out for unscrupulous publishers.

We, in Brisbane, always read SF Editorials and take very seriously such editors as John W. Campbell and philosophies of Issac Asimov, and the stories they write based on these ideas. We are responsible people who are concerned with the future world trends in science, politics, economics and social event. We look to SF to help us see into this future, and perhaps in our small way prepare others and help people in authority to plan for this future in the right way. Much of SF encourages individual initiative and responsible action and suggest that outward looking and pioneering attitudes are the pathway to an adult nationhood. On this basis, I would suggest your magazine adapt its policy, as I think it already has?

Following on from your article "Computer Technology" what about an article on the effect of this innovation on real people, what social changes will come about, what happens if thousands are displaced by computers and cybernation, how do they live? Has any SF author written a book on this subject? Will a society of workers replaced by robots disintergrate or will it lead to a new era of leisure and happiness. What about an article on the "Population Explosion" written from the angle that the world has the resources to accommodate 20 billion people. What about an article on psychosomatic medicine and treatment, "fantasy" would seem tame compared to this subject. An author would not need to take LSD to have some weird experiences ; a few days in a mental institution would give them enough material for a dozen books.

However enough for now, how can we help you, we are few but helpful. Let us have some creativity, not rehashes and descriptions of some other writer's creation.

- David Gray.

\*\* How to help? Simple. Write those articles you speak about, and send them to me. You up in Brisbane seem to have the seeds of some good articles - see if you can come up with something.-RLC \*\*

oooooooooooo

Brian Richards  
Swanbourne, W.A.

Dear Ron,

I am obliged to you for THE MENTOR no 9, which although described as a crudzine and numbered 9 did not in any way act as an aperient on my system. Foolishly, you asked for comment. 1. Editorial : Surely sir you are not as astonished as you pretend to be that you get no LOC's or other writings from your local fans. This is a well known fact of life which as

long ago as 1938 was noted even in American prozines and in the rest of Australia we all recognise with sorrow the paresis of the writing faculty in N.S.W. fans.

Could not agree less with the argument that the flag needs to be shown - quality is what is called for - if you have to write the damn thing yourself then do so, why should ASFR have a monopoly on the usage of pennames.

(2) "Deceive Me Not" I am obviously slow witted on this one. As far as any point went I "perceive he not".

(3) Nova Express takes my own personal award of one second hand toilet roll, for being the most incoherent unnecessary book of 1968. If this represents the best that the Mainstream idol Burroughs can do then the sooner he leaves SF to people who know something about it the better it will be. Not throwing crud at Frank Blamey - he is entitled to a viewpoint even if it is peculiar.

(4) Computer Technology - have always failed to see why poor fans should be obliged to suffer this type of thing - if they want fact most of them know where to get it, let us stay in the faery world of fenland - life has too much fact.

(5) Are there really still people who do not know that the SF Book Club exists to sell hard cover SF at a paperback cost - if so you do them a favour in bringing Peter Darling's note to public notice.

I said earlier you were foolish to ask for comment. Why not leave well alone and assume your product is perfect. General Motors do, why not you?

- Brian Richards.

ooooOoooo

Gary Woodman  
Parkdale, Vic.

Dear Ron,

Ah, MENTOR. I passed Doug (Kewley) the other day, and he pounced on me and asked me if I had received "a thing from New South Wales." I said no, and that it was unlikely that I ever would because fans are poor and the cost of sending live things through the post is ridiculous. His fist missed. "Ron Clarke's thing, you fool!" "Oh, that!" I said, and pulled it out of my pocket. "Not bad, eh?" he muttered between clenched teeth....

Your editorial - not having seen MENTOR 7 & 8, I refuse to comment (fearing that I am treading on thin ice) on their quality, but I say this ) if you want to or have to publish crud, then do so and bugger the criticism. A zine must be exceptional to extract a good showing of letters : exceptionally good, or exceptionally bad.

Pat Terry, as usual, takes a few words and turns them into a couple of pages of informative (yet entertaining) prose. I think he is too vague in his definition of "robot". To me a

robot is a self contained mobile unit requiring one, and one only, programming for any given task. An android I consider to be a robot indistinguishable by any simple test - no, that's too vague. An android is a robot indistinguishable from a man by any human sensory test.

A humanoid is a different class - while a robot cannot be alive as humans are alive (what egotism!), a humanoid is a self-contained mobile unit requiring no programming for a given task, and <sup>can</sup> therefore be alive. By these definitions a robot cannot reason, but a humanoid, when faced for the first time with three-pin electricity plugs and sockets, say, will be able to place plug in socket without having being told how to do so. Intentionally, this definition implies a certain degree of curiosity.

Your attitude to contribs seems too liberal to me. Often it is necessary to print something which conflicts with one's own thoughts - so in this case one ought to add "these are the views of the author of this article and not those of the editor. The views of the editor can be found hereafter, and in the editorial." (\*\* I thought this was understood? -RLC \*\*)

I have been unable to determine whether the story was an imaginative, superbly-written masterpiece, or a page and a half of wasted ink. It either impresses me overwhelmingly or makes me want to chuck, perhaps both at once. Plotless ( but do Ballardian stories need a plot?), characterless, (unless you count Jon, who is alive but dead) and pointless ( but then isn't all Ballardian work?) it is, and I cannot decide.

I was particularly impressed by the article on computers. Obviously written by someone with a grounding in the subject, it presented an excellent history of the calculating machine, topped off by a suggestion of the future. This sort of thing is bandied around in the dailies and the glossies, but I have never seen its like in a fanzine, unfortunately. More of its ilk if you can.

- Gary Woodman.

Mike O'Brien  
Hobart, Tas.

Dear Ron,

Very interested in that piece in THE MENTOR 9 on the Science Fiction Book Club. Have already writ (airmail) to them; sounds good.

I tried to re-read NOVA EXPRESS, encouraged by the review. Didn't make it. My reading habits lately are dreadful; I can (Blast! The typewriter just knocked over a salt shaker and I had to pause to throw some over my shoulder. Now, where was I?) I can read a book in a couple of hours if I set my mind to it, but I'm constantly starting others and glancing through old ones. Result : A month to finish George O. Smith's VENUS EQUILATERAL.

Pat Terry  
Mosman, N.S.W.

Sir,

I am much interested in Peter Darling's explanation of the British S.F. Book Club. Tis wondering I am, whether any reader can tell me WHY American counterparts, and other "Special Offers" of which we see a great number in the U.S. mags and P/Bs are all, without exception, marked "Offer good in U.S.A. only", or "Books available only in U.S.A."

Sure, I've written to at least six of the advertisers, over the last few years, asking why this is so, and quoting the B.S.F.C. as an example. To date I have not had one reply. Sure, I know tis easy enough to get a U.S. friend to apply for membership, or the Special Offers, and then send them on, but; WHY cannot we deal directly with the sources? Anyone know? I seriously mean this.

- Pat Terry

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Other letters were received from Pauline Hankin, Jock McKenna and a tape from Bernie Burnhouse, which will be answered as soon as possible.

I must appologise about that bad reproduction on various pages, but it appeared I had run out of ink. I'm learning, I'm learning - the hard way, by my own mistakes. - RLC.

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Advertisement :-

PASSLOWS Book Exchange & Lottery Service  
88 Kemble St.,  
Wollongong.

Has usually a few hundred SF softcover books and magazines for sale or exchange, cheap.

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- Read FORERUNNER .-

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THE AUSTRALIAN SCIENCE  
FICTION SOCIETY.

This society was formed at the Easter, 1968 Conference in Melbourne. The Aims and objects of the A.S.F.S. are :-

- (1) To act as an advisory Bureau.
- (2) To establish an Information Service.
- (3) To act as a liason between S.F. Groups and fans, in Australia and Internationally.
- (4) To encourage and promote interest in F & S.F. fandom in Australia.
- (5) To assist with advice and help in the co-ordination of Conventions either State or National.

As you will observe, there is no mention of any form of control, over groups, or any mandate for the A.S.F.S. to run or conduct Conventions. but merely to assist in any way desired.

A Provisional Committee was elected to carry out certain prescribed functions, until the Easter Convention in 1969.

The duties are :-

- (1) To draw up a draft Constitution for presentation to the 1969 Con. for approval, amendment, or rejection.
- (2) To arrange for Election of Officials for A.S.F.S. To carry on from Easter 1969 to Easter 1970, and ensure that all intending members, shall be able to vote. Also that they shall be able to nominate and second nominations for people of their choice for positions on the National Executive, and for their own State Representation.
- (3) To publish a Newsletter, to be sent to all known Australian fans, containing progress reports, and news of general interest.

After some natural confusion, it is now hoped that the Provisional Committee will function smoothly and efficiently. Committee Members at the present time are :-

Melbourne. Mervyn Binns, (Chairman)

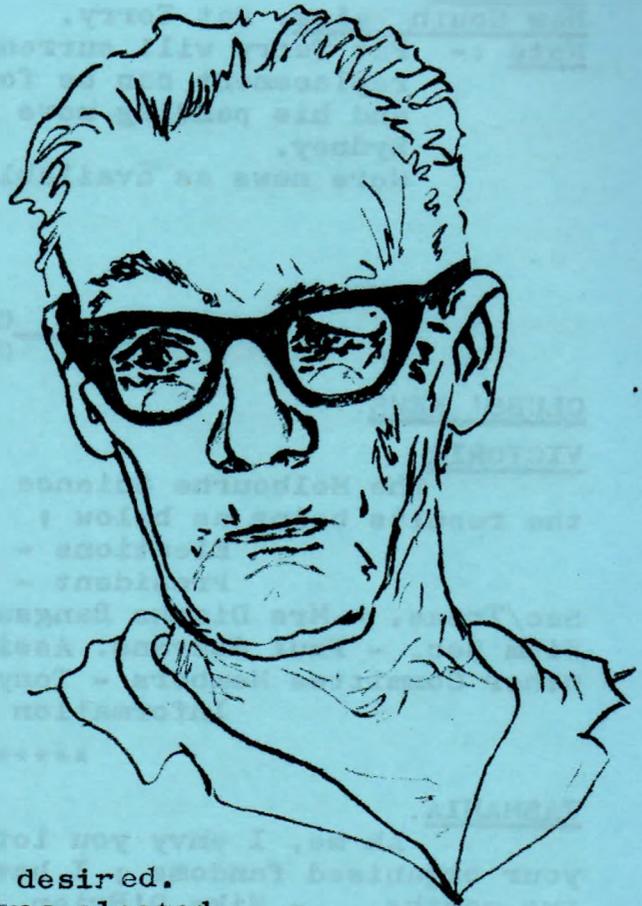
Tony Thomas, (Secretary)

John Bangsund,

Paul Stevens,

(Lee Harding has resigned for personal reasons.)

West Australia. Brian Richards.



Tasmania. Michael O'Brien,  
New South Wales. Pat Terry.

Note :- Pat Terry will surrender his post , as soon as a replacement can be found, because of health reasons, and his pending move from the Metropolitan Area of Sydney.

More news as available.

- Pat Terry.

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CLUBS' NEWS.

VICTORIA

The Melbourne Science Fiction Club recently held elections, the results being as below ;

Elections - MSFC held June 30th, 1968.

President - Dr Dick Jennsen.

Sec/Treas. - Mrs Dianne Bangsund. Librarian - Mervyn Binns.

Film Sec. - Paul Stevens. Assist. Secretary - John Bredon.

Other Committee Members - Tony Thomas, Leigh Edmonds.

Information from Peter Darling and Gary Mason.

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TASMANIA.

Ah me, I envy you lot in Melbourne and Sydney, with your organised fandoms ; I haven't even seen Don Tuck for about two months. - Mike O'Brien

\*\*\*\*\*

N.S.W.

After 'Today' there are thoughts for tomorrow. The reason the SSFF has such a 'binding' Constitution, is that it is trying to make sure that there will be no "Second Empire", at least not the same as the "First". When I suggested "Foundation" as the name for the Sydney club, I had some idea at the back of my mind of the significance that could be attached to it, but I did not have any idea that it would catch on in fact.

There will be no Second Empire springing from the SSFF, at least as long as its Constitution is in force. - Ron L Clarke (Sec)

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QUEENSLAND. Still no official word from this club, yet, as to when meetings are being held, etc.

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Another issue completed. Comments, subscriptions and contributions welcomed for future issues. Fanzines received : ASFR 16 and BRAMSTON 14 at time of printing. - Ron L Clarke.