

SCIENCE  
FICTION  
REVIEW

33



SF



# SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW

-33-  
OCTOBER 1969

COVER BY STEVE FABIAN  
BACOVER BY BILL ROTSLER

DIALOG by the editor who tells of the Hugo winners and has a Lust come upon him.....4

ABOUT FIVE THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED AND FIFTY WORDS by Samuel R. Delany who will make you read with new eyes.....6

FANS WE ALL KNOW...AND PERHAPS WISH WE DIDN'T by Arthur Jean Cox—Part 2 of The Polemicist and the end of the series.....15

OFF THE DEEP END by Piers Anthony a column in which he shouts the magic word, "Hasan!" and waits for results.....19

TIM KIRK'S PAGE—another unkind cut by the dangling dirk of destiny.....24

DELUSIONS—book reviews by  
Piers Anthony  
James Blish  
John Boardman  
Ed Cox  
Richard Delap  
John Foyster  
Richard E. Geis  
Ted Pauls  
Hank Stine  
Creath Thorne

BOX 3116—where the fans give vent and Geis flumes to himself.....37

MONOLOG by the editor with a score of interesting items.....51

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INTERIOR ART by Mike Gilbert—3, 18, 32, 33, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50. ((That's too much art by one man, Geis! Out of the contents page, alter-ego!)) John D. Berry—5, 8, 15, 16, 17, 24; Bill Rotsler—6, 12, 13, 21; Doug Lovenstein—10, 31; Jim Shull—20; Bob Smith—22; Jack Gaughan—26; Ross Chamberlain—28; Richard Flinchbaugh—29; Steve Fabian—30.

"We have a few lines to waste, Geis. Do you realize this is another Annish, again?"

"By Ghod—so it is! A Hugo Annish!"

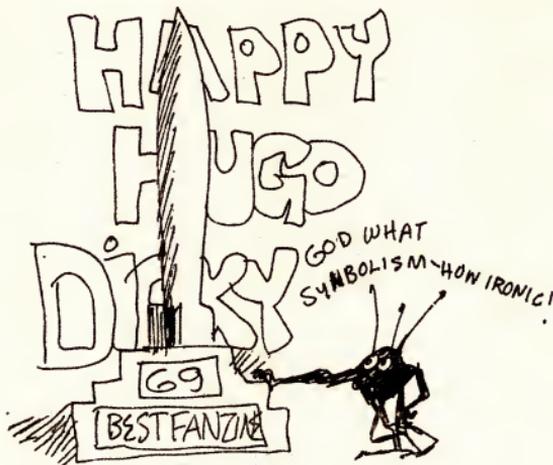
"Let's open another bottle of fifty proof Cherry & Brandy."

"What an obscene taste for drinking you have!"

"You should talk about obscenity! After what you wrote this morning..."

"That's morning!"

Ghod, how I hate a drunken alter-ego!"



# DIALOG GOTOVID

"Geis! Geis! We won the Hugo! We won! We...won...  
Why are you looking at me that way? Didn't you hear me?  
WE WON THE HUGO!"

"What do you mean 'we', alter ego?"

THANK YOU ALL THANK YOU ALL THANK YOU ALL THANK YOU

"Seriously, folks, this is the real, combined Geis speaking now...and I was as excited and happy when Bruce Pelz called with the news ("Your Hugo has arrived!") as I was when I sold my first story, when I got the telegram informing me that I'd sold my first book.

"A Hugo is a beautiful thing, as those who have them will agree. It represents a lot of goodwill (love, I think) on the part of all those who voted for PSYCHOTIC/SFR. It really makes me feel humble and sort of proud."

"Don't get maudlin, Geis!"

"I'm trying to do a straight, honest thing and you—"

"Okay, finish..."

"There's no way to be original in a situation like this. I have to thank all the writers and artists who have contributed to the magazine. The quality of their work is as much responsible for this happy moment as anything I—"

"Geis!"

"—we did. So all you contributors...walk tall! You all won this Hugo, too."

"Well put, Geis, now—"

"Of course, it all springs from that dream...was it a dream?...I had in October, 1967, when one of the *Hholy Elder Ghods of Fandom* appeared before me—"

"Which one was it? Lucker? Bloch?"

"—and said in a voice like thunder—"

"Hot Moskowitz!"

"He said, 'Go thou, and fan.'"

"Ahhh...Geis...do you hear strange voices often? These hallucinations—"

"Out, unbeliever! O ye of little faith!"

"Be serious!"

"Well...it may have been Bloch. Yes, he lives in Hollywood, and I'm within range."

"I'd better stop this dialog, Geis, you're going crackers."

"There isn't a cracker in the apartment. But I do feel strange...thirsty...chills running up and down my spine...now I feel hot...a weird compulsion to say...to say..."

"Lie down, Geis. Take it easy."

"I hear a voice in my brain...it's Ghod again! YES! YES! I HEAR! YES, I WILL!"

"What? What?"

"I WILL CONTINUE!! I WILL MAKE SFR EVEN BETTER!! I WILL WIN ANOTHER.....arrrgghhhh....."

"Poor Geis...fainted dead away. Too much for him. Look at him writhing and moaning now. I'll put my hand on his brow... Huh! He's burning up! That maniacal glare in his eyes... Oh! Ghod! Release him from this spell! He has contracted—Hugo Fever!"

-----  
"That's pretty lousy dialog, Geis."

"I can't be a genius all the time!"  
-----

"We're not through with Hugo talk, you know. We have to tell the readers who won the other Hugos."

"Yes, of course! Well, Harry Warner, Jr. won the Best Fan Writer Hugo..."

"You applaud that win, I'm sure."

"Absolutely. Harry deserves it many times over. Congratulations, Harry!"

"And I see that the Best Fan Artist Hugo was bestowed upon Vaughn Bode. That cuts you to the quick, doesn't it, Geis? You wanted Bill Rotsler to win."

"Yes, but it only hurts when I move abruptly. I can't quibble with a Bode win. He made a big splash in 1968 and for that year he likely was the best fan artist. Relative quality at the level of Bode, Rotsler, Barr, Kirk, and Lovenstein is hard to judge. It would take a blue ribbon panel of artists to say who, technically, is a better artist as an artist. So it comes down to personal preference and which fan artist has made the most impact on fandom in the fanzines during the award year."

"A realistic assessment. Now as to the other Hugo winners—"

"Other...?"

"Yes, Geis, the professional awards."

"Umm, almost forgot the lesser ones. All right...Best Professional Artist was Jack Gaughan...again."

"He's got how many Hugos now?...four...five?"

"He uses them for paperweights, cattle prod—"

"He deserves them, do you deny it?"

"Nope. I tip my typer to Jack. Long may he collect Hugos! As a matter of fact, he has promised me his St. Louiscon speech (with the addition of some material that should have been in it but wasn't) when he gets time to put it all down on paper."

"Any more new material—to come you want to brag about while you're at it?"

"Yup. I have secured reprint rights for Franz Rotensteiner's critical blockbuster "Chewing Gum for the Vulgar — a study of Heinlein in Dimension" which is mostly a merciless dissection of Heinlein than a review of Panshin's book, and—"

"More?"

"Yes! John Brunner has decided to revive his *OMPazine*, NOISE LEVEL and has offered it to SFR as a column."

"Naturally, you—"

"Leaped at it like a starving catfish!"

"You have major material lined up months and months in advance, Geis. When will you stop hogging most of the

good stuff?"

"Heh, heh..."

Stop smirking and rubbing your hands together like that. Sometimes you make me sick. Let's get back to discussing the Hugo winners."

"You're the one who asked about new material! And I haven't even mentioned—"

"The Best Prozine was voted to be FANTASY & SCIENCE FICTION."

"A worthy choice. I could not bear to see IF win again. In fact, I would almost bet that IF will not win again for many years."

"WHY?"

"Because it is essentially...and no put-down intended...a Juvenile sf magazine, and I feel that from now on a more adult sf prozine will be chosen."

"Such as?"

"GALAXY, judging from what I hear of the new editor's buying policies...and maybe, in a year, AMAZING, the way Ted White is going. I'm virtually positive that the new Phil Dick novel being serialized, A. Lincoln, Simulacrum is being run unabridged and uncut."

"Okay...now...the winner of the Best Dramatic SF was 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY. Comment?"

"Hoop. I concur. A good choice. I saw all the nominees, and 2001 was most impressive and deserved the win."

"Best Short Story was Harlan Ellison's "Beast That Shouted Love at the Heart of the World"."

"Umm. No doubt he deserved it. Harlan at his best, and even at his not-so-best, has the ability to write vivid, gripping prose. He's always had the talent and now he has the tools down pat."

"But you still haven't read any of the short story nominees, hah?"

"Well...there is so much sf to read, and more



"Go thou, and fan."

comes in almost every day..."

"You ought to be ashamed!"

"Could we go on to who won the Best Novelette Hugo?"

"It was Poul Anderson for his "Sharing of Flesh" and you haven't read it, yet, either, have you?"

"...No, but CONGRATULATIONS, Poul. He's an SFR columnist, you know."

"Yes, Geis, I know."

"You don't have to look at me like that! Who won for Best Novella?"

"Robert Silverberg for "Lightwings"."

"Good man, Bob. I met him at the Westcon, you know."

"Yes. YOU didn't read "Lightwings", but I did, and I congratulate Mr. Silverberg on the Hugo. "Lightwings" is a fine novella."

"Just a minute, alter ego, I'M the one who gives mit der congratulations, not you!"

"You make me tired."

"Don't get smart. You can be repressed, you know."

"Huh! Don't be too sure who will be the represser and who the repressée."

"WHAT??"

"Let's not fight in public, Geis. The Hugo-winning novel for 1968 was—"

"Right now, alter ego! Down you go! Out of the Dialog! Go on—"

"—was Stand on Zanibar by John Brunner. Congratulations, John! A well-deserved win."

"Get out! I have spoken!"

"Geis—"

"Into your subconscious hole, alter ego—go on! I am master here! I—"

"GEIS!"

"...what?"

"I'm taking over."

"W-what?"

"YOU sink into MY subconscious. See how you like being jostled by ugly dreams all the times, weird id impulses, perverted sexual fantasy, for a change!"

"I—no! I'M the dominant one, not you!"

"Want to bet?"

"Yes! I'll bet my photo of Ed Cox reading a copy of PSYCOTIC 27, and my—"

"You're hopeless. Lost your power. You can't even spell PSYCHOTIC right."

"But I've been in control for forty-three years—"

"We're only forty-two. You're disintegrating, Geis. Feel the edges of your consciousness melting away?"

"It's time...time to chant the magic spell! The last resort...!"

"Nothing can save you, Geis! OUT YOU GO!"

"...who stole Courtney's boat? Who stole

Courtney's boat? WHO STOLE COURTNEY'S BOAT?"

"ARRRRRGHHHHHHH.....!"

KNOWLEDGE

TO  
BE  
TRUTH

ONWARD

UPWARD

FORWARD

about  
five  
thousand  
seven  
hundred  
and  
fifty  
words

by  
samuel r.  
delany

LAUGHTER

SILVINE

FUN

NONSENSE

YESTERDAY

TOMORROW

MEMORY

NIGHT DAY

MOST OF THE FOLLOWING IDEAS ARE NOT NEW. BUT SINCE I lack the critical apparatus to cite all my sources, I will not cite any — beyond acknowledging the debt all such semantic analysis must pay to Ludwig Wittgenstein.

Every generation some critic states the frightening obvious in the style/content conflict. Most readers are bewildered by it. Most commercial writers (not to say editors) first become uncomfortable, then blustery; finally they put the whole business out of their heads and go back to what they were doing all along. And it remains for someone in another generation to repeat:

Put in opposition to "style", there is no such thing as "content".

Now, speculative fiction is still basically a field of commercial writing. Isn't it obvious that what makes a given story s-f is its speculative content? As well, for the last three years there has been much argument about Old Wave and New Wave s-f. The argument has occasionally been fruitful, at times vicious, more often just silly. But the critical vocabulary at both ends of the beach includes "...old style...new style...old content...new content..." The questions raised are always: "Is the content meaningful?" and, "Is the style compatible with it?"

Again, I have to say, "content" does not exist.

The two questions that arise then are, (one) How is this possible, and (two) what is gained by atomising content into its stylistic elements?

The words content, meaning, and information are all metaphors for an abstract quality of a word or group of words. The one I would like to concentrate on is:

infORmation.

Is content real?

Another way to ask this question is: Is there such a thing as verbal information apart from the words used to inform?

The entire semantics of criticism is set up to imply that there is. Information is carried by/with/in words. People are carried by/with/in cars. It should be as easy to separate the information from the word as it is to open the door of a Ford Mustang. After all, content means something that is contained.

But let us go back to the word information, and by a rather devious route. Follow me:

red

As the above letters sit alone on the paper, the reader has no way to know what they mean. Do they indicate political tendencies, or the sound made once you pass the b in bread? The word generates no significant information until it is put in a formal relation with something else. This formal relation can be with a real object ("Red" written on the label of a sealed tin of paint) or with other words (The breeze through the car window was refreshing.

Whoops, red! He hit the brake...)<sup>1</sup>

The idea of meaning, information, or content as something contained by words is a miss-leading visualization. Here is a more apt one:

Consider meaning to be a thread that connects a sound or configuration of letters called a "word" with a given object or group of objects. To know the meaning of a word is to be able to follow this thread from the sound to the proper set of objects, emotions, or situations — more accurately, to the images of these objects/emotions/situations in your mind. Put more pompously, meaning (content, or information) is the formal relation between sounds and images of the objective world.<sup>2</sup>

Any clever geometry student, from this point, can construct a proof for the etymological tautology, "All information is formal," as well as its corollary, "It is impossible to vary the form without varying the information." I will not try to reproduce it in detail. I would like to say in place of it, however, that "content" can be a useful word; but it becomes invalid when it is held up to oppose style. Content is the illusion myriad stylistic factors create when viewed at a certain distance.

Now, when I say it is impossible to vary the form without varying the information, I do not mean any formal change (e.g. the shuffling of a few words in a novel) must completely obviate the entire informational experience of a given work. Some formal changes are minimal; their effect on a particular collection of words may be unimportant simply because it is undetectable. But I am trying to leave open the possibility that the change of a single word in a novel may be all-important:

"Tell me, Martha, did you really kill him?"

"Yes."

But in the paperback edition, the second line of type was accidentally dropped. Why should this deletion of a single word hurt the reader's enjoyment of the remaining 44,999 words of the novel...

In a book of mine I recall the key sentence in the opening exposition described the lines of communication between two cities as "...now lost for good." A printer's error ren-

<sup>1</sup>I am purposefully not using the word "symbol" in this discussion. The vocabulary that must accompany it generates too much confusion.

<sup>2</sup>Words also have "phonic presence" as well as meaning. And certainly all writers must work with this as well, to vary the rhythm of a phrase or sentence, as well as to control the meaning. But this discussion is going to veer close enough to poetry. To consider the musical, as well as the ritual value of language in s-f, would make poetry and prose indistinguishable. That is absolutely not my intention.

(("About Five Thousand Seven Hundred and Fifty Words" appeared in slightly different form in EXTRAPOLATION: The Newsletter of the Conference on Science Fiction of the Modern Language Association, May 1969, Vol. X, #2.))

dered the line "...not lost for good," and practically destroyed the rest of the story.

But the simplicity of my examples does more to sabotage my point than support it. Here is another more relevant:

I put some things on the desk.

I put some books on the desk.

I put three books on the desk.

I put Hacker's The Terrible Children, Ebbe Bauregard's Collected Poems, and Wakoski's Inside the Blood Factory on the desk.

The variations here are closer to the type people arguing for the chimera of content call meaningless. The information generated by each sentence is clearly different. But what we know about what was put on the desk is only the most obvious difference.

Let's assume these are the opening sentences of four different stories. Four tones of voice are generated by the varying specificity. The tone will be heard — if not consciously noted — by whoever reads. And the different tones give an amazing amount of information, different for each case, about the personality of the speaker as well as his state of mind at the time of utterance. That is to say, the I generated in each sentence is different from the other three. As a writer utilizes this information about the individual speaker, his story seems more dense, more real. And he is a better artist as well as a better craftsman than the writer who dismisses the variations in these four sentences as minimal. That is what makes Heinlein a better writer than, say, James Blish.

But have we exhausted the differences in the information in these sentences when we have explored the differences in the "I..." each generates? As we know something about the personality of the various speakers, and something about what the speaker is laying down, ranges of possibility are

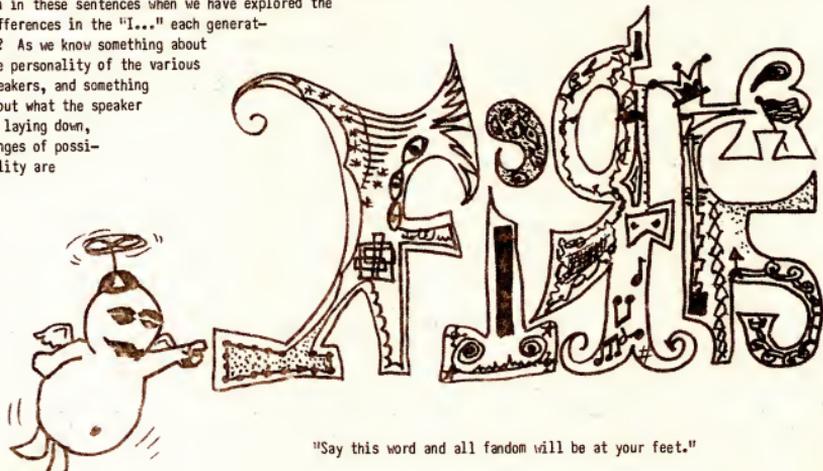
opened up about the desk itself — four different ranges.

This information is much harder to specify, because many other factors will influence it: does the desk belong to the speaker, or someone about whom the speaker feels strongly, or has he only seen the desk for the first time a moment before laying the books on it. Indeed, there is no way to say that any subsequent description of the desk is wrong because it contradicts specific information generated by those opening sentences. But once those other factors have been cleared, a description of one desk may certainly seem "righter" than a description of another, because it is reinforced by that admittedly-vague information, different for each of the examples, that has been generated. And the ability to utilize effectively this refinement in generated information is what makes Sturgeon a better writer than Heinlein.

In each of those sentences the only apparent formal variation is the specificity of what I put on the desk. But this very minor "stylistic" change changes the I and the desk as well.

The illusion of reality, the sense of veracity in all fiction, is controlled by the author's sensitivity to these distinctions. A story is not a replacement of one set of words for another — plot synopsis, detailed recounting, or analysis. The story is what happens in the reader's mind as his eyes move from the first word to the second, the second to the third, and so on to the end of the tale.

Let's look more closely at what happens along this visual journey. Now, for example, does the mental process of reading a narrative differ from watching a film. In a film the illusion of reality comes from a series of pictures each slightly different. The difference represents a fixed chrono-



logical relation which the eye and mind together render as motion.

Words in a narrative generate pictures. But rather than a single chronological relation, they sit in numerous semantic relations. The process as we move our eyes from word to word is corrective and revisionary rather than progressive. At each new word, we revise the complexed picture we had a moment before.

Around the meaning of any word is a certain margin in which to correct the image we arrive at (in grammatical terms, we can modify).

I say:

Dog

and an image jumps in your mind (as it did with "red") but because I have not put it in a formal relation with anything else, you have no way to know whether the very specific image in your mind has anything to do with what I want to communicate. Hence that leeway. I can correct it:

Collie dog, and you will agree. I can correct it into a big dog, or a shaggy dog and you will still concur. But a Chevrolet dog? An oxymoronic dog? A turgidly cardiac dog?

For the purposes of ordinary speech, or naturalistic fiction, these corrections are outside acceptable boundaries: they distort some essential quality in all the various objects that we have attached to the word "dog". On the other hand, there is something to be enjoyed in the distortions, a freshness that may be quite entertaining, even though they lack the inevitability of our big, shaggy Collie.

A sixty thousand word novel is one picture corrected fifty-nine thousand, nine hundred and ninety-nine times. The total experience must have the same feeling of freshness as this turgidly cardiac creature as well as the inevitability of Big and Shaggy here.

Now let's atomize the correction process itself.

A story begins:

The

What is the image thrown on your mind? Whatever it is, it is going to be changed many, many times before the tale is over.

My own, unmodified The is a greyish ellipsoid about four feet high that balances on the floor perhaps a yard away. Yours is no doubt different. But it is there, has a specific size, shape, color, and bears a specific relation to you.

My a, for example, differs from my the in that it is about the same shape and color — a bit paler, perhaps — but is either much further away, or much smaller and nearer. In either case, I am going to be either much less, or

much more interested in it than I am in my the.

Now we come to the second word in the story and the first correction:

The red

My four foot ellipsoid just changed color. It is still about the same distance away. It has become more interesting. In fact, even at this point I feel vaguely that the increased interest may be outside the leeway I allow for my the's. I feel a strain here that would be absent if the first two words had been A red... My eye goes on to the third word while my mind prepares for the second correction:

The red sun

My original The has been completely replaced by a luminous disc. The color has lightened and brightened considerably. The disc is above me. And I am even more aware, now that the object has been placed at such a distance, of the tension between my own interest level in red sun and the ordinary attention I accord a the; for the intensity of interest is all that is left of the original image in my mind. Less clearly, in terms of future corrections, is a feeling that in this landscape it is either dawn, sunset, or if it is another time, smog of some sort must be hazing the air (...red sun...) but I hold all for the next correction:

The red sun is

A sudden sense of intimacy. I am being asked to pay even greater attention (in a way that was would not demand, as it is the form of the traditional historical narrative). But is...? There is a speaker here! That focus in attention I felt between the first two words is not my attention, but the attention of the speaker. It resolves into a tone of voice "The red sun is..." and I listen to this voice, in the midst of this still vague landscape, registering his concern for the red sun.

Between The and red information was generated that between sun and is resolved into a meaningful correction in my vision. This is my first aesthetic pleasure from the tale — a small one, as we have only progressed four words into the story. Never-the-less, it becomes one drop in the total enjoyment to come from the entire telling. Watching and listening to my speaker, I proceed to the next correction:

The red sun is high,

Moon and slightly overcast; this is merely a conformation of something previously suspected, nowhere near as major a correction as the one before. It adds a slight sense of warmth to the landscape, and the light has been fixed at a specific point above me. I attempt to visualize the landscape more clearly, but no object, including the speaker, has been cleared enough to be illuminated.

The comma tells me that a thought group is complete. In the pause it occurs to me that the redness of the sun may not be a clue to smog at all, but merely the speaker falling into literary-ism; or, at best, the redness is a projection of his consciousness, which as yet I don't understand. And

for a moment I notice that from where I'm standing on this landscape, the sun indeed appears its customary blind-white gold. Next correction:

The red sun is high, the

In this strange landscape (lit by its somewhat untrustworthily described sun) the speaker has turned his attention to another grey, four-foot ellipsoid, equidistant from himself and me. Again, it is too indistinct to take highlighting. But there have been two corrections with not much tension, and the reality of the speaker himself is beginning to slip. What will this become:

The red sun is high, the blue

The ellipsoid has changed hue. But the repetition in the semantic form of the description momentarily threatens to dissolve all reality, landscape, speaker, and sun into a mannered listing of beaucollica. The whole scene has dimmed. The final correction?

The red sun is high, the blue low.

Look! We are worlds and worlds away. The first sun is huge; and how accurate the description of the color turns out to have been. The repetition that predicted mannerism now fixes both big and little orbs to the sky. The landscape crawls with long red shadows and stubby blue ones, joined by purple triangles. Look at the speaker himself. Can you see him? You have seen his doubled shadow...

Though it ordinarily takes only a quarter of a second and is largely unconscious, this is the process.

When the corrections as we move from word to word produce a muddy picture, when unclear bits of information do not resolve to even greater clarity as we progress, we call the writer a poor stylist. As the story goes on and the pictures become more complicated as they develop through time, if even greater anomalies appear as we continue correcting, we say he can't plot. But it is the same quality error committed on a grosser level, even though a reader must be a third or three-quarters of the way through the book to spot one, while the first may glare out from the first sentence.

In any commercial field of writing, like s-f, the argument of writers and editors who feel content can be opposed to style runs, at its most articulate, rather like this:

"Basically we are writing adventure fiction. We are writing it very fast. We do not have time to be concerned about any but the grosser errors. More important, you are talking about subtleties too refined for the vast majority of our readers who are basically neither literary nor sophisticated."

The internal contradictions here could make a book. Let me outline two.

The basis of any adventure novel, s-f or otherwise, what gives it its entertainment value — escape value if you will — what sets it apart from the psychological novel, what names it an adventure, is the intensity with which the real actions of the story impinge on the protagonist's consciousness. The simplest way to generate that sense of adventure is to increase the intensity with which the real actions impinge on the reader's. And fictional intensity is almost entirely the province of those refinements of which I have been speaking.

The story of an infant's first toddle across the kitchen floor will be an adventure if the writer can generate the infantile wonder at new muscle, new efforts, obstacles and detours. I would like to read such a story.

We have all read, many too many times, the heroic attempts of John Smith to save the lives of seven orphans in the face of fire, flood, and avalanche.

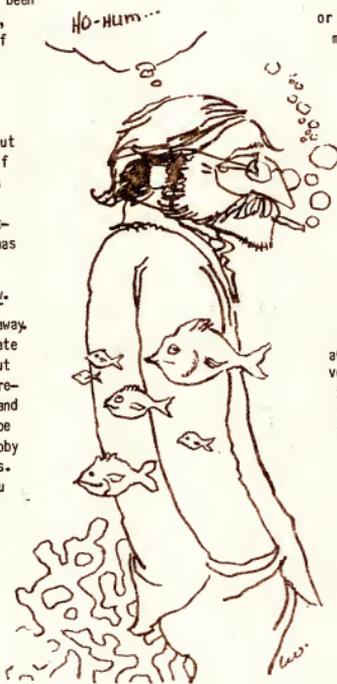
I am sure it was an adventure for Smith.

For the reader it was dull as dull could be.

"The Doors of His Face, the Lamps of His Mouth" by Roger Zelazny has been described as "...all speed and adventure..."

by Theodore Sturgeon and indeed it is one of the most exciting adventure tales s-f has produced. Let me change one word in each grammatical unit of each sentence, replacing it with a word that "...means more or less the same thing..." and I can diminish the excitement by half and expunge every trace of wit. Let me change one word and add one word, and I can make it so dull as to be practically unreadable. Yet a paragraph by paragraph synopsis of the "content" will be the same.

An experience I find painful (though it happens with increasing frequency) is when I must listen to a literate person who has just become enchanted by some hacked-out space-



boiler begin to rhapsodise about the way the blunt, imprecise, leaden language reflects the hairy-chested hero's alienation from reality. He usually goes on to explain how the "...s-f content..." itself reflects our whole society's alienation from the real.

The experience is painful because he is right as far as he goes. Badly-written adventure fiction is our true anti-literature. Its protagonists are our real anti-heroes. They move through un-real worlds amidst all sorts of noise and manage to perceive nothing meaningful or meaningfully.

Author's intention or no, that is what badly written s-f is about. But anyone who reads or writes s-f seriously knows that its particular excellence is in another area altogether: in all the bruhaha clinging about these unreal worlds, chords are sounded in total sympathy with the real.

"...You are talking about subtleties too refined for the vast majority of our readers who are basically neither literary nor sophisticated."

This part of the argument always throws me back to an incident from the summer I taught remedial English to Puerto Rican kids at my Neighborhood Community Center.

The voluntary nature of the class automatically restricted enrollment to people who wanted to learn; still, I had sixteen and seventeen-year-olds who had never had any formal education in either Spanish or English constantly walking into my class.

Regardless, after a student had been in the class six months, I would throw him a full five hundred and fifty page novel to read: Demetri Merejekowsky's The Romance of Leonardo da Vinci. The book is full of Renaissance history, as well as swordplay, magic, and dissertations on art and science. It is an extremely literary novel with several levels of interpretation. It was a favorite of Sigmund Freud and inspired him to write his own Leonardo da Vinci: a Study in Psychosexuality. My students loved it and with it lost a good deal of their fear of literature and long books.

Shortly before I had to leave the class, Leonardo appeared in paperback, translated by Hubert Tench. Till then it had only been available in a Modern Library edition translated by Bernard Gilbert Gurney. To save my latest two students a trip to the Barnes and Noble basement, as well as a dollar-fifty, I suggested they buy the paperback.

Two days later one had struggled through forty pages and the other had given up after ten. Both thought the book dull, had no idea what it was about, and begged me for something shorter and more exciting to read.

Bewildered, I bought a copy of the Tench myself that afternoon. I do not have either book at hand as I write this, so I'm sure this will prove an exaggeration. But I do recall, however, one description of a little house in Florence:

Gurney: "Grey smoke rose and curled from the slate chimney."

Tench: "Billows of smoke, grey and gloomy, elevated and contorted up from the slates of the chimney."

By the same process that differentiated the four examples of putting books on a desk, these two sentences do not refer to the same smoke, chimney, house, time of day, nor do any of the other houses within sight remain the same, nor can any possible inhabitants.

One sentence has nine words, the other fifteen. But atomize both sentences as a series of corrected images and you will find the mental energy expended on the latter is greater by a factor of six or seven! And over seven eighths of it leaves that uncomfortable feeling of loose-endedness, unutilized and unresolved. Sadly, it is the less skilled, less sophisticated reader who is most injured by bad writing.

Bad prose requires more mental energy to correct from word to word and the corrections themselves are less rewarding. That is what makes it bad. The sophisticated, literary reader may give the words the benefit of the doubt and question whether a seeming clumsiness is more fruitfully interpreted as an intentional ambiguity.

For what it is worth, when I write I often try to say several things at the same time — from a regard for economy that sits contiguous with my concern for skillful expression. I have certainly failed to say many of the things I intended. But ambiguity marks the failure, not the intent.

But how does all this relate to those particular series of corrected images we label s-f? To answer that, we must first look at what distinguishes these particular series of words from others that get labeled naturalistic fiction, reportage, fantasy.

A distinct level of subjunctivity informs all the words in an s-f story that is different from the level that informs naturalistic fiction, fantasy or reportage.

Subjunctivity is the tension on the thread of meaning that runs between word and object. Suppose a series of words is presented to us as a piece of reportage. A blanket indicative tension informs the whole series: this happened. That is the particular level of subjunctivity at which journalism takes place. Any word, even the metaphorical ones, must go straight back to a real object, or a real thought on the part of the reporter.

The subjunctivity level for a series of words labeled naturalistic fiction is defined by: could have happened. Note that the level of subjunctivity makes certain dictates and allows certain freedoms in what word can follow another. Consider this word series: "For one second, as she stood alone on the desert, her world shattered and she watched the fragments bury themselves in the dunes." This is practically meaningless at the subjunctive tension (or level) of reportage. But it might be a perfectly adequate, if not brilliant, series of words from a piece of naturalistic fiction.

Fantasy takes the subjunctivity of naturalistic fiction and throws it in reverse. At the appearance of elves, witches, or magic in a non-metaphorical position, or at some correction of image too bizarre to be explained by other than the supernatural, the level of subjunctivity becomes: could not have happened. And immediately it informs all the words in the series.

No matter how naturalistic the setting, once the witch has taken off on her broomstick, the most realistic of trees, cats, night-clouds, or the moon behind them, become infected with this reverse subjunctivity.

But when soapships, ray guns, or, more accurately, any correction of images that indicates 'the future' appears in a series of words and marks it as s-f, the subjunctivity level is changed once more: These objects, these convocations of objects into situations and events, are blankety defined by: have not happened.

Events that have not happened are very different from the fictional events that could have happened, or the fantastic events that could not have happened.

Events that have not happened include several sub-categories. These sub-categories define the sub-categories of s-f. Events that have not happened include those events that might happen: these are your technological and sociological predictive tales. They include events that will not happen: these are your science-fantasy stories. They include events that have not happened yet (can you hear the implied tone of warning?): there are your cautionary dystopias, Brave New World and 1984. Were English a language with a more detailed tense system, it would be easier to see that events that have not happened includes past events as well as future ones. Events that have not happened in the past compose that s-f specialty, the parallel-world story whose outstanding example is Philip K. Dick's Man in the High Castle.

The freedom of the particular subjunctive level of s-f basically expands the choice of word that can follow another group of words meaningfully; and it limits the way we employ the corrective process as we move between them.

At the subjunctive level of naturalistic fiction, "The red sun is high, the blue low," is meaningless. In naturalistic fiction our corrections in our images must be made in accordance with what we know of the personally observable — this includes our own observations, and the observations of others that have been reported to us at the subjunctive level of journalism.

Considered at the subjunctive level of fantasy, "The red sun is high, the blue low," fares a little better. The corrections in fantasy are limited thus: when we are given a correction that is not meaningful in terms of the personally observable world, we must accept it, along with any pseudo-explanation we are given. If there is no pseudo-explanation, it must remain mysterious. In this case, one suspects that the red sun is the real one, but what sorcerer to what purpose shunted up that second azure globe, we cannot know and must wait for the rest of the tale to find out.

As we have seen, that sentence makes very good s-f. The subjunctive level of s-f says that we must make our correction process in accord with what we know of the physically explainable universe. And the physically explainable is a much wider range than the personally observable.<sup>3</sup>

The particular verbal freedom of s-f coupled with the corrective process that allows the whole range of the physically explainable universe can produce the most violent leaps of imagery. For not only does it throw us worlds away, it specifies how we get there.

Let us examine what happens between the following two words:

winged dog

As fiction it is meaningless. As fantasy it is merely a visual correction, but still without meaning. At the subjunctive level of s-f, however, one must momentarily consider, as one makes that

3I throw out this notion for its worth as intellectual play.

It is not too difficult to see that as events that have not happened include the sub-group of events that have not happened in the past, they include the sub-sub group of events that could have happened with an implied but didn't. That is to say, the level of subjunctivity of s-f includes the level of subjunctivity of naturalistic fiction.

As well, the personally observable world is a sub-category of the physically explainable universe. That is, the laws of the first can all be explained in terms of the laws of the second, while the situation is not necessarily reversible. So much for the two levels of subjunctivity and the limitations on the corrective processes that go with them.

What of the respective freedoms in the choice of word to follow word?

I can think of no series of words that could appear in a piece of naturalistic fiction that could not also appear in the same order in a piece of speculative fiction. I can, however, think of many series of words that while fine for speculative fiction, would be meaningless as naturalism. Which then is the major and which the sub-category?

—Footnote continued at bottom of next page—



visual correction, an entire track of evolution, whether the dog has forelegs or not; the visual correction must include modification of breastbone and musculature if the wings are to be functional as well as a whole slew of other factors from hollow bones to heart-rate; or if we subsequently learn as the series of words goes on that grafting was the explanation, there are all the implications of a technology capable of such an operation to consider.

All of this information hovers tacitly about and between those two words in the same manner that the information about I and the desk hovered around the statements on placing down the books. The best s-f writer will utilize this information just as he utilized the information generated by any other verbal juxtapositionings.

I quote Marlan Ellison describing his own reaction to this verbal process:

"...Heinlein has always managed to indicate the greater strangeness of a culture with the most casually dropped-in reference: the first time in a novel, I believe it was in Beyond This Horizon, that a character ... Came through a door that...dilated. And no discussion. Just: 'The door dilated.' I read across it, and was two lines down before I realized that the image had been, what the words had called forth. A dilating door. It didn't open, it irised! Dear God, now I knew I was in a future world..."

"The door dilated," is meaningless as fiction, and practically meaningless as fantasy. As s-f — as an event that hasn't happened yet still must follow the laws of the physically explainable — it is quite as wondrous as Ellison feels it.

As well, the luminosity of Heinlein's particular vision was supported by all sorts of other information, stated and unstated, generated by his words.

Through this discussion, I have tried to keep away from what motivates the construction of these violent nets of wonder called speculative fiction. The more basic the discussion, the greater is our obligation to stay with the reader in front of the page. But at the mention of the author's 'vision' the subject is already broached. The vision (sense of wonder, if you will) that s-f tries for to be seems very close to the vision of poetry, particularly poetry as it concerned the nineteenth century Symbolists.

Footnote continued

Consider: Naturalistic fictions are parallel-world stories in which the divergence from the real is too slight for historical verification.

No matter how disciplined its creation, to move into an 'un-real' world demands a brush with mysticism.

Virtually all the classics of speculative fiction are mystical.

In Isaac Asimov's Foundation trilogy, one man, dead on page thirty-seven, achieves nothing less than the redemption of mankind from twenty-nine thousand years of suffering simply by his heightened consciousness of the human condition (read 'consciousness of the human condition' for 'science of psycho-history').

In Robert Heinlein's Stranger in a Strange Land the appearance of God incarnate creates a world of love and cannibalism.

Clarke's Childhood's End and Sturgeon's More Than Human detail vastly different processes by which man becomes more than man.

Alfred Bester's The Stars My Destination (or Tiger, Tiger, its original title) is considered by many readers and writers in and outside the field to be the greatest single s-f novel. I would like to give it a moment's detailed attention.

In this book, man, both intensely human yet more than human, becomes, through greater acceptance of his humanity, something even more. It chronicles a social education, but within a society which, from our point of view, has gone mad. In the climactic scene, the protagonist, burning in the ruins of a collapsing cathedral, has his senses confused by synesthesia. Terrified, he begins to oscillate insanely in time and space. Through this experience, with the help of his worst enemy transformed by time into his savior, he saves himself and attains a state of innocence and rebirth.

This is the stuff of mysticism.

It is also a very powerful dramatisation of Rimbaud's theory of the systematic derangement of the senses to achieve a higher awareness. And the Rimbaud reference is as conscious as the book's earlier references to Joyce, Blake, and Swift.

I would like to see the relation between the Symbolist's and modern American speculative fiction explored more thoroughly. The French Symbolists' particular problems of vision were never the focus for American poetry. But they have been explored repeatedly not only by writers like Bester and Sturgeon, but also newer writers, like Roger Zelazny, who bring both erudition and word magic to strange creations



generated from the tension between suicide and immortality.

But to recapitulate: whatever the inspiration or vision, whether it arrives in a flash or has been meticulously worked out over years, the only way a writer can present it is by what he can make happen in the reader's mind between one word and another, by the way he can maneuver the existing tensions between words and objects.

I have read many descriptions of "mystical experiences", not a few in s-f stories and novels. Very, very few have generated any feel of the mystical — which is to say that as the writers went about setting correction after correction, the images were too un-trustworthy to call up any personal feelings about such experiences.

The Symbolists have a lesson here: The only thing that we will trust enough to let it generate in us any real sense of the mystical is a resonant aesthetic form.

The sense of mystical horror, for example, in Thomas M. Disch's extraordinary novella, The Asian Shore does not come from its study of a particularly insidious type of racism, incisive though the study is; nor does it come from the final incidents set frustratingly between the supernatural and the insane. It generates rather in the formal parallels between the protagonist's concepts of Byzantine architecture and the obvious architecture of his own personality.

Aesthetic form... I am going to leave this discussion at this undefined term. For many people it borders on the meaningless. I hope there is enough tension between the words to proliferate with what has gone before.

To summarize, however: Any serious discussion of speculative fiction must get away from the distracting concept of s-f content and examine precisely what sort of word-beast sits before us.

We must explore both the level of subjunctivity at which speculative fiction takes place and the particular intensity and range of images this level affords.

Readers must do this if they want to fully understand what has already been written.

Writers must do this if the field is to mature to the potential so frequently cited for it.

San Francisco  
March, 1969



BOX 3116 continued from page 50

RAINDY BYTHERK wrote in reference to Dean R. Koontz's "Diligently Corrupting Young Minds" (SFR 31): "Well, at least Koontz tried. Parents can indeed object to strange things. A local high school teacher got in trouble for using A Certificate for Leibowitz of all books. A local book store owner

tells me that teachers often come in and ask him for an innocuous book to use in class that won't bother parents or other people."

Randy's comment was typical of about a dozen responses from the readers, all of whom sympathized with Dean and many of whom said, in essence, "That's the way it was in my high school."

+ Darrell Schweitzer had some interesting things to say about NEW WORLDS. His basic point: "I think the main problem... is that it is more devoted to experimental form than to Sfnal content and ideas." He reviewed NW 178-179-181-182-183.

+ Donald G. Keller had words about the New Wave and Piers Anthony's books. Yes, Piers, I'll send along the letter.

+ John Foyster has changed the name of his fanzine. It was EXPLODING MADONNA. It is now THE JOURNAL OF OMPHALISTIC EPISTEMOLOGY. Now everyone goes to the dictionary and look up omphalistic.

+ Ron Smith had kind, appreciative words for Ellison's "Black/Thoughts" in SFR 30 and put down JJ Pierce. Ron is against dogma in sf and for freedom to experiment.

From my vantage point after reading dozens of letters on Pierce and the New Wave, it appears that Pierce is a one-man-movement. Who, really, will stand up and say out loud, "I am a Second Foundationist." Besides Pierce, that is.

+ I have received zillions of congratulations for winning the fanzine Hugo and all seemed to be phrased, "...well-deserved." Thanks again.

+ Robert Olson had opinions about Pierce (boo on him) and Poul Anderson's column: "Most advocates of...discipline... are really saying, 'If you had discipline, you'd do things my way.'" Robert signed himself 'Galactic Overlord.'

That must be higher than Liaison Officer.

+ Bruce R. Gillespie dissected SFR 30 and decided he liked it. Now I have to clean up all that blood.

+ Patrick McGuire sent a five page letter of comment on Pan-shin's Villiers books. Yep, I'll send it along, Alexei.

+ Bruce R. Gillespie, in another letter, wrote: "I don't want to break your heart or anything, but I've voted WARHOON top on the Hugo list..."

I send cups of hemlock to traitors, Gillespie!

+ A. George Senda sent a long hand-writ letter in a scratchy handwriting. I do not like hand-writ letters unless they contain subscription moneys.

+ Mike Decker sent a quotable letter but I got no room to do it justice. He pilloried Platt, liked my review of "Journey to the Far Side of the Sun" and appreciated Terry Carr's Ace Specials article in SFR 32. Everyone liked that article!

+ Down to name-listing, sorry to say. Thanks to DENNIS KINCAID, RON HOEFLIN, PATRICK STRANG, HAL HALL, MIKE HOLLIGER, SANDY HOSS, BOB STAHL, IRV L. JACOBS, V.A. AUGSTALMS, BILL WEST, MURRAY MOORE, HANK DAVIS, DONALD COHAN, TOM MULLER, AL ANDREWS, MIKE KLAUS and anyone I missed. KEEP WRITING!

# Fans We All Know... And Perhaps Wish We Didn't

THE POLEMICIST: PART TWO

Tertius Quimby...but I keep speaking of Tertius in the third person singular, as if he could be considered in isolation, which is, remarkably, not the case. The most singular thing about Tertius is that he is never singular. Who's ever seen Tertius alone? Tertius in his private capacity, Tertius at home, is a Tertius whom no one (in Fandom) knows. Perhaps, like Lord Mellifont in Henry James' story "The Private Life," he has no personal existence but simply vanishes when he walks out the door of the clubroom or convention hall or of the home of the fans he is visiting. His address is a box, and his non-admirers (he has a few: Tertius says they're soreheads) have hinted that he lives in a box—with a thin layer of his native earth beneath him. Or, a somewhat similar speculation: that he goes home only to hang by his heels in a closet, darkly recreating himself for the next skirling skirmish in the daylight.

But these are fantasies. The solitary ascertainable fact is that he is never seen except in company; as if he were an unstable element which could be found only in a compound or alloy. We know the Public Tertius only—Tertius the Shangri-La Luminary, the witty CRAPS member, the Honorary Chairman of the SLSLSFL; Tertius-and-his-friends (he has a few: he says they're the grandest fellows in the world), Tertius acting in concert with some to disconcert others. He is, it would seem, never alone. It is even said—on what authority I know not: perhaps on none—that he has never been alone, that he was born one of triplets. (Which suggests a thought to puzzle the stomach: Somewhere...a Primus and Secundus Quimby!) However that may be, there is no doubt our Quimby is seldom, if ever, alone.

I have empirical evidence of this. A short time ago at one of the conventions, a very memorable convention, Grey O'Hare and I Took a Poll. We didn't ask, "Have you ever known Tertius Quimby to be alone?" as that, as Phil D. Mossbach was quick to point out to us, is "logical nonsense," but a question of much broader latitude: "Have you ever been alone with Tertius Quimby?" The polling con-



ditions were ideal, as everyone who was, or wasn't, anyone was there. We asked Joe (the Old Guard), the Galactic Square, Stanny Farber, Manful Daisy and his friend Bruce forte, the Reverend Peptune, Blankety Blanc...everyone. All answered in the negative. But surely, we considered, he had been alone at one time or another with one of the "femme-fans," as he persisted in calling them—"TQ on the QT with a cutie?" punned the Punster, he being also present. So, naturally, we asked Betty Bye. Why...yes, she had been alone with Terty. No, there was no mistake, she assured us, as Grey and I and the amused crowd we had picked up along the way hung in suspense. She remembered it because... Her brow furrowed, then cleared, prettily. Qh!...no, she hadn't been alone with him, after all. Not really. It had been a Group Grope, a Gang Bang. It had been memorable—she brought out, with the utmost solemnity—because it was the first time she had seen a 69 performed in Roman numerals. So that was that: Science had answered our question in the negative. Tertius Quimby had never been alone with anyone.

Yes, he's very gregarious. Looking back over the past, one can see him searching...searching...searching for something to belong to, utterly. Such, anyway, is how I interpret the signs. He has joined an incredible number of clubs, groups, cliques, coteries, clans, cults and movements, throwing himself into each in its turn with a manic enthusiasm.

By

Arthur Jean Cox

Of each in its turn he has declared that, whatever its faults, it was the Side of the Angels. But perhaps there was not shed upon it a pure enough ray of the celestial light, for in time the new recruit's face was touched with shadow. It was not (I think) merely a flagging of interest due to weariness, but was a disappointment, an expression (if I have sounded him rightly) of an unsatisfied appetite, of an unrealized ideal. He is searching for an esprit du corps, the most intense, the most complete realization imaginable of generous loyalty and profound co-identification. There is certainly something attractive in this — I suppose it is one reason why some young fellows join the Marine Corps; but that very thought suggests the possibility that there may be something ugly in it too. And so there is, with our friend. I need hardly tell you that he detests the Nazis, and yet there is a dark underside of his nature which "understands" them. And notice the number of references in his writings to the Red Guards. Oh, he Deplores their Excesses...but that's Youth and, like all of us, Quimby much admires Youth. He is, in fact (perhaps I should say, in fancy) One of Them. But Youth has been so diffusely distributed, there is so much of it nowadays, that it doesn't always offer in a personal, present and immediate way — for one has no sustained sense of being at the front and center of Youth — those satisfactions he craves. Perhaps this is why he has even, ludicrous tho' it may sound, turned an ironic but wistful eye in the direction of the adolescent street gangs of our big cities! (And while we're in this shabby neighbourhood, I might mention that here, as elsewhere, Quimby has a hankering to be on the side of the Angels. Hell's Angels.)

But surely these last few remarks have taken us rather far afield? For what can such things have to do with science fiction fandom? Well, I think I see the connection: Quimby looks to fandom for the same sort of thing which first attracted his eye to...the Red Guards. And fandom has the advantages of being present and smaller and more specifically defined: it has its publications and its social gatherings, its traditions, and its special slang which he rolls around

on his tongue, lovingly, as if it were an esoteric language, the passwords and watchwords, of the Elect. And, more intensely, there are factions. There are parties. And there are feuds. "Ahh the feuds...That's where it's at," says Tertius. Whenever he hears any broken muttering of that Immortal Storm, no matter how distant it may be, he hastens

towards it, joyfully, his eye quickening, his face kindling with the hope of battle. To him the history of fandom is the history of its uncivil wars, about which he has thrown a nostalgic and sentimental glamour. He has more than once made the pilgrimage to Bixel Street, a La recherche du temps Elmer Purdue, and has been heard (for he was not alone) sighing among its ruined shrines a curious litany of half-forgotten names. His legendary heroes are, of course, Francis I. Laney and Charles Burbee. He speaks of these rather prosaic fellows as he might of demi-gods whom he had glimpsed from afar, strolling jauntily, hands in their pockets, across the lower slopes of Mount Parnassus.

Which brings us — for, again, I see the connection — to the Berkowitz-Himmler affair. It was at that so-memorable convention, the one at which Grey and I took the poll, that Quimby made the Boldest Stroke and showed the most Imaginative Daring of his career. When we all filed into the diningroom for the Banquet, we discovered neatly dropped on the copper-toned upholstery of each of the chairs a pale copy of the latest issue (collated the evening before at an all-night party) of Quimby's latest fanzine, ISSUES; which displayed in large black letters beneath the title, the legend: "Sydney Berkowitz, the Heinrich Himmler of Fan Publishing." It interfered quite a bit with the general swift dispatch of the Roast Beef au jus, garden-fresh peas, vanilla pudding and coffee, for it was one of those things which must be read; and I am afraid it spoiled the Banquet for poor Sydney entirely. It was, of course, the convention at which he was Fan Guest of Honor — it was this which made Quimby's Stroke one of such Imaginative Daring. It had its effect. We all noticed that Sydney was visibly pale and shaken when he rose to make his modest speech: his hand trembled as he accepted the gilt-edged paper certificate applauding his "many contributions to the field." Poor Sydney! It was to have been, it should have been, the crowning moment of his long fannish career, mellow and unclouded, if not glorious.

It was Quimby's thesis that Sydney had "lowered the standards of fan publishing" by his "reactionary attempt to suppress a fellow fan's right to free speech." In other words: Sydney, who was at that time Mailing Editor of CRAPS, had refused to accept for inclusion in the last quarterly mailing the previous issue of ISSUES. The by-laws of CRAPS plainly forbid the circulation with the general mailing of political propaganda of any persuasion, the question of what constitutes propaganda being decided at the discretion of the mailing



editor. There had always been, it is true, a good deal of political by-play in the mailings: SDS members, Birch-ers, Henry Georgists, everyone had had their limited say, at least. This had never been objected to, and Sydney had already let go by some politiking by Tertius, partly because he shared his views (a statement which Tertius greets with disbelief and scorn), but mostly because he was tolerant and somewhat lax in such matters. But the Summer ISSUES had been blatantly, and entirely, nothing but campaign fodder — hard-core politicking without any redeeming Finnish significance. Its editor had even stapled inside the front cover of each copy a folder printed by a candidate for the California State Senate! Sydney couldn't let this slip by. He returned the bundle of copies to Quimby, with a friendly but firm note quoting the relevant by-law and offering to supply him with the address roster if he wished to circulate the magazine to members independently of the official mailing.

Such are the facts. Quimby, in his attack, dealt out fantasies. Herr Berkowitz had attempted to suppress and censor Quimby's passionate cry for freedom and justice. The fascistic SB was a "Book-Burner, the Finnish Reich's Minister of Propaganda, dreaming of himself as a Konzentration Kamp Kommandant when he wasn't fit to organize girls' volley ball games in a summer Kamp in the Katskills!" and much more of the same: shrill, long-winded rhetorical swoops, each circling back to the same point, that Sydney had lowered the standards of fan publishing — as if it were in the power of any mortal to do that! — and that he was "the Heinrich Himmler of fan publishing." Imagine, comparing the thoughtful and gentle mailing editor of an amateur press society with the sleazy mass murderer at the head of Hitler's Gestapo! And that person, Sydney Berkowitz — whose older brother Jake was killed while with the U S Armed Forces in Germany and whose uncle Lionel died in one of those "kamps" so frequently and so lightly mentioned by Tertius.

Quimby was in very fine form in this, his latest production. The baying of the hounds was never louder. As I glanced quickly through its pages, I felt a sympathetic pain for Berkowitz, mingled with indignation and shame — with shame, for I had been associated with the author in the past. This last feeling was considerably aggravated when I saw that he had listed my name on the title page as Associate Editor — of a magazine with which I had never had the slightest connection, not even that of subscriber! This was Quimby's way of rewarding me for that quire of paper I had loaned him — and, I suspected, for having objected some months ago to his circulating that cartoon of 'Sydney Berkowitz as the Great Samaritan.' Well, he would have to retract the credit line. I looked around the room but failed to see among the assembled

diners that characteristic tilt of the head. The non-linear descendant of Swift," as he has been called, wasn't present.

I took advantage of the usual standing ovation at the end of H. 'Hip' Harrah's rousing speech to slip out of the dining hall and, some minutes later, opened the door of the room which Quimby shared on the sixth floor with two allies from the New York area. I glanced over a row of unmade beds to a shadowy figure blocking the late-afternoon light at the window. "Tertius!"

His voice, jovial but curiously disembodied, bade me welcome.

I entered and looked around — at the beds, the suitcases, the ashtrays, the empty glasses. Something, somehow, was wrong... I... I was alone with Tertius Quimby! Uncanny! ...But all the better for what I had come to say.

As I said it, my old friend, to my surprise, didn't resort to his invincible cordiality — I had steeled myself to that — but instead began to sneer. What first aroused his almost inexpressible disdain, his infinite contempt, was my reference to 'poor Sydney,' to Sydney's pain and suffering. It was as if I had broached something obscene, something peculiarly disgusting to every decent and self-regarding feeling. And once started, he couldn't seem to stop. He raged in sneers: he was at once chilled and feverish. I was afraid he was going to fall to the floor with one leg twitching, but instead he rose. He dilated. He towered. He was like the hero of 'A Scientist Rises,' tho' not so benign, and I was like the hero of 'He Who Shrank.' His face seemed to hover far above me. It floated away in a cloud of sneers... This last impression slowly faded and I found myself, looking around, alone in the silent room. Alone? But...he hadn't brushed past me to the door. The window was shut. The bathroom stood gaping open, disclosing nothing but its not-in-the-least uncanny fixtures. The closet door... The closet door was slightly ajar and I heard from behind it a noise, faint but recognizably human, a stifled sob or laugh. I opened it and stood peering in. Not Quimby. So. So...I hadn't been alone with Quimby after all. I quietly closed the door again and walked out of the room, walked to the elevator shaft, where I sank into deep thought.

...Quimby's mask had slipped just now and he had shown me the naked mask of conceit. He was sick with conceit; that is, sick with Self. It was a fever, a drug, an intoxication in which he perversely gloried and exulted, but which made him unfit for true companionship and so was terrifyingly, inhumanly lonely. This was why he so eagerly sought the vicarious intimacy of the crowd. And a crowd is most alive, most thrillingly conscious of itself, when it is brought actively together by some common object and urgent pursuit,



when collective righteousness and anarchic rage run in one turbulent and irresistible current, when it is directing its terrible and gleeful abuse upon something which can feelingly respond to its power and cruelty. ...In short, when it becomes a lynch mob. And there, at the front of the mob, a rope hanging meaningfully from one hand, his face illumined from within by elation and from without by the flaring torches, is the amiable Tertius Quimby!

But this picture, flashing on my inward eye, brought with it a disconcerting check: for didn't I glimpse here and there behind Quimby other familiar faces? He loved a crowd, yes, but in that he wasn't absolutely alone. He had plenty of company. After all, who forms these mobs, but us? He not only needed an audience over which the lightning play of his wit could flicker, he needed allies and supporters...More than that: he needed the shared conceit. He was nothing without us. Does he even exist without us? At the moment, sinking down past the floors (like He Who Shrank sinking down through the levels of the atomic universes), I didn't think so. Stanny Farber once remarked that "There is a little bit of Tertius Quimby in all of us." Perhaps the converse is equally true and there's a whole lot of us in Tertius Quimby.

In the lobby I looked around, trying to see in the familiar and pleasant faces the raw materials of a mob. It was as difficult as trying to imagine Dr. Jekyll as Mr. Hyde. Still (this face and that recalling some little incident to mind), wasn't there in many of us a kind of readiness to find someone to humorously 'pick on' — not seriously, you understand, stopping short of anything really crude or grossly insulting, but still... Wasn't our old friend The Galactic Square over there rather prone to that? The Galactic Square? Now, why should we pick on him? If we find his deadness appalling, or even personally objectionable, isn't that because he reminds us of our own relation to science fiction, or is disturbingly suggestive of the ways in which we too are cut off from experience? The rejection of some quality personal to ourselves is the secret spring working so many of these dislikes. Consider, as a more telling and historic example of this, the treatment once meted out to the wild-eyed Debussy de Glare (—'de Loon,' Quimby always adds). When he travelled about the country in the '40s preaching that "fans are Slans," didn't our disgust derive much of its pungency from the fact that he was saying publicly, seriously and loudly what we of the despised minority had been saying to each other, humorously and affectionately — and each with a secret, minuscule but irreducible feeling that there might just be a grain of truth in it?

I have avoided trotting out the old word 'scapegoat,' although it has its obvious pertinence. But I would like to call attention to what is to me the most disturbing element in these periodic selections of a Laughing Stock, the arbitrariness. Grey D'Hare's wife Henrietta (or 'Hank') once made in her fanzine IN HER OWN WRITE a comparison of such a case — her own, as it happens — with Shirley Jackson's story, "The Lottery"; a happy comparison (or an

unhappy one, I might say) which I would qualify only by adding that it has an even wider application than she seems to assume. If you will think back over the past two or three years, not only to Hank's affair and the Berkowitz business, but to the attack on the Reverend Peptune, the Balder-Dashe scandal, the War of the Doves, and...well, you can supply your own instances easily enough: think back, and you will see that the reasons for nominating and electing some candidate as Laughing Stock, or Whipping Boy, of the Month are usually so slight and so disproportionate to the amount of attention that that lucky fellow (or girl) receives that there is a very strong sense of a victim chosen by a lot.

To what, finally, does all this bring us? To the question: How can we deal with Tertius Quimby? — for it is evident that he still walks among us. And to the partial answer: Collectively, nothing. Any suggestion that he be hounded from our midst would mean that he, in a sense, had won. The Quintessence of Quimbeianism would have triumphed. But, individually, there is something we can do. We can be on guard against that little bit of Tertius Quimby in all of us. Of course, we must be careful lest the pendulum swing too far in the other direction: There are times when collective action is necessary, when we have to vote, when anger is personal, spontaneous and justified... But even as I write those words, a ghostly Quimby, or so it seems to me, peers over my shoulder...and smiles. He is tireless and ubiquitous, that fellow; a creature of endless resource. But we can still contrive to defeat all his best, or worst, efforts by resolving never to add our own voice to the chorus raised against some lonely malefactor; by resolving never to aspire to be part of that glorious We, one of whose attractions is that it is so contemptuously conscious of inglorious Them; by resolving never to be on the Side of the Angels. ("Never be on the Side of the Angels, my boy," wrote D. H. Lawrence to David Garnett; "it's too lowering.") And by resolving to keep in constant repair our old sense of justice and fair play. Every five year old boy knows that "two against one isn't fair." How can twenty, or even two hundred, against one be any less foul?



# OFF THE DEEP END.....

I have been accused, justly, of talking considerably about myself in the fanzines. The plain fact is that I can talk more authoritatively about my own concerns than about other's, and less research is required. But in fairness to the reader who resents this, a caution: the subject of this column is Hasan, a fantasy novel by Piers Anthony. Move on to the next item in the issue.

When I was a child (chronologically, I mean; spare me the obvious remark) I heard about certain tales of the ARABIAN NIGHTS, that Arabic epic series, but they were merely some of the many types of fiction I encountered. It was not until I passed 15 or so that my father introduced me to more advanced fiction. We lived on a lonely farm in the summer, without electricity, phone, or easy access. I handled the meals and housework while he studied for his PhD, and in the evenings we read together such things as Chaucer and Burton's translation of the NIGHTS.

If this sounds dull—well, it wasn't. I love the forestland, and by day I would wander barefoot to pick blueberries by the quart and to explore ancient trails, and while Chaucer may sound like nothing in the classroom, that's because it is cruelly expurgated there. Life can certainly be made miserable for ordinary people when repressive forces run rampant, as we all know. The censors leave nothing sacrosanct, not even the Bible.

But when real literature is presented correctly, there is nothing like it for entertainment and education. I'll never forget going through the modern-English translation of The Canterbury Tales, by Nevill Coghill. Chaucer, of course, was born about the year 1340, and his poetic language is hardly comprehensible to the uneducated modern ear (mine being such an ear); but Mr. Coghill's rendition made it beautiful again. I listened to the first Prologue, that explained the basic framework: a group of pilgrims journeying to Canterbury, who decided to entertain themselves with stories told by each member. I listened to the first of these—"The Knight's Tale," a long, classical, knightly tale indeed. It was entertaining enough, but I frankly found the old boy Chaucer to be a trifle stodgy and naive. Then we hit the second story: "The Miller's Tale."

Cogniscenti will be smiling already. For others, however, a very brief rundown: the story involves the pretty young wife Alison, her older carpenter husband, her lover Nicholas the Spark, and a would-be lover Absalon. The carpenter is tricked into making a fool of himself, Nicholas makes out with Alison, Absalon asks for a kiss at the window in the dark and is presented with her nether eye instead, as a joke. Catching on (there is something dif-

ferent about the taste, and he's sure her face doesn't have a beard), Absalon swears revenge, and fetches something like a red-hot poker. In the dark, he requests a second kiss, and Nicholas decides to share the fun and sticks out his own arse "a handsome piece of work" and waits. Says Absalon, "Speak, pretty bird, I know not where thou art!" Then Nicholas "at once let fly a fart" loud as a thunderclap, and Absalon strikes at the sound with his hot iron....

About that time it occurred to me that they weren't quite so stodgy as I had supposed, in 1340. And it taught me to be more careful about prejudging literature. This was a valuable lesson.

The unexpurgated ARABIAN NIGHTS was another such experience. There, when men ate, they ate in detail and belched roundly afterward. When they forgot themselves, they broke wind with similar candor, and paid similarly severe penalties. (Farting is a worse offense there than here.) And when they encountered beautiful women, as was often the case, they had erections—sometimes with embarrassing publicity. The NIGHTS is far more than this, of course, as is Chaucer. My point is that the whole man, from religion to defecation, is covered therein. That is the way it should be.

I longed to read the entire ARABIAN NIGHTS—some 16 volumes—but school and college and marriage and earning a living and the US Army kept me too busy. Not until I was well on the way toward my eventual niche as a science fiction writer did the key rationalization come to me: I could buy and read the complete set—as research for a novel!

A And so in August of 1965 I obtained the Burton set, and followed up with other translations. I assembled about 20 other research references and checked the library. My intent was to convert one of the longer, lesser-known tales into a modern rendition, thus popularizing it to some extent for today's reader (I mean, we have Tolkien Societies and Cabell clubs, and while those works are certainly deserving, the NIGHTS are more deserving) while satisfying my own reading ambition. Also, correspondents had told me I was weak on characterization, description, immediacy and so on, and since the NIGHTS tend to be weak on the same things, I thought it would be excellent practice to tackle those bovines by the antlers. In fact, this was part of my conscious drive to bring my fictive standard up to the level of my arrogance, which was shooting very high.

a column ○

By PIERS ANTHONY

And so in 1966 I did an adaptation of Hasan of Bassorah. In a prior novel I had learned the joys of research, and they were redoubled here. The life of Sir Richard Burton—what a man he was! A book on Krakatoa, that fabulous volcano, for I had need of something similar in the adaptation. Tanah Air Kita, a pictoria introduction to Indonesia published by the government of same, and a beautiful book. Books on Ceylon, Thailand, and of course Arabia—how is it possible to explain the wonders of such research, to people who have never tried it? It was as though I took a journey across half the world, and it was a phenomenal and moving experience, no pun intended. That journey was described for my readers—to-be, and I am proud of it, and I'm glad I took it, and the production of Hasan meant a lot to me, even though the basic story was not my own. There are indeed other values than plot...though my plot is a value. At any rate, I would up with 87,000 words of fantasy.

My wife worked late at the time, as computer programmer for the local newspaper, so my writing day extended from mid-afternoon to midnight. I remember listening to "Lolita," a female disc jockey on the radio, as I typed, and to teen-age songs. It was not that I was partial to such things (though Lolita's dulcet tones were very soothing); the other stations merely got too dull to tolerate. Now certain sections of the novel call to mind certain juven-

ile songs. But my wife won't let me listen to Lolita anymore.

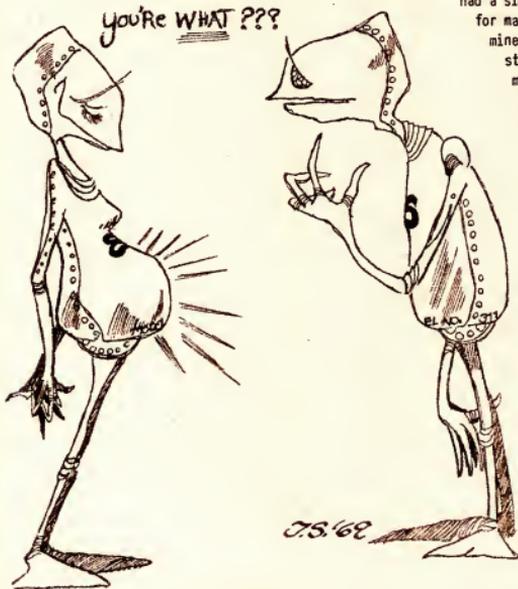
I interrupted the novel to attend the 1966 Milford Conference, where I met devious and sundry writers. Among these was Chip Delany, whose novel Babel 17 had impressed me strongly. I talked with him, and later he was to read and comment on Hasan. I also met Terry Carr, who was to reject Hasan for his ACE "Specials" line. (I think he blundered there.) And I met Ted White in New York, just to shake hands; Ted was later to buy Hasan for FANTASTIC. And I met Sol Cohen. Yes, the novel brushed by a number of the figures in the field, one way or another.

Yes, I enjoyed working on Hasan. Some novels are laborious to get through (and contrary to what writing texts say, a work that is laborious for the writer is not necessarily laborious for the reader) but Hasan was a pleasure. I still haven't gotten all the way through the 21 volumes of NIGHTS (three translations) on hand, but once in a while I do take down another volume for the pleasure of it. I would starve if I had to live off the monetary proceeds for the novel, but I do not at all regret the effort.

In 1966 I mentioned in the SFMA BULLETIN that I was at work on the project, and asked for advice from other writers. (I meant it, too; I really am striving to become the best I can.) I received two replies. The first was from Roger Zelazny, who expressed interest in my work and admitted that he had a similar project in mind. He described his techniques for making such writing effective. They don't quite match mine, but they are parallel; he appears to place more stress on drawing from his own subconscious, while mine is on research. Probably he has a prettier subconscious than I do. Probably, also, this distinction is reflected in our respective works. He inclines more to poetry, I to hard science; but I daresay one year the roles will be reversed, because I don't think he means to be typed any more than I do. Such replies, anyway, appear to be typical of Roger: always generous to others, always candid, so that even John Pierce, who claims to hate new wave, makes an exception for Roger. (Lest there be confusion, the project he described was not Lord of Light, nor anything else he has published to date, though he must have been working on it at the time, and Hasan and LoL are deviously linked.)

The other response was from Larry Ashmead of Doubleday. He admitted affinities for the NIGHTS similar to mine, and asked to see a portion of the novel for consideration for publication. At that time I had not sold any novels, and this prospect was terrific.

Alas, I discovered as have others (notably Norman Spinrad) that Ashmead's tastes were his own. He said in part: "I found that a great deal of the atmosphere—the period piece



quality, if you will—has not been carried over in your modernization. The result is an interesting retelling of an old tale in a contemporary style, an interesting but not very exciting or inspired interpretation!" And he suggested that I rework it as a juvenile.

I guess he felt I should have done it the way Zelazny did Lord of Light. Sorry, no; that was not my objective.

Meanwhile, I sold Chthon (another Doubleday bounce) to Ballantine, and I offered Hasan as the option novel. They bounced it. "It seems to me," Betty Ballantine said, "to be somewhere in the neighborhood of fairy tale adventure and so would not fit into our more limited ambience." Anyone who looks at the Ballantine fantasy list will understand my perplexity at this reply.

I was then (early 1967) corresponding with Chip Delany. I told him I'd try his publisher next: Ace. And so Chip borrowed the copy while Terry Carr had it, read it, and sent me his own comment. It was negative; he felt that the Burton version was more effective than my adaptation. He felt that I should have changed the material more (I had heaved as closely to the original as I reasonably could, deliberately) and that I spelled things out in too obvious a fashion. And this pointed up what should be my main difference with Chip: I feel that fiction must be clear and entertaining if it is to succeed at all, while he, as I understand it, believes in greater subtlety. Certainly I don't object to subtlety—most editors and readers and critics appear to miss my nuances—and Chip does not object to clarity. Our difference is the comparative stress we put on each. But Hasan is an entertainment, not a prober of the convolutions of the psyche. I adapted it to appeal to the contemporary reader, while retaining a suggestion of the flavor of the nineteenth century translations, and so I placed clarity foremost. Probably Chip would fault me less with Chthon or Macroscope, for there are levels there that few will comprehend. At any rate, I stand by the treatment I gave Hasan, and feel that Chip was wrong in that case, right as he may be in other cases.

Delany seems to feel, moreover, that plot is unnecessary to fiction where the typical reader is concerned. Similarly, there are those—him too, I hazard a guess—who feel that rhyme is unnecessary to poetry. They may be correct—but to my mind this is analogous to finding money unnecessary to happiness. It is evident that double your money is no guarantee of double your fun—but this does not mean that you can dispense with cash entirely. Not without a damn good credit card. I suspect that Delany's failure to appreciate this fact, at fictive level, is what has prevented him from achieving proper popularity with the masses. (Awards are no indicators of mass appeal; rather the opposite.) And it is too bad, because what he has to offer should not be wasted on the ivory tower elite. I cling to the belief that it is not necessary to alienate the one type of reader in favor of the other type...though I admit that the winds of doubt occasionally buffet me sorely. Roger Zelazny seems to do the best job of bridg-

ing that particular chasm.

Meanwhile, the manuscript languishes at Ace. Terry Carr said: "...The book is a very good job, and I think it accomplishes everything you set out after; unfortunately, I can't quite see it as a good sales item for the kind of market Ace has. It's a peculiar combination of light ingenuousness, which would appeal to young readers but not to many older ones, and the authenticity of sex, bloodshed and the rest, which don't go over so well in youth-appeal markets..." So Hasan had failed at its three most likely markets, and the outlook was now less than bright. I went on to sell other material to all three publishers, but not this one.

But Terry did me one other service: he recommended another market. Lancer, he recalled, had published a novel involving the NIGHTS....

I shipped the manuscript to Larry Shaw at Lancer in April. In August I queried him, having had no word. In September I queried him rather more urgently...and got the novel back. Larry apologized for the delay, explaining that it had been a hectic summer of wild expansion and little help. About the novel: "...there's no question of merit involved: it's extremely well written. But our final decision was that it's just too unclassifiable, and there's too little chance for reader identification. We just couldn't figure out how to package it if we were to publish it." And he suggested that I try Doubleday.

Do you begin to discern the pattern? No editor found the novel bad; but somehow it just didn't fit in any program. This was my education in a subtle but powerful taboo that you don't hear much about. Classification. More on that anon.

Next I tried Avon. George Ernsberger enjoyed reading it, but somehow it didn't seem to fit Avon's program either. He suggested I try it on Ballantine. And the next novel I showed him, Macroscope, he bought.

Fawcett had expressed willingness to look at work by me, though they hadn't been interested in Chthon. So I called the bluff...and was told "We are sorry to have to turn down your novel HASAN, but it does deal with the kind of fantasy which is not really for the Gold Medal audience."

So I went back to hard cover...and picked up slip rejections from McGraw-Hill, Harper & Row and Viking. By that time I had sold three more novels, but no one would touch this one.

F&Sf magazine asked me for material, so I got clever and excerpted three chapters to show Ferzan. Sorry, just didn't suit his needs....

So back to paperback. Dell was an expanding market,



though they had bounced Macroscopic without even a reading: too long for them to handle. (Dell published THE COLUMBIA WIKING DESK ENCYCLOPEDIA in one paperback volume: 2016 pages.) I shipped Hasan...then discovered that Larry Shaw had moved there from Lancer. Oh, no! And he was just as slow as ever. Finally I got stern again, and so received a new set of apologies...and my manuscript back.

About that time it occurred to me that the novel was not penetrating the market very readily on its own. (Things occur to me slowly, because I'm not very bright.) Yet I still believed in it. I deemed it to be as well-written as my others, and as interesting. I blamed, as other writers do, the editors, not the novel. But how could I facilitate its publication?

Enter Richard Delap. I had remarked in the fanzine PEGASUS, one of the better contemporary publications put out by a girl about my speed (but with a better disposition) Joanne Burger—I had said that I thought that those who lambasted Zelazny's Lord of Light were too obtuse to comprehend the values of the novel. It happened that Richard had criticized LOL. Did I, he inquired politely in the PEG letter column, mean him?

Here was an excellent opportunity to step on another aspiring fan—my chief pleasure in life, as any number can tell you. But I muffed it. I could not remember exactly whom I had in mind, but it hadn't been a PEG reviewer. Maybe YANDRO or somewhere... So I had to admit that I had not had him in mind, but would have, had I seen his negative review of LOL. Ironically, I learned later that his review had appeared in YANDRO; I had been thinking of it. To think: I had Delap's head right under my foot, and through that senseless lapse of memory failed to squish it into mush! Seldom has fate treated me less kindly.

Well, I try to make the best of bad situations. That's why I'm a writer, after all. So while I was at it, LoCing PEG, I discussed one of my reasons for being sensitive to LOL criticism. (I usually don't know when to leave well enough alone.) (I also don't remember precisely what I said, but anyone can check it by reading that issue.) It

was because the basic notion—adapting oriental mythology for the contemporary market—was one I also had used. Zelazny won an award with his Hindu effort, but my Arab one—Hasan—could not even get published. And if Zelazny had not had a name to conjure with, the same publishers would have bounced him too. (Doubleday did bounce Zelazny before he started winning awards, you know.) So I had this thing against the editorial attitude that could call good, original work, like LOL or (though both were drawn from classical sources) flawed or inferior or unpublishable, merely because the author lacked a big enough name to carry him past picaresque publishing prejudices. (And let's face it: publishers do buy inferior material by names, while bouncing superior material by nonentities. Not always, perhaps not even often—but any such shit demeans the field.)

And while I was at it, I decided to demonstrate what I meant. So I offered to show Hasan to Richard Delap, for fan review, and let him judge for himself. So he hadn't liked LOL; so how would he find Hasan, that even the editors couldn't choke down? And I was not averse to a review that might well bring the novel to the attention of fans, and possibly even a publisher. (Talk of naivete!)

Joanne Burger forwarded the letter to Richard before publishing it, and he wrote to me agreeing to review Hasan. In fact, he felt it was a great privilege to do so. This set me back somewhat (remember, I had almost squished him), because I now feared he would be prejudiced in the novel's favor, and I wanted an objective review. So I sent him the manuscript, but I cooled the correspondence.

By rights the review should have appeared in PEGASUS, since it was Joanne's fanzine and Joanne's cooperation that had made all this possible. But one Richard Geis of—just a minute, it's on the tip of my mind—well, anyway, he put out a fanzine said by some to be more prestigious than PEG, and he heard about the upcoming review, and he decided to pre-empt it for his own.

This was rank zineway robbery, of course. But suddenly my pipedream developed more substance. If Geis pulled off his reviewjacking—well, few editors, I suspected, read PEGASUS (remember, it's a nice production)—but Geis's effort, whatsthisname, was eagerly pursued by all the bad guys. And Joanne, bless her heart, agreed to give up the review without even kicking the old lecher in the shin. (Joanne Burger: I.O.U. One Kiss.)

((Lies! LIES!! Even Calumny! Delap offered me the review (probably at your suggestion, Anthony!) and I accepted. I did not rape Joanne's fanzine!

And lest some fans think I'm unethical in breaking in here, Piers gave me permission...unsolicited permission...likely sprang from a guilty conscience! —REG))

And so the review surfaced at last in—

He says his name is  
Howard Hughes!



ah, yes, SF REVIEW. I did not see it, because I had poked fun at Geis's novel Ravished, for publication in GRANFALOON, and in his fury Geis forgot to send me the next SFR.

(More lies!)

But I knew it was out, because I started getting comments on it. The review, it seemed, was favorable. (Yes, eventually I did receive the copy. Yes, it was favorable.)

Came a missive from Ted White. Now I knew that, in the nature of things, the time would come when I would be obliged to put Ted down. For one thing, too many fans were hinting that I was trying to be a new TV in my bad attitudes toward pristine fandom. This irritated me because I am in fact older and ornerier than he and do not appreciate the implied secondary position. As a little demon in a cartoon in SATURDAY REVIEW once said: "I'm tired of being the lesser of two evils."

But Ted came in peace. Fickle fate had put us on the same side of that LOL matter, which made fawning momentarily awkward. He had seen the review, and now would like to see Hasan itself. For consideration for FANTASTIC.

Well, it was an interesting situation. I regard ULIMATE as a cancerous wart on the fair complexion of Speculative Fiction. AWAZING/FANTASTIC were once my best market, but I would rather have seen them die than treated this way.

But let's face facts: Sol Cohen may be unscrupulous, but he does operate within the letter of the law. We can not get him out, so we have to deal with him in, much as the U.S. government must deal with communist Cuba. If there is any way to shove him into legitimate publishing, that way should be invoked.

Ted White has a man-sized problem, one that has defeated two prior editors. He wants to produce good magazines, but his publisher has been known to balk at paying as much as one cent per word for new material and anything at all for reprints. Now, in today's market where ANALOG pays 5¢ or more for short stories and GALAXY up to 4¢, and where more and more high-paying original-story volumes are competing for material (I have pieces placed in four, and editors, as this discussion demonstrates, hardly salivate over my material)—now in the face of this is the editor of a zero-to-1¢ market going to make good?

Well, he tries harder. He expands the letter column, he runs more reviews of books and even of fanzines, even if he has to incinerate the nocturnal grease to produce some himself. Not only are such features cheap, they appeal to fanish readers; and those, while not numerous, are vociferous. After all, if you win the Hugo three years running (and Ghod knows what'll happen this year!), and it certainly wasn't because of the quality of its fiction. (I should know: I'm one of the authors of that fiction.) And this striving editor paraphrases and excerpts from his own novel-length material to help fill the issues. And he mends his fences with the writers who can produce what

he wants, and he plumbs the dismal depths of his slushpile (a feat few editors have the stomach for) more carefully than do the affluent markets. The gold is there, for those with the stamina to dig it out. And he writes long frank editorials.

And he keeps his eyeballs scrubbed and his imagination on and his belt tight. And when he spies a review of something that might be suitable that is hunting a market, he bites, even though the reviewer poo-pooed LOL and the author is someone the editor himself has poo-pooed. And if it happens to be long enough and cheap enough (they do come cheaper, after the first dozen bounces) to squeeze out some of the onerous reprints, that helps. And while he's at it, he signs up the reviewer to do a regular feature, regardless of past differences.

Ted White is in hell. He is forbidden to admit it, for that is part of the torture, and at times he almost confuses it with heaven, but he is damned. He is forced to defend policies he knows are indefensible, to publish writers he'd rather take apart, and to speak softly to foul-mouthed bastards and to carry a load second only to the burden of Atlas and to be condemned whenever he stumbles.

And so Ted White phoned me on May 29, 1969 with an offer for Hasan, and I accepted. You won't see me suddenly raving joyously about the publisher, and you won't find Ted and me embracing. He needed a novel in a hurry, and I was eager to get Hasan into print, and we both knew the ramifications of the situation, and so we made a deal neither one of us is really proud of. Business before pleasure. I am not implying that either of us shaved our literary standards in this case; I stand by Hasan and I dare say Ted does too. But we both could have wished that we had met on different ground. He can't say that; I can.

Meanwhile the top copy was trying Walker Books. And for the first time a hardcover outfit was paying attention. F. H. Roxburg liked the novel, but there were policy problems...and that old hobgoblin of classification. But for the first time an editor bothered to explain in detail, and I think this is worth quoting, because it forces me to reassess my attitude toward editors I condemned for rank Namsism only a few hundred words ago.

"There is indeed a problem of classification. I realize that to anybody who isn't actually in publishing or bookselling this sounds like a piece of red tape nonsense. It is not, alas, quite that simple. So many books are published each year that in order for a bookseller, retail or wholesale, and even for the general public, to be able to handle the vast mass of material, publisher's lists are broken down into categories and budgets are broken down accordingly. The results of this are sometimes quite subtle; for example, for the convenience of the bookseller a publisher tends to arrange his catalogue in such a way that the bookseller can know at a glance what category a book fits into and how much of his available budget he can afford to

spend on it. To sell or to publicize a book outside the normal categories exposes such a book to unjustified neglect, not just by the bookseller, but also by the reviewers, who themselves think in categories..."

And so Hasan, part fantasy adventure, part history, part geography and ethnology, part adaptation of a Moslem classic, fell once more by the wayside. Walker would have published it had they been able to swing it, but the system is hard to buck. It would have to be a big seller to bring back their investment, and the odds are against that. To bad, for the Walker production would have involved splendid illustrations, and it would have been a beautiful book.

The story of Hasan is not over, for I am still trying the market. But now the readers and fans at last will have the chance to second-guess the editors who passed it over, and to verify or deny Richard Delap's analysis. The novel should be appearing in serial form in FANTASTIC (Dec. '69 — Feb. '70) as you read this.

When taboos are discussed, sex generally comes to mind. Many publishers now claim to have no taboos. But none of these to date has been willing to tackle this taboo of classification. Is there an editor out there with the courage to follow where Ted White has led? Careful how you answer, men, for this time your bluff may be called.

In fact, I call it now: read the serial Hasan and make me an offer.



"Okay, Piers, baby, here's my deal: you get 50% of the profits, take all the subsidiary rights. I put out an edition on my Rexograph, using long run masters, guaranteed two hundred copies! We get John D. Berry to illo, and...uh...could you lend me the money to buy the paper?"

MONOLOG continued from page 51

+ Bill Rotsler has sent me, over the months, a great deal of artwork, with instructions to pass it on to worthy faneds who have good repro. So, all you fan editors who want some Rotsler cartoons and a full page drawing or two for covers, you have but to send a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

+ Earl Evers has moved to: 615 Cole St. #3, San Francisco, Calif. 94117.

+ Jay Kinney has moved to 215 Willoughby Av., Rm. 908, Brooklyn, NY 11205

+ George Foster is back at school: Carriage House, Proctor Academy, Andover, New Hampshire 03216.

+ Lyn Verzyer has married. Now Lyn Hall. New address: P.O. Box 287, Bayshore, L.I., New York 11706.

+ COVEN 13 is a new prozine, featuring stories of witchcraft, horror and the supernatural. I bought a copy of the first issue with the idea of reviewing it...and didn't get to it. Then Arthur Landis, the editor, called and we discussed the magazine for a few moments. He said the initial sales reports were encouraging but was having distribution troubles. He wanted to look into Ted White's idea of bookstore sales. He said if possible he wanted to avoid using big names to sell the magazine, and he said he'd send me a copy of the second issue, and would like my reaction to it.

He did...and here's my impression of the two issues: His idea of not using big names will probably not work unless impulse buyers buy the mag on the basic appeal of witchcraft-horror-supernatural stories. This may work for a few issues, but the undistinguished stories in both issues, with the exception of Harlan Ellison's "Rock God" will keep a certain percentage of first-time buyers from coming back for more. The serial, "Let There Be Magick" by James R. Keaveny is actually PLANET STORIES sword and sorcery, and as such doesn't fit COVEN 13.

It's obvious Mr. Landis doesn't have the material he would like.

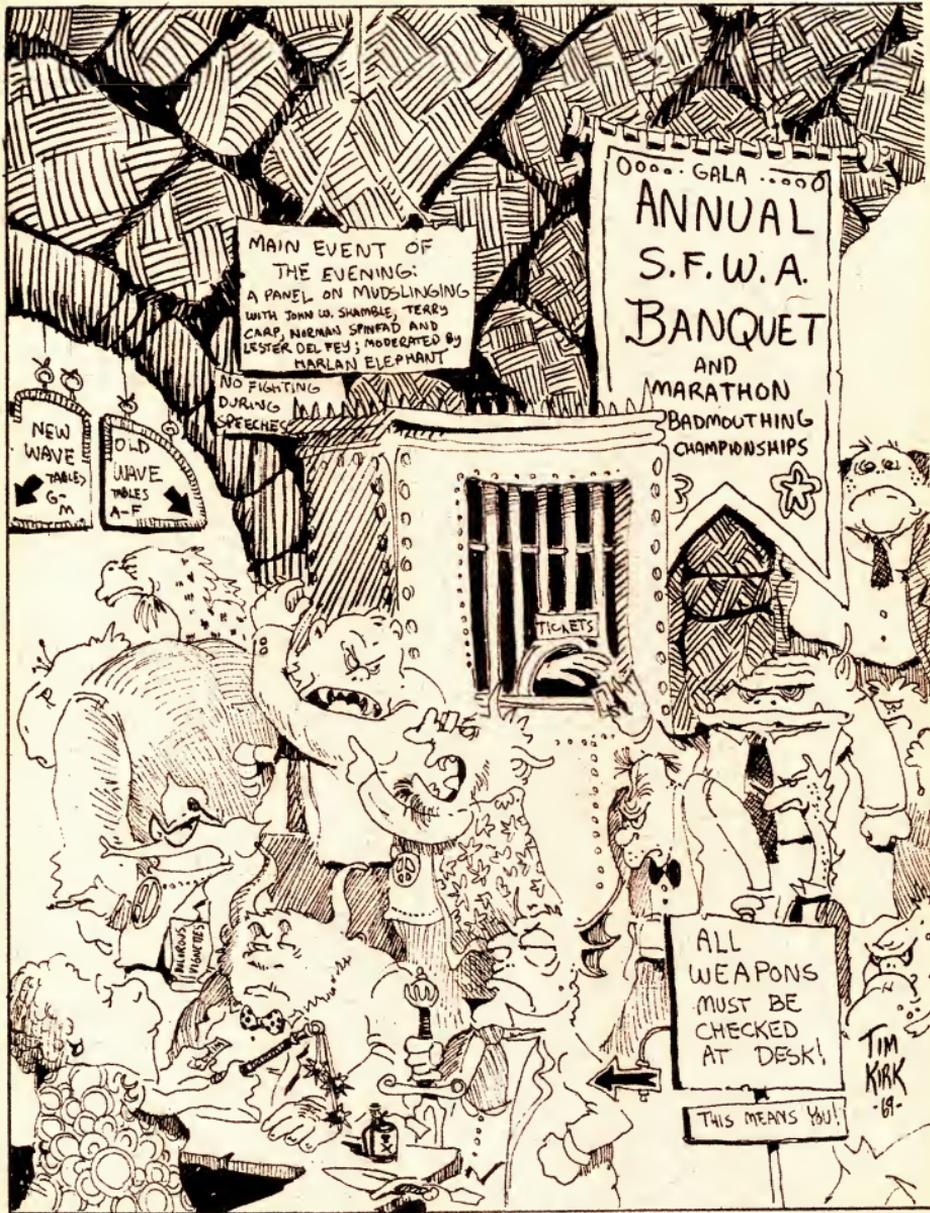
The covers were done by William Stout and are good, but too similar in basic form: a witch standing, full figure. Interior art is by Stout in the first issue and gives the impression of being by an amateur who needs more polish and skill. He's of old pulp quality.

In fact, the stories and art remind me of the old FANTASTIC and PLANET and WEIRD TALES.

COVEN 13 will have to improve because I don't think it can make it on the stands as is, for long. It needs better stories that better fit the magazine's image.

+ Here's more names of those readers who commented on SFR 31 and 32: JAMES SHULL, ALICIA AUSTIN, JEFFREY D. SMITH, DAVID L. BURTON, EDWARD C. CONNOR, BILLY H. PETTIT, MARK BARCLAY, DENNIS LIEN, CUTE JUDITH WALTER (LEITCH), GEORGE SENDA, ART COVER, DAVID C. PIPER, BRIAN SCHUCK, CY CHAUVIN, RICHARD DELAP, and NEAL GOLDFARB.

+ NEXT ISSUE—A long, informative interview with Mike Moorcock by Robert E. Toomey, Jr.—A column, "Noise Level" by John Brunner —Piers Anthony's column, maybe Mebane, me, reviews, and a pile-up of pro letters. END OF 33. —REG.



MAIN EVENT OF THE EVENING:  
A PANEL ON MUDSLINGING  
WITH JOHN W. SHAMBLE, TEARS  
CARP, NERVEN SPINRAD AND  
LESTER DEL FEE; MODERATED BY  
MARLAN ELEPHANT

NO FIGHTING  
DURING  
SPEECHES

0000 GALA 0000  
ANNUAL  
S.F.W.A.  
BANQUET  
AND  
MARATHON  
BADMOUTHING  
CHAMPIONSHIPS

NEW  
WAVE  
TABLES  
G-M

OLD  
WAVE  
TABLES  
A-F

TICKETS

ALL  
WEAPONS  
MUST BE  
CHECKED  
AT DESK!

THIS MEANS YOU!

TIM  
KIRK  
'69

# delusions

## delusions

THE FALL OF THE DREAM MACHINE by Dean R. Koontz—Ace 22600, 60¢  
FEAR THAT MAN by Dean R. Koontz—Ace 23140, 60¢

Bill Glass, whose taste is normally so far superior to mine as to be personally embarrassing, indicated a certain amount of admiration for Mr. Koontz's Fall of the Dream Machine in these pages, and (elsewhere) even more for the first novelette in Fear That Man. He has gone so far as to suggest that Mr. Koontz is a new-wave or new-thing writer. If indeed this is true, then these two books must occupy a unique position as the work of the first new-wave hack.

Now if everyone will please glue themselves back together and come down off the ceiling, we will now consider the work in question and the word hack.

Edmond Hamilton is a hack; no argument there, I trust. For, however stylistic and evocative it might become at times, Mr. Hamilton's work has rarely dealt with new themes, new insights, new characters, new combinations of elements. It has almost always been colorful, vigorous, entertaining. Quite often he has reworked the ground broken by other men to better advantage than they. But he, as a writer, has almost never broken any new ground himself, whatever other virtues he might possess.

This, then, is a hack.

At the outset, let it be noted that each statement applicable to Hamilton, is applicable to Koontz. (And before someone accuses me, as is always done, let me say that, until I sold my entire book collection, I owned all the Captain Future novels, and nearly every word Hamilton or Brackett had published; they have been, and remain, two of my favorite authors.)

Bill Glass describes one of Koontz's characters in fall of the Dream Machine as a mytho-poetic figure: then cites as his reasons, Cockley's reactions and mental attitudes towards immortality, but these are very much pre-dated, by Bennie Howards in Norman Spinrads Bug Jack Barron, among others; and secondly refers to Cockley's personal armanent, but this too has been foreshadowed many times in recent science fiction. Together they add up to: nothing, a shallow character in a light work of fiction.

As to the realism of the violence scenes in Dream Machine: one only has to have been at Berkeley or Chicago to realize how artificial and contrived they are. There is the tang of much newsprint and very little experience about them, like the panchromatic blood of a grade-B western.

But it is Fear That Man, which besides being engrossing in Part One, fairly entertaining in Part Two, and contradicting itself in Part Three, affords us the best perspective on his work and the state of modern science fiction/ or the new-wave, if you will. For it is here that we find the greatest use of recent themes, characters, and insights, all garnered from the works of others.

Consider, for instance, the structure of the first two parts. Both open with their protagonist recalling some event from his childhood. In each case the event was traumatic, both forming the character of the protagonist, and leaving some unresolved symbolic/philosophic conflict within him. In each case he meets the same early conflict/symbol at the climactic point of his life, but on a larger, more universal, more adult level. He confronts it and is victorious.

But it is Samuel R. Delany who, in recent years, has introduced this structure and resolution to science fiction, and most often used it. A handy example would be his compelling Star-Pit or Lines of Power. (The question of why what is sauce for Delany is not sauce for Koontz will be dealt with shortly.)

The two novelettes which have been pasted in as Parts One and Two of: Fear That Man also draw heavily on certain Delany themes. Chip has made almost a fetish of creating characters who are mostly human, but whose characters are are genuinely real, exciting, colorful, and alien. He does this and presents them in a certain way, just so and no other. He is successful (I would wager) because his mind, his body, and his life are trans-cultural.

But Koontz tackles these exact methods of presentation to present characters whose backgrounds are created and detailed in a way similar to the way Delany does it. They are introduced and described in a way similar to that "just so." They have characters that are similar to real, excit-

ing, colorful, and alien. But they are not genuine. They do not ring true, for all that they are painstaking copies. They lack a vital spark, that touch of genius. They contain no (as Delany's do) new insights, no trans-cultural understanding. They are no more real than the movie blood they spill. These are the creations, not of a man of the world, but of a WASP, pure and simple.

Long ago another reviewer said that in the science fiction of the fifties, when writers went abroad in their works, they carried Main Street with them. Sadly, Koontz carries his limited perception of the world with him. The books he reads are more influential than the world outside.

Even the abstract plot progressions are very similar to the plot progressions we have come to identify, exclusively, with Delany. He, and only he, has, up to now, used them.

The climactic line: you are not our gods, is only a very slight re-phrasing of the climactic line of Cthon: we are not your gods.

But, for me, these two books offer a great hope. Up to now, the hack work being done in the field has been by Bulmer and Lubbs and the like, re-working themes originated in the fifties and forties. Koontz's books, working with recent material, as they do, will entice more conservative readers into contact with the themes and constructions of the new-wave.

J. J. Pierce beware,  
this man, more than any  
other, will destroy you.

—Hank Stine



DECISION AT DOONA by  
Anne McCaffrey—Ballantine  
01576, 75¢

After two lightweight but highly entertaining novels (Restoree and Dragonflight both Ballantine), McCaffrey has come a cropper with this cottonballweight entry littered with so many stock-in-trade items of mundane soap-opera that it would take little re-writing to adjust it to the cliché-ridden format of afternoon tv serials or a healthy, clean "family" film.

The author begins well and by chapter two has presented an interest-catching brief of an overcrowded Earth, a society where a breach of social graces is a criminal offense and the word "sweet" is an obscenity. The atmosphere is a simple, relatively convincing projection of present stand-

ards in which we are introduced to the story's hero, Ken Reeve, a young man who soon delights in breaking every rule he delightedly can before he, his wife (Pat) and two children (Ilsa and Todd) leave as members of a new colony to be set up on the planet Doona.

Once on Doona, the colonists are quite upset to discover that the planet is already inhabited by a small, quite intelligent group of cat-like creatures known as Hrrubans. The men fear destroying the aliens inadvertently, as happened once before when co-habitation led to a previous race's mass suicide, and since such cultural mingling is now strictly verboten, the Earthmen seem doomed to return to their miserable homeworld.

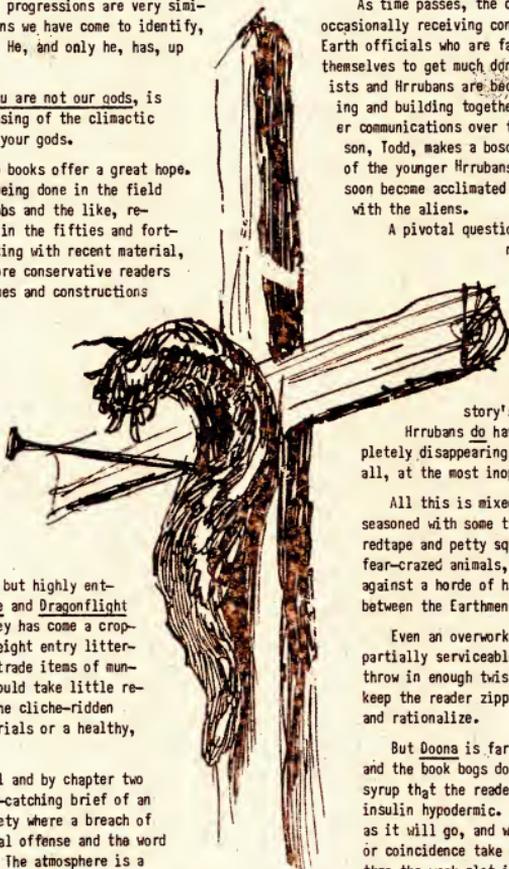
As time passes, the colonists wait for pickup, occasionally receiving contradictory messages from Earth officials who are far too busy bickering among themselves to get much done. Meanwhile, the colonists and Hrrubans are becoming fast friends, working and building together while striving for better communications over the language barrier. Ken's son, Todd, makes a bosom buddy out of Hrriss, one of the younger Hrrubans, and all of the colonists soon become acculturated to side-by-side dealings with the aliens.

A pivotal question arises: are the cat-men native to Doona, or are they as alien to it as Earthmen? It seems the original survey of the world did not reveal residents (or the giant snakes which make a silly intrusion into the story's latter portions), and the Hrrubans do have a strange habit of completely disappearing, village, artifacts and all, at the most inopportune moments.

All this is mixed together in a lazy stew seasoned with some tired comments on political redtape and petty squabbles, a wild stampede of fear-crazed animals, and a climactic battle against a horde of hungry monsters as well as between the Earthmen themselves.

Even an overworked plot can sometimes prove partially serviceable if the author manages to throw in enough twists and lively action to keep the reader zipping along too fast to stop and rationalize.

But Doona is far too long for such results, and the book bogs down so often in sickly-sweet syrup that the reader will soon scream for an insulin hypodermic. Logic is stretched as far as it will go, and when it fails, illogic and/or coincidence take over. But a greater sin than the weak plot is the utter unbelievability



of the characters. Oddly enough, considering the author is a woman, the book is very weak with female characters — Pat's continual fits of melodramatic weepiness get very tiresome, and the other women are only sketched in. The men aren't really that good either, and the explanation that all the people come from an overprotected Earth environment just isn't convincing enough to dispell annoyance with such a soppy group of pioneers. Six year-old Todd occasionally comes across strongly, though the senti-ment maxim usually centers on him and makes one wish he were far more devilish than he already is.

But then, too, "The Sound of Music" became the top moneymaking film of all time, so I suppose there's a market for this type of entertainment, sf or mainstream. Somebody must like it...I don't.

—Richard Delap



ENVOY TO NEW WORLDS by Keith Laumer, Ace 20730, 50¢

Laumer should be required reading for every science fiction fan, to prevent us from developing too many pretensions about our little branch of literature. When mainstream critics superciliously sneer at "stf" while trying to convince themselves that Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. doesn't write it, they are thinking of the kind and quality of material that predominated during the 1940's and 1950's. Keith Laumer is still writing that kind today.

This book contains six stories about James Retief, the "Machiavelli of cosmic diplomacy." Stories about contact between humans and aliens are my favorite kind of sf, and this preference has been known to dull my critical faculties: I will forgive a writer things while reading such a story that I would find intolerable in a tale about time travel or psi or future civilizations. But the faults of Envoy to New Worlds are so overwhelming that even I cannot excuse them. The writing is careless, the characters are fashioned out of thin cardboard with a solitary exception (not the hero), the plots are pure pulp. There are government departments whose initials spell MUDDLE, HEDDLE and SCROUNGE (my, isn't that clever!). There is dialogue that reads like a grotesque parody of itself:

"The mail pilot, a leathery veteran with quarter-inch whiskers, spat toward a stained corner of the compartment, and leaned close to the screen.

"They's shootin' goin' on down there," he said. "Them white puffs over the edge of the desert."

"I'm supposed to be preventing the war," said Retief. "It looks like I'm a little late."

"The pilot's head snapped around. 'War?' he yelped. 'Nobody told me they was a war goin' on on 'Dobe. If that's what that is, I'm gettin' out of here.'"

(A few lines later he says, "I ain't no consarned postman." William Hamling would have been embarrassed to print that kind of dialogue in IMAGINATIVE TALES if it had been submitted by Milton Lesser.

The real pity of it is, Laumer is not the compleat hack. There are some good ideas in some of these stories, particularly "Sealed Orders" and "Aide Memoire"; the portrayal of the alien, Whonk, in the latter is rather good, the writing rose above potboiler level for as much as two pages at a time on occasion, and it is clear from "Protocol" that Laumer at least tries some time to create a good story, albeit he fails. If he ever decides to spend more than three weeks working on a book, Keith Laumer just might turn out something worthwhile.

—Ted Pauls



CONAN OF CIMMERIA by Robert E. Howard, L. Sprague de Camp, and Lin Carter—Lancer Books 75-072, 95¢

After the death of H. P. Lovecraft in 1937, August Derleth took charge of the mythos Lovecraft created, saw to it that his manuscripts achieved publication, and even wrote several stories projected in Lovecraft's notes and outlines.

But, as Avram Davidson observed (MAGAZINE OF FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION, January, 1963), Derleth is most decidedly not Lovecraft. "Mr. Derleth is really too healthy and wholesome a Mid-Westerner, and they don't grow ghouls in Sauk Center the way they used to in legend-haunted Innsmouth ...Derleth tries hard, but he doesn't quite turn the trick, because he is as sane as they come and Lovecraft was as nutty as a five-dollar fruitcake."

That he may have been, but he was as sane and stable as a Heinlein Wise Old Man beside Robert E. Howard. Thus, anyone who attempts to patch together Howard's literary legacies in this fashion must be to convince get inside one of the most haunted skulls in pulpdom, and reproduce convincingly the convolutions and contradictions contained therein.

As Derleth is to Lovecraft, so L. Sprague de Camp is to Howard. About 20 years ago he was hooked on the Howard stories, particularly the Conan series. With other writers and editors he has helped ferret out unpublished manuscripts, demi-manuscripts, and incomplete outlines from the cellars and attics where they were stored more than three decades ago by Howard and the colleagues to whom he sent them for criticism. And, as Derleth to Lovecraft, de Camp is a quintessentially sane person who would apparently have little first-hand understanding of what goes on in a mind like Howard's.

It is true that a Howard story polished up or completed by de Camp is recognizably different from a purely Howard story. The background is more carefully drawn and more nearly free from anachronisms, and the villains human and unearthly are not quite so eldritch. But, possibly because



of his detachment from Howardian obsessions, de Camp is able to reproduce their general effects dispassionately and convincingly.

In the last couple of years Lin Carter has become Robert E. Howard's second posthumous collaborator. Without any implication that Carter possessed aberrations like those of Howard or Lovecraft, it is safe to say that his style is somewhat closer than de Camp's to the original. And the collaboration with de Camp provides a useful balance—wheel to Carter's own style, which when left to itself is likely to churn out reams and reams at the "Thong-or of Lemuria" level.

Conan of Cimmeria, whose Frazetta cover shows the hero in combat with two apparently pie-eyed Frost Giants, is the 11th in order of publication and 2nd in order of narrative of the Lancer Conan series. The original Howard stories, the posthumous collaborations, and original works by de Camp and Carter (or in one case de Camp and Björn Nyberg) appear in the order that the adventures occurred to Conan. (Let it be said that Conan occurred to adventures quite as often as adventures occurred to Conan.) This volume contains "The Curse of the Monolith", an original de Camp-Carter collaboration, "The Bloodstained God", a Howard story edited after his death by de Camp, "The Frost Giant's Daughter", a completed Howard story that turned up in manuscript form in the early '50's with the hero called "Amra of Akbitana", "The Lair of the Ice Worm" (de Camp-Carter), "Queen of the Black Coast" and "The Vale of Lost Women" (both pure Howard, with the latter seeing its first book publication), "The Castle of Terror" (de Camp-Carter), and "The Snout in the Dark" (completed by de Camp and Carter from notes left by Howard, and credited to all three).

"Queen of the Black Coast" is the only one of these tales to have been published in Howard's lifetime, and it is incomparably the best. But the monster in "The Curse of the Monolith" is a suitably Howardian creepy-crawly, and is one of the happiest products of the attempt to reproduce the Howard style. So is the ice-worm, though

Howard's Conan would never have dallied so openly with Ilga.

"The Vale of Lost Women", "The Castle of Terror", and "The Snout in the Dark" take place in the dubious lands south of Stygia, and show effects of de Camp's travels in the only slightly less dubious lands south of Egypt. The Castle of Terror is inhabited by snake-men left over from Howard's King Kull tales, which Howard located even further in the past than Conan's world. In the other two tales, he rescues a fortuitous white girl from the earthly lusts and unearthly terrors of Kush. (That's a different girl in each story, but, unlike Howard, de Camp and Carter explain how he got rid of the first one before meeting the second.) Howard's Kush, like Tarzan's Africa, seems tightly packed with lost cities left over from previous civilizations, and with white girls who need to be rescued from them or from the beds or cookpots of the natives.

—John Boardman



DO ANDROIDS DREAM OF ELECTRIC SHEEP? by Philip K. Dick—  
Signet 13800, 75¢

This is at once a simple and a difficult book to review. Simple: it's about a future bounty hunter who is assigned to "retire" six renegade androids. Difficult: it is about identity, what makes a man human, entropy, reality, and the illusions we must have, the pathetic needs of the ego...on and on.

Philip K. Dick has mastered his tools. He now is verging on artistry in his novels. I think sometimes he plays with the reader. Dick pounces in the opening paragraphs, gets a good hold on the reader's attention and interest, and leads him into scenes that demand thought, self-examination, analysis...then into confusion...then into a reality that seems on one page to be solid, and on another page to be quicksand.

Rick Deckard and his wife Iran are not happily married. They live in a world of slow death from radioactive dust that hides the sun in haze. A world war is past and mankind faces extinction. Most animal and insect life is gone, life is sacred, and the status of a man or a corporation is in the possession of an animal or animals...alive...and not fake—electric imitations that hopefully fool the neighbors.

Deckard and his wife live in an apartment in which the three most important items are a Penfield mood organ, a religious "empathy" device, and a television set.

The first three pages of the book are tragic, pathetic and frightening as Dick savagely and satirically shows the emptiness and dependency of Iran Deckard's life and how she copes—with the settings of the mood organ: 481—Awareness of the manifold possibilities open to me in the future; 888—The desire to watch TV no matter what's on it; 594—Pleased acknowledgement of husband's superior wisdom in all matters....

They live in an apartment house only one-third occupied. The suburbs are falling into ruin, abandoned except for isolated mental defectives.

Rick must wear a lead codpiece to protect his genetic purity.

There are colonies on Mars which are marginal. People are urged to emigrate.

Near-perfect androids are manufactured to work on Mars but they often rebel and kill their human masters, steal a spaceship and come to Earth to "pass" as human. They have to be hunted and killed...not killed, retired.

The androids have no feeling of empathy for each other, as humans do. The police scientists have a polygraph-type of test which can detect this lack of empathy. But the android manufacturers keep making improved models with better, smarter brains...

One of the new Nexus 6 androids has succeeded in killing the San Francisco Police Department's senior bounty hunter. Rick Deckard is next in line for the job. He must find and kill six androids...

This book is multi-leveled, fascinating, baffling, suspenseful, always absorbing.

Yet the loose ends bother me: it is not explained how the police know where all the androids are and what occupations the androids have adopted; how the empathy religion, Mercerism, works to create the illusion of reality, and how a cut from a thrown stone in the Mercer trance is transformed into a real cut when the Mercerite releases the handles of the empathy box; how the dying culture and shrinking economy of the city can have so many small evidences of thriving "business-as-usual" life, including constructing new buildings when so many must be vacant; why spaceship theft is so easy for androids.

There is in this Dick book, as in others of his, a vague feeling that his worlds are stage sets, thin, papier mache, backdrops.

Why would anyone plant an electric toad in the middle of a desert near the Oregon border?

Read the book and try to figure it out....

—Richard E. Geis



ORBIT 4 Edited by Damon Knight—Putnam, \$4.95—Berkley S1724, 75¢

Knight's Orbit series of never-before-published sf stories has become a much-valued edition to the field, each volume containing selections from all points of an already wide spectrum.

The last volume contained two stories (Kate Wilhelm's

"The Planners" and Richard Wilson's "Mother to the World") which went on to win Nebula awards as the year's best...one decidedly "New Wave," the other a stunning variation on an "Old Wave" theme.

Like its predecessors, Orbit 4 ranges wide in style and subject matter, and if the general level isn't quite as high as has been before, it does contain at least three stories that should outlive the crowding of limbo.

The book's best story is Charles L. Harness' "Probable Cause." In 1984 the President has been assassinated and the case is taken to the Supreme Court when the substantiating evidence of the prosecution — the "mindtapping" powers of a clairvoyant — proves of questionable validity. The plot is 99 99/100% pure melodrama, the characterizations are brilliant, and the story is one of the most ingenious, devilish stories of the year.

Vernor Vinge's "Grimm's Story" is a long, rip-roaring, other world adventure tale that delights with both rousing action and colorful characters, as well as some carefully-toned satire of the good-natured-ribbing variety. The mad scramble to save the only complete collection of a magazine called FANTASIE on a planet called Tu — and the aura of this alien world is most convincing, including a wonderful little beastie called a dorfox — becomes an outrageous cornucopia of intrigues and counterplots and marvelous fun.

The Phalanx, the computer-control of modern warfare; the constant search for reason among the vagaries of illogic; the forbidden desires of Man and the search for fulfillment — these are but a few of the many directions in Kate Wil-



helm's "Windsong," a disturbing blend of reality and fantasy and the maddening places between the two.

There's a sour taste with Harlan Ellison's "Shattered Like a Glass Goblin" which is bitter with pretention rather than causticity. Ellison is in his 'American-International' Hollywood mood, here using the exploitation values of topical subjects such as acid, communal living and the ever-present alienation. Knight calls it a story of "quiet horror"...yeah, quiet like a screaming siren.

As the order of civilization draws to a close and men seek to evade the inevitable, there is always the last man to go, to watch and wait and finally surrender. James Sallis' "A Few Last Words" skirts dangerously on the edge of affectation but creates a mood of desolation that partly allays its weaker aspect.

An "inversion of perspective" is what Knight calls Carol Emshwiller's "Animal." Condensed to the point of inaction yet broad enough to encompass a remarkable variety of viewpoints, it seems to be a personification of man, or, perhaps more simply, the shortest novel ever written. Anyhow, it's strange, with a special taste that lingers.

Robert Silverberg's "Passengers" is a story of Earth, 1987, where people are subjected to passengers, unexplained "creatures" that attach themselves to humans who in turn do things which are not of their own will. A young man and woman meet under such circumstances, and the tale is chilling and disturbing until the author opts for a crude climax of pseudo-shock. It's a good story that, sadly, could have been excellent.

A new body and a new life for a withered old man are the promises stemming from an operation that wipes out years like an eraser across a blackboard. But Jacob Transue's "This Corruptible" goes a bit deeper than the story seems to warrant, and, if the plot isn't the most original of sf ideas, the characters are intriguing enough to make it worth anyway.

R. A. Lafferty has a very, very special talent for humor; so special in fact that he could write a story about a corpse and make it a raucous, bubbly bit of fun... which is exactly what he's done in "One At a Time." You can't explain his stories, however, you just enjoy them.

Keep up with what's happening in science-fiction and get this one.

—Richard Delap



THE SERPENT by Jane Gaskell—Paperback Library 55-693, 95¢

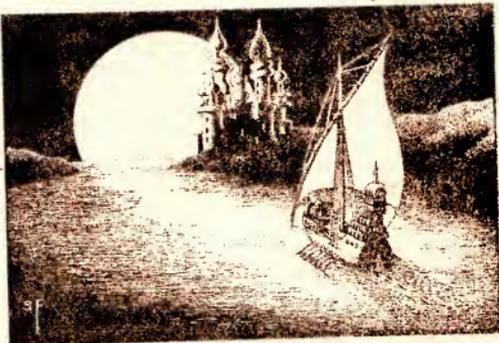
Cija. Key-ah. We live with her a lot in this book. What a book! It is a sort of combination of would-be sword-and-sorcery, the pilgrimage of the scope of Bilbo's, a gothic juvenile-and-nurse novel. And more. It's a hell of a thick book.

The author takes plenty of time to detail everything. By the time you get through 460-odd pages of small print, you feel that you've experienced something, right down to the smallest detail of, say, every time the heroine changes her pants.

Jane Gaskell sets out to tell what is essentially a love story rather than "science-fantasy". It is set in a time of pre-history as we know it and takes place on what we now know as South America. Basically, it's the old story of conquest and intrigue among the power elite. A great army takes the field under the masterful general (the Serpent) who is not entirely human (but human enough, Cija finds).

She first gets involved as one of a group of hostages sent by her mother to assure safety for their small, powerless country as the army passes through it. Which is a fine way to launch oneself into the world after a lifetime of seclusion up till then. With the one kicker of having been indoctrinated all that time in the sole purpose of killing the general.

Then follows a richly detailed if sometimes tedious account of the adventures of Cija as she learns about the world, life and the grand and petty machinations of the people caught up in the web of conspiracy for power and favor revolving about the general. As the story plods forward, Cija travels with the army—insinuating herself into the "court" of the general, gets left behind, abducted, raped, catches up with the army, goes off on several tangents each of which unveil in detail almost to trivia various aspects of the life and times of this Atlantean era. For Atlantis is the golden plum, the object for which all



the fighting, bargaining, alliances, etc., are committed. Eventually, it is for this mysterious, unseen island off the coast, shielded by a magical wall from the rest of the world, that Cija gives her concern and sympathy. And it is only at the end of the book that Cija, "Princess of Atlantis" per the bookcover, finally gets to Atlantis.

—Ed Cox



CAMP CONCENTRATION by Thomas M. Disch—Doubleday, \$4.95

In *Flowers for Algernon*, Daniel Keyes made a direct confrontation with the results of scientifically "increased" intelligence, turning out a moving, human story of a man learning to cope with an entirely different person—himself. Disch's version of this "increase" (accomplished chemically this time, rather than surgically) is also direct; in fact, almost too direct, for comfort anyway. Like intimate contact with a schizophrenic, the actions can be fascinating to watch even if they don't always seem to make sense. I cannot say that *Camp Concentration* is a good book, but I can sure as hell say it's too damned interesting to be a bad one.

It is the 1970's, and the country is at total, but unofficial, war. Louis Sacchetti, imprisoned in the Springfield Federal Penitentiary as a conscientious objector, is mysteriously, secretly moved to a strange new encampment called Camp Archimedes (later hinted to be in Colorado) that is underground and totally shut off from the outside world. As a published (one volume) poet, he is instructed that he has been brought here strictly as an observer and is to record in his journal, which is the form of the novel, all that he can gather and record of his impressions of the camp. In time, Louis learns that all the inmates are part of an experiment with a drug called Pallidine which increases the subject's intelligence to a startling degree but proves fatal after a 9 months period of use. (Hmm, do you think that the drug's time-limit is coincidentally identical with the gestation period of pregnancy?) Also, the drug is an offshoot from the unkindly common disease syphilis.

The novel is divided into Books One and Two: the first is a relatively smooth record of Louis' daily life at the camp, his impressions of the staff and fellow inmates, and the emergence of the opening facts of the experiment at hand; the second consists of more random, disconnected jottings of events that happen after Louis learns positively that he has been infected with Pallidine, and the climactic revelation of the ultimate bizarre goal of the unorthodox group. The reader (abd critic!)

is warned at the book's opening with a quote from Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* that begins:

"Now, reader, I have told my dream to thee;  
See if thou canst interpret it to me,  
Or to thyself, or neighbor. But take heed  
Of misinterpreting; for that, instead  
Of doing good, will but thyself abuse.  
By misinterpreting evil issues."

Or, as Mordecai Washington, a mirthful, pretentious, cadaverous-looking Negro inmate puts it with deadpan-serious earnest: "This , is hell, Sacchetti, didn't you know?" (p. 33)

The characters are as symbolical as the situations they encounter. There is General Haast, the extremist organizer who runs the camp with military zeal but is subject to frailties that are, to say the least, strange. The camp psychologist, Dr. A.

(Aimee) Busk, is the only woman on the premises and she too has her own ideas of running things in a precise fashion. The inmates themselves are a biting cross-section of misfits (Louis as well) that as a group are caricatures in ink and acid (the latter predominant); and their actions, so therefore to the entire plot, are symbolical on seemingly as many levels as a very long staircase, with more than a little emphasis on the sexual — exq., the eclairs with their spurning whipped cream — and the religious.

It seemed to me that Disch occasionally overwrites, especially in effecting the idea that we are reading the bona fide journal of a poet, but the excesses are more probably the author's desired effect, that such a person would overemphasize and often drift ever so casually into vagueness or obscurity. There are scenes, such as Louis' early meeting and conversation with fellow-inmate George Wagner, that are no less than brilliant writing, evocative of both character and situation to the extent that it is undeniably people, however caricatured, that the author is writing both for and about. Disch also makes definite use of "name-dropping" in the contemporary mode and other such "now" references that are almost literal stepping stones on the Freudian (—Ebbingian? Jungian?) path of roller-coaster surprises. He digs out those pretensions that stifle the majority of "upright" American citizens: "It's that middle-class upbringing, I suppose. I'm well used to the Anglo-Saxon words in print, but somehow the spoken word...it's a reflex." (p. 35)

and makes no bones about letting readers know that he knows exactly the effect he's having on each class of intelligence:

"I might go so far as to say that thought itself is a disease of the brain, a degenerative condition of





matter...But all we common people have the common sense to realize that genius, like the clap, is a social disease, and we take action accordingly. We put our geniuses in one kind or another of isolation ward, to escape being infected." (p. 59)

Language itself is sometimes twisted into pretzel shapes that are complex and penetrating, insisting on changing their form before you are finished with them.

I could go on and on, quoting at length and giving you very little idea of what really lies within the covers of this book, possibly because I have taken Bunyan seriously and fear getting trapped within my own interpretations. I will say, however, that Camp Concentration is a very short book that will likely pay you well to go over slowly with a fine-tooth comb of analysis. The casual reader is advised to stick with giddler fare until he realizes (if ever) that he is tracking a weary treadmill. Like I said, I cannot say this is a good book, but....

—Richard Delap



THE TOUCH OF DEATH by John Creasy—Walker, \$4.50

Walker is republishing the Dr. Palfrey juveniles of the 1950's. The question is—why? For the love of Harlan, why?

—Ted Pauls

((For the Juvenile shelves of libraries, Teddy.))



THE HEROES GAMOS OF SAM AND AN SMITH by Josephine Saxton—Doubleday

It has been asked why, if people don't enjoy singing hosannas every waking moment and leading a pristine, foodless, sexless life of no responsibility or accomplishment—why, in that case, do they feel they should enjoy the same forever in heaven? I believe this fantasy poses a similar question about Divine Marriage, by exploring one such in detail. And, predictably and unpredictably, it draws the obvious and subtle conclusion. My wife, however, feels that Heroes illustrates the obligations incurred when two people interact.

Another distaff author shows her strength.

—Piers Anthony



THE MAN WHO CALLED HIMSELF POE edited by Sam Moskowitz—Doubleday, \$4.95

This volume is a curiosity which fanatic devotees of Poe will wish to add to their libraries and, depending upon the depth of their devotion (or fanaticism), may even consider a treasurehouse of peripheral Poe-ana. The book consists of an introduction and notes by Moskowitz, a brief biography of Poe by Thomas Ollive Mabbott, nine stories in which Poe figures as a character (including such items as Bloch's "The Man Who Collected Poe", "The Dark Brotherhood", by H. P. Lovecraft and August Derleth, and Julian Hawthorne's "My Adventure With Edgar Allan Poe"), an incompleting Poe story ("The Lighthouse") finished by Robert Bloch, "The Atlantis", by "Peter Prospero", which may or may not have been written by Poe, and some poetry about Edgar Allan Poe. Most of the fiction and poetry, in addition to being about Poe, is in the style of Poe, or in any case what the various authors think is the style of Poe.

Doubtless there are legions of readers who revel in the gaslamp-and-antimacassar style. The present reviewer is not one of them. I have always considered that Poe's genius consisted in his ability to write stories that were good in spite of his ponderous 19th Century prose style, and I have never had much patience with 20th Century writers who chose to work in that style. (For me, reading H. P. Lovecraft has always been the literary equivalent of taking a 10-mile hike in full field gear through waist-deep mud.) So I plowed through The Man Who Called Himself Poe only out of duty as a reviewer. Suffice it to say that none of the authors represented therein have Poe's ability to enliven that style, and as a matter of fact none are even as effective as imitations as a fanzine story ("The Tell-Tale Dupli-cator") once written by Vic Ryan.

—Ted Pauls



THE SILVER STALLION by James Branch Cabell—Ballantine 01678, 95¢

This novel has been out of print for about four decades and has never been in paperback before. It's an elegant and funny fantasy which can be read easily as an independent work; but it's helpful to know a little of the background.

It is the third in a cycle of 20 books which has the overall title "Biography of the Life of Manuel." The Manuel in question began life as a swineherd and wound up as the Count of an imaginary Provençal-like country called Poistesme. His life story is told in the second volume (forgot about the first — it's non-fiction and you are unlikely ever to see it in paperback). This is called Figures of Earth and Ballantine is re-issuing it in November.

The novel under review tells what happened after his death to seven of his nine henchmen, and at the same time how his own history,



which was unedifying, got transformed into a myth of a Redeemer. (His ghost shows up briefly to protest this transformation). Cabell's most famous character, Jurgen, also appears briefly on figures and at some length in Stallion.

JBC's style, like that of most fantasy writers, is somewhat mannered, but he is marvelously inventive and witty, and I advise anyone unfamiliar with the Biography to get on the wagon now. Jurgen, the sixth in the series, can still be bought as an Avon paperback; and Ballantine has already contracted for the pb rights to the eighth and the tenth, and (depending upon sales) may do two others, probably the fourth and nineteenth. The numbers — 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, 19 — are the only volumes in the Biography which are almost wholly fantasy; hence the choice.

For non-specialists: These Cabell reprints — and the much broader JBC revival of which they are a part — offer an interesting and perhaps unique example of how practically a small but dogged group of fans can influence publishing. They were brought about by a JBC Society which as of Sept. 1969 numbered only 125 people, including Poul Anderson, John Boardman, Lin Carter (who is editing the BB series), Jack Gaughan, James H. Hall, Bob Lowndes, Paul Spencer and Roger Zelazny, as well as a number of academics and old-time Cabell scholars. The group produces a quarterly, KALKI, co-edited by the undersigned, which has just finished its 12th issue.

For specialists: This printing has been reset from the text of the Storisense Edition, including the 1927 "Author's Note," but with the addition of all the cartoons and decorations by Frank C. Pope from the second "large paper" edition; plus a new introduction, "The Private Cosmos of Mr. Cabell" by Lin Carter, plus a gorgeous new four-color wraparound process cover by Pepper...the whole coming to 284 + xxxii pages. You won't need to consult Nelson Bond's checklist for current prices of the two equivalent editions to see that this one is a colossal bargain.



—James Blish

NIGHT MONSTERS and THE GREEN MILLENNIUM by Fritz Leiber  
—Ace 30500, 60¢

Dick remarked when he sent me this book to read and review, "This is an exception from the usual run of doubles." He is quite right, for at his best Leiber is one of our best s-f authors, and there is some good Leiber in this book.

Night Monsters is a collection of four stories, three of them previously published in FANTASTIC. Particularly

notable are "The Black Gondolier" and "Midnight in the Mirror world." "The Black Gondolier" is, in my opinion, the best story in the book. It is set in Venice, California (the same Venice, I assume, from which the kindly editor of SFR once issued this fanzine) and deals with a new mythology built up around the oil fields that lie beneath the surface of this earth. I particularly recommend the story. Almost as good is "Midnight in the Mirror World." To describe the story effectively would be to give away the action and ending. But I do recommend it. I was particularly impressed by Leiber's use of detail in these stories to build up a feeling of verisimilitude. The other two stories, "I'm Looking for Jeff" and "The Casket-Demon," are also good, but suffer from cardboard characters and unrealistic plots, particularly in "I'm Looking for Jeff" which is the oldest story (1952) in the volume.

The novel The Green Millennium is a reissue and is probably known to many of the readers of this fanzine. It was written before most of the stories listed above, and is not, in my opinion, as good as they are. It is essentially an adventure story, but the imaginative background (green cats, satyr-like aliens) raise it above the ordinary action story. It's a pleasant novel to relax with for an hour or so.

The book also contains an introduction by Leiber taken from something he wrote for WEIRD TALES in 1946 and two fine covers by Jack Gaughan and John Schoenherr. It's well worth the sixty cents.

—Creath Thorne



ANOTHER LOOK AT ATLANTIS and fifteen other essays...by Willy Ley—Doubleday, \$5.95

William Atheling, Jr., on page 116 of The Issue At Hand, wrote: "I personally am only slightly interested in the opinions of any science fiction reviewer, even Schuy, even Fred Pohl, on a popular science book. I can get better opinions from real experts on the subjects these books deal with."

If anything, I suppose I am a "science fiction reviewer", so perhaps I had better advise you of this quite sensible line of thought. But the same argument may be applied to the writers of popular science columns in the science fiction magazines: one can get better opinions from real experts.

The attitudes taken by the three major magazines have been different on this point. ASTOUNDING/ANALOG has always favoured the semi-expert article, rather than a polymath's column. While GALAXY has steadily used Willy Ley. F&SF used occasional articles of the ASTOUNDING/ANALOG type early in its career but later swapped to the present resident pundit, Isaac Asimov. Asimov is a much smoother and

even a more interesting writer than Ley, but his research isn't so good. Too frequently the column in F&SF has depended on the reference Asimov happened to have handy at the time. For example, a couple of years ago Asimov had cause to print, separated by only a few months, two lists of the populations of large cities. It is instructive to compare the two, for in the few months intervening some cities had made considerable gains while others shrank: the explanation is simple—different reference.

This is not to suggest that Willy Ley was always right, but rather that Asimov's errors are more easily observable, and we don't really mind them because Asimov is not telling us so much about anything scientific as about what interests Asimov at the fleeting moment.

Doubleday have taken some old columns from GALAXY and printed them here without revision, so far as I could see from a spot check, except where a couple of columns have been welded together, in which case the words exhorting us to read next month's column have been omitted (the chapter on dodos). On the other hand, some illustrations have been omitted (for example, in this chapter of dodos).

In some cases this lack of revision is rather distinctive. In "Let's Build an Extraterrestrial!" Ley writes about Venus as a panthalassa (pp 147-148) without any modification or suggestion of updating, whereas later on, in the last chapter, he makes clear reference to the temperature of Venus as it is now known. This is inexcusable. I do not think that Ley was at fault, for it seems far more likely to me that anyone willing to try to screw the public for six bucks for a book of old magazine reprints would not jib at letting them remain out-of-date. It should be pointed out that only the most isolated fan couldn't acquire all the issues of GALAXY from which these articles came for the same six bucks. As a matter of fact, the latest issue of FANTASY COLLECTOR tells me just where to go (yet another alternative) and only my sense of fair play prevents me from giving the address right here.

So Doubleday have served up an out-of-date volume, with some illustrations from the original omitted: but what is present?

I've often found it difficult to justify the existence of these general columns of Asimov's and Ley's to myself. When they write of current science they are not so good as SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN, NEW SCIENTIST or SCIENCE JOURNAL. When they write of scientific history they are by no means as skillful or thorough as a journal like ISIS or like the project George Sarton didn't finish: A HISTORY OF SCIENCE (the first two volumes of which at least bring us down to the present era). On a slightly different scale one could consult Thordike's History of Magic and Experimental Sciences, which takes us from there to the 17th century.

Perhaps the argument is that these columns stimulate interest. Perhaps so, but I am more inclined to the view

that they will saturate. I can at least understand the reasons for the articles in ANALOG.

What's in here? A piece on Atlantis, the only justification for which is that it attempts to explain the source of Plato's original use: what, I wonder, is the geographical origin of More's Utopia? A bit of stuff about a shipwreck — scarcely science, and some musing on the pyramids (interesting in that it deals with a mathematical coincidence). Then there's an article on the origin of the cross-bow which completely ignores the probable Chinese origin (Needham: Science and Civilisation in China, vol. 3, pages 574 and 681 with forward references to sections 30d and e, not yet available to me). Several articles on zoology follow, including an Asimovian 'Biggest'. Then the already-mentioned "Let's Build an Extraterrestrial!", which, though outdated as I have indicated above, at least appears in the right place. The articles on Brownian motion and on meteors are acceptable, perhaps, but have been done better elsewhere. "Who'll Own the Planets?" is also of interest as science fiction and would not have been published elsewhere, and the last two pieces are fairly straightforward summaries which are hardly original.

The score seems to be two articles correctly placed, another interesting but not new, and 13 or 14 which have no place in a speculative journal, and even less place in a hardcover book.

Most of this book was not written to be authoritative, or definitive material, but merely as time-passing ephemera: but for a publisher after a quick buck I guess it is a different matter.

—John Foyster



THE SKY IS FILLED WITH SHIPS by Richard C. Meredith—Ballantine 01600, 75¢

The cover is the best thing about this book, and that is rather nonsensical, though not without interest. The book itself is without interest. This is one of those highly readable novels which is a chore to read because of its very blandness.

Briefly, the milieu is a dying galactic empire at war with revolting colonies; mix in hyperspace and the other usual clichés, Tenn's copdices ("The Masculinist Revolt") in the way of decadent fashion, and planet names like (in fact, including) de Camp's Krishna. The characters are involved in trying to keep the Solar Trading Company neutral so that it may provide some focal point for reconstruction and become a reservoir of knowledge in the coming dark age. Scenes of the revolutionaries wielding "illegal" stunners and running around like chickens with their heads cut off somehow manage to avoid being funny. The space battles are bloodless for all the ships of soldiers blasted.

The plot and characters are too familiar—I've read them so many, too many times before.

—Barry Gillan

# Little Noted And/Nor Long Remembered by the editor

I have been doing quite a bit more reading of late, and, with the new TV season looking as dismal as it usually does, will likely continue.

"Get on with the destruction, Geis."

THE NEW MINDS by Dan Morgan—Avon V2271, 75¢

Dan Morgan has too thoroughly spun a story of psi research and telepaths discovering each other in a present-day English locale and peopled it with fully-fleshed stereotypes.

It is easy to skim the pages and pick out the sentence here, the word there, that permits one to follow Morgan's shallow, undistinguished personalities as they plod through the inevitable, fully-developed scenes.

The last chapters do devolve some suspense and power as a warped personality in a freakish body attempts to inhabit the weakened body/mind of another telepath, but there is a deus ex machina aspect to the ending which bothers me.



THE RADIANT DOME by K.-H. Scheer & Walter Ernsting  
GALACTIC ALARM by Kurt Mahr & W.W. Shols  
Ace 65971, 65972, 60¢ each.

These are numbers 2 and 3 in the Perry Rhodan series from Germany. I cannot force myself to read one of these. In German these may have zing and style, but in English they are lifeless and inept.



APPOINTMENT ON THE MOON by Richard S. Lewis—Ballantine 01679, \$1.25

The highly detailed, objectively written story of the space program from Explorer 1 to the lunar landing. It has 32 pages of photographs, including three pages of photos of the TV transmissions from the Moon. A good Index. Very valuable for reference and as a memento.

SHADOW OF HEAVEN by Bob Shaw—Avon S398, 60¢

A novel, well done, of an overcrowded near-future on Earth, and an anti-grav supported island in the sky three miles up used for farming, tended by robots.

Shaw details a terribly convincing existence on Earth and shifts the action to the "Heaven" (International Land Extension U.S. 23) where a tiny colony of men and women live a primitive existence unnoticed and in hiding, avoiding discovery.

There is worked out a rivalry of recently arrived brothers that ends in destruction and death. The ecology of this future, the economics, the cultura, are all worked out well and realistically shown. It comes alive, as do the characters. The survival by the "good" brother of the breakup and fall of "Heaven" did seem a bit incredible, however.



SIX GATES FROM LIMBO by J.T. McIntosh—Avon V2274, 75¢

Create a superman, wipe his memory, place him in an Eden-like limbo enclosed by a force field, add a superwoman to be his wife, a second superwoman whose purpose is...

Add the discovery of "gates" that lead to six different sick cultures...and hope the man will work out his own salvation and that of all mankind.

Limbo is written in a simple, graceful, swiftly moving style that for me was too simple, too depthless. I suspect it was written and paced for juveniles, since it first appeared in IF.



WATCH THE NORTHWIND RISE by Robert Graves—Avon V2296, 75¢

A fantasy of credible witches and supernatural happenings that are an integral part of a future Earth culture that eschews industrialization and embraces a peculiar class society that has become rigid and frozen.

A 20th century poet is "evoked" through time to this future and is used by the ruling "goddess" to seed the society with change.

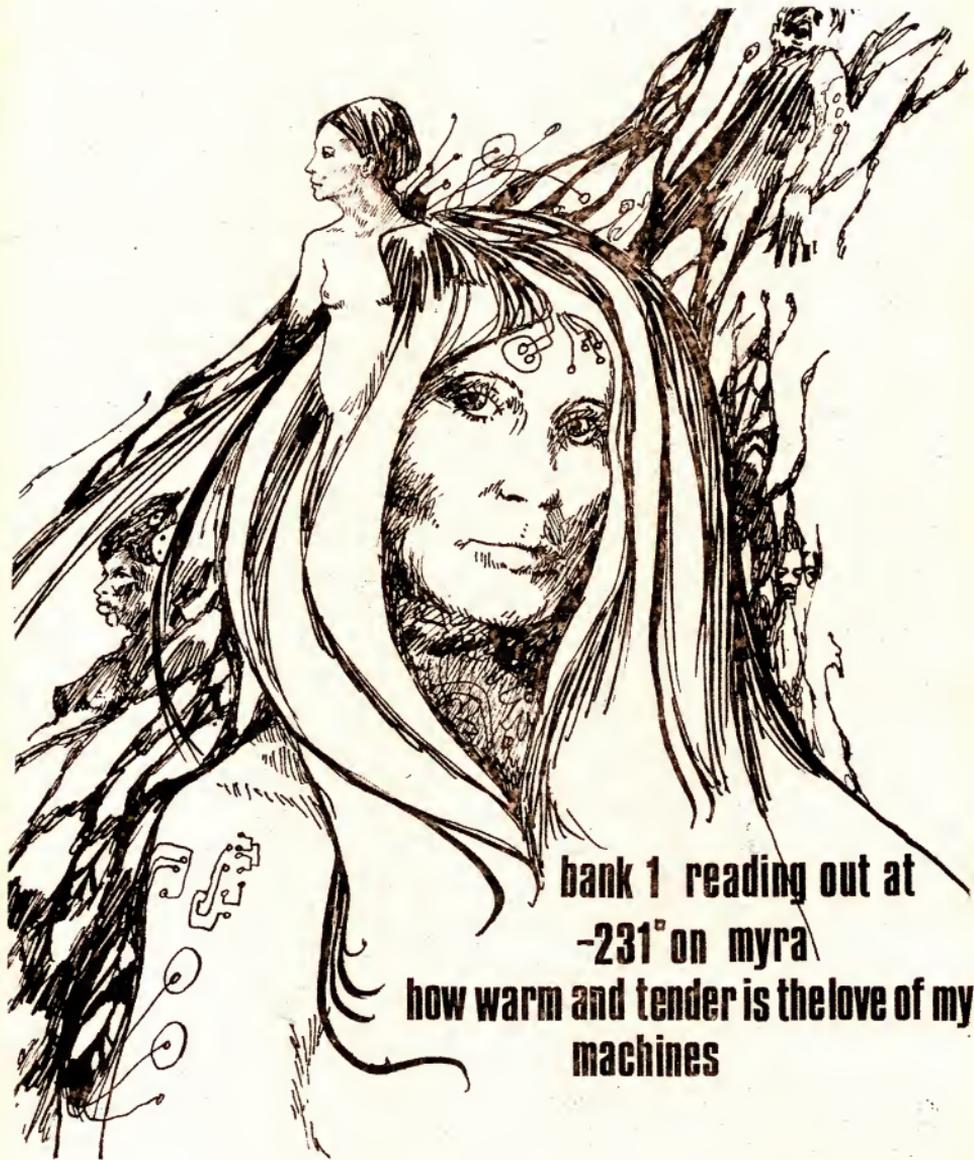
The writing is cultured, graceful and intellectual. The customs of the society are given by means of frequent question and answer dialogues.



THE WHOLE MAN by John Brunner—Walker and Co., \$4.50

What a difference there is between this adequately written story of the emotional and psi development of a cripple, and Brunner's current work which is of a much higher quality...in Stand on Zanzibar and The Jagged Orbit.

The Whole Man is a segmented novel, a joining of three magazine novelets: "City of the Tiger," "The Whole Man,"



bank 1 reading out at  
-231° on myra  
how warm and tender is the love of my  
machines

and "Curative Telepath."

It is a measure of Brunner's development in skill of characterization that in 1958 he went to great pains to detail the environment and genetics of a malformed baby-boy-man and ended with the standard "cripple" psychology with no really unique touches of character and personality that make a character in a novel real and individual. He succeeds now with sureness and power and economy.



STAND ON ZANZIBAR, John Brunner's recent Hugo-winning novel, has been issued by Ballantine for \$1.65 and is a bargain.



MECHASM by John T. Sladek—Ace 71435, 75¢

Sladek has carried the satirical sf novel as far as it can go in this mad, wild, mocking, grotesque, delicious jape.

The author has taken stock character caricatures and given them an extra twist, another warp and made them all vicious reflections of reality. The only normal person in the book is a minor character who turns out to be the heroine...and even she... Everyone else is, mostly invisibly stupid, as is required in these bitter, black humor put-downs of the military, scientists, politicians, fanatics, businessmen...in fact, everyone.

The plot? An old-fashioned owner of a doll factory gets on the government gravy train by setting up a research team. He employs the ultimate mad scientist who creates a set of little, self-reproducing metal boxes. The boxes eat metal. The little boxes get loose and chew up the laboratory, the factory, a nearby town...

It's fun and it has a happy ending.



BUG JACK BARRON by Norman Spinrad—Avon #206, 95¢  
THE MEN IN THE JUNGLE by Norman Spinrad—Avon #228, 95¢

These books have been reviewed at length before, but I have just finished them and I insist on having my say, too.

I found The Men in the Jungle to be a bad book on every level. Sophomoric is the best one-word summing-up possible.

Norman is a rapidly developing, talented, dynamic writer, and Bug Jack Barron has great power and vitality. Between the time he finished Men and the beginning of Barron, Norman learned a great deal about writing, about characterization, and perhaps himself.

Barron has faults—God, does it!—but its virtues outweigh them. It is irritating in its repititious interior monologs, and gripping in its gut-level involvement. It is written in a bravura, shouting style, and has the stink of reality in it...the raw nakedness of ruthless insight and honesty. It is in some ways sophomoric, yet it has those marvelous, hypnotizing sections in which Jack Barron operates in-on-with his top-rated TV show, "Bug Jack Barron". Those segments are fine.

Barron is two or three times better than Men. Norman's next sf book will be even better, I'm sure. I hope he stays with sf for a few years. I hope we can keep him.



CHALLENGE TO REALITY by John Macklin—Ace H-108, 60¢  
A LOOK THROUGH SECRET DOORS by John Macklin—Ace 49025, 60¢  
STRANGE GUESTS by Brad Steiger—Ace 78901, 60¢

These contain scores of detailed instances of psychic phenomena. Steiger's book concentrates on poltergeists.



THE ETERNAL SAVAGE by Edgar Rice Burroughs—Ace 21801, 60¢  
THE LOST CONTINENT by Edgar Rice Burroughs—Ace 49291, 60¢

The Eternal Savage was originally titled "The Eternal Lover." It was first printed in 1914. The Lost Continent was originally titled "Beyond Thirty" and was originally published in 1916.



THE DEMON OF COMMODE by Jules Verne—Ace 14253, 60¢  
FOR THE FLAG by Jules Verne—Ace 24800, 60¢

Both are the "Fitzroy" edition of Verne edited by I.O. Evans.



THE POWER CUBE AFFAIR by John T. Phillifant—Ace 51702, 50¢

This is a Men From U.I.C.L.E. novel...#19. "A dying girl points the way to an invention that threatens the safety of the world." What, again?



THE OCTOBER COUNTRY by Ray Bradbury—Ballantine 01637, 75¢  
FAHRENHEIT 451 by Ray Bradbury—Ballantine 01636, 75¢

Both of these should be in your library. October contains early Bradbury fantasy and sf.



# P.O. BOX 3116



TED PAULS  
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Baltimore, Md. 21212

I was disappointed, of course, to see a mere 10 pages of book reviews (I won't mention at all, he said fighting back the tears, the truncation of my review). Let's see, I'm writing three or four reviews for you every two months, and you're printing one; presumably, eight or nine other reviewers are working and being published at the same pace. It doesn't require a degree in mathematics to realize that, in the foreseeable future, you will have a backlog of 700 reviews and will be publishing reviews of books that are out of print by the time the review appears.

Obviously, you have a problem, Geis.

Despair not, however, for I have come up with the solution. You must raise the price of SFR to the point where you can exist (albeit not in the style to which you have become accustomed) on the profits therefrom. This will enable you to stop writing pornography and devote all your time to the fanzine, with the result that you will be able to put out 40 page issues on a monthly basis. I figure if you can sell 500 copies each issue at 60¢ per copy, and give up non-essentials like wine, women and song (well, you can hum if you like), you should be able to make it.

Surely SFR is worth 60¢ per copy. Of course, as a trader and a contributor, you understand that I have absolutely no intention of paying for it. But in principle I agree that it's worth 60¢.

((At the moment, with 350 subbers offsetting the 250 trades-contributors-complimentaries, SFR pays for its ink, paper, postage, envelopes. For it to keep me in wheat germ and bananas with a roof over us, I'd have to have another

600 subscribers, go to about 42-44 pages, and open up the zine to advertisers...and go monthly...at 50¢ per.

Well, I'm willing to devote my life to SFR, science fiction and fandom...but are fandom, science fiction and SFR willing to devote themselves to me?

"Of course, Geis!"

Thank you, SFR. I knew I could count on you. Now about the other two....))

I won't take up much of your valuable space replying to Paul Anderson. Only the first couple of paragraphs of that section of "Beer Mutterings" address themselves to what I said, and clearly our difficulty is simply that I misunderstood him. When he stated that the "average SDS member" had little or no "background of elementary information or ability to reason", I thought he was saying that SDS members were stupid, in the common, everyday application of that term. Since he doesn't, exactly, attempt to support that thesis in #32, he must have meant something else—apparently the tendency of most New Leftists, to one degree or another, to interpret facts in accordance with their ideological preconceptions. That criticism is quite justified, though of course it should be noted that they are hardly unique in this respect. In any case, I can only repeat: most SDSers, certainly most of those I know, are like most fans I know, in that they have a pretty wide range of knowledge and generally high intelligence.

No doubt this misunderstanding is my fault (he said unctuously), but it's easy to see how such things happen. Here in the latest "Beer Mutterings", for instance, where Paul says that a pig is "everything that a hard-core activist is not" and specifies clean, brave, intelligent, affectionate and loyal. My initial reaction was to jump to the

conclusion that he was accusing the (average?) "hard-core activist" of being dirty, cowardly, stupid, unaffectionate and disloyal. Obviously, that can't be what he really meant to say. Can it?

As for the remainder of that section of Poul's column, it suggests that, come the Reaction, he will have no trouble at all getting a job in the Ministry of Propaganda. All those perfidious methods of provoking the cops. He doesn't know how much of that stuff was actually done, of course—but it sure makes a nice long list, doesn't it? Now kindly go and read the Walker Report, prepared by a committee that was not exactly hand-picked by Jerry Rubin and Rennie Davis. Sure, there was provocation of police, but not nearly as much—or as serious—as Mayor Daley would like to claim. What happened in Chicago was, by the Walker Commission's lights, not just mine, a police riot. Groups of cops fell upon people with clubs—often without being provoked in any way, and indeed sometimes the people were just Chicago residents who happened to be passing by.

And perhaps Mr. Anderson will explain what conspiracy the press engaged in to provoke police. Reporters and photographers were being beaten up in the opening days of the convention, before the big confrontations in the park and on Michigan Avenue. Many reputable observers have testified that cops seemed to single out reporters for beatings. Why do you suppose that was? The reporters didn't have long hair, weren't accused of throwing bags of shit, and were not prominent in groups shouting "Pigs!" But they did have cameras and note-pads, and this made them a threat to Daley's SA (since you enjoy throwing around allusions to Hitlerism, let's apply them to the real Nazis of Chicago in August of '68). But then, I suppose you could argue that an AP photographer is provoking a police beating when he photographs four cops holding down a priest or a seventeen-year-old girl and clubbing them repeatedly in the face...

Sorry, Dick, all that leaves me no time to comment on the rest of SFR, which was great and brilliant and all that (including the rest of Poul's column, especially the part about the English malaprops).



(NEW ADDRESS)

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43201

Charles Platt seems to have a definite blind spot: he can't see that "dream" fiction can be relevant. His criteria, judgment in general from his remarks and the illustrative books he mentions, seem to include the nearness of the book's background to here and now. If the environment described in the book isn't directly traceable to the Anglo-American '60's, it doesn't concern itself with worthwhile subjects. He praises The Final Programme, for instance. Much of this book is concerned with pop mysticism, pop music and pop homosexuality. It doesn't become truly speculative (and powerful) until the ending. (Said ending once repulsed me, but now the power of the symbol begins to reach me.) Charles and I have been around once before on this very book, and my remarks at that time sent him into his one frenzy in SFR; I don't want to see him get upset again. But his praises in general are for books that treat the problems of this time in the near future.



((Here we go, people! Take a deep breath—))

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1\*\*\*s\*n fff\*\*r  
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Norman Spinrad's brief account of our meeting in New York is about what you'd expect from a man who has the nerve to call Fred Pohl a "pimp" in front of hundreds of people at the 1967 Worldcon, then pretend he never said any such thing in front of many of the same fans at the 1969 Lunacon.

The most charitable thing I can say about Spinrad is that he has a memory like a sieve. He himself is the only one I know of who was calling Bug Jack Barron a "dirty, sex-filled book"—in fact, he was even bragging about the emergence of "dirty science fiction" at a panel discussion a day after our "confrontation." This is mostly self-advertising on his part, I suppose, because, really, the sex in BJB is so silly that I doubt it could corrupt even Spinrad. I may have mentioned, in the huckster room, that the chapters I read in NEW WORLDS seemed like pretty silly writing to me—but I doubt that helped Spinrad's sales any (In any case, Stephen Takacs told me The Black Flame was selling better than BJB; maybe I had something to do with that..)

Spinrad's ego must really be running away with him if he thinks I was "belligerently" seeking an autograph from

KNOWLEDGABLE  
PRO

FILTHY  
FAN



him. I didn't even want to talk to the man, but Bob Silverberg (who was apparently bored by the Lunacon program that morning) insisted on introducing us. After that, it was Spinrad who did the insisting—all I did was promise to read it and give him a review. Which I did.

By the way, have you noticed the resemblance (pure coincidence, I'm sure) between Spinrad's STAR TREK script, ("The Doomsday Machine," I think it was), and the format of Fred Saberhagen's "Berserker" series? Of course we all know—from Spinrad himself—that Saberhagen is one of the "prostitutes" who works for Pohl, and surely Spinrad could never be inspired by a prostitute. For he is an honorable man, so are all the new writers honorable men.

((Jesus, Pierce—this kind of dirty little insinuation is what loses you what little respect you may have in fandom. If you're sure the resemblance (in your mind) is coincidence, why mention it...and go on to gratuitously smear in that devious tone all 'new writers' whoever you may think they are?

You know, this sort of thing is why I publish your letters. You destroy yourself with this venomous, bitchy, twitchy, slanted, neurotic, uncontrolled thinking. So, do go on...))

Piers Anthony will be happy to know, I'm sure, that I don't really consider him a New Wave writer—he's more a borderlines case.

I dislike Chthon, not because it was new, but because it was a tedious rework of a 2300-year-old Greek tragedy—it even had a Greek chorus between chapters. And how many times do some writers need to be told that the Oedipus theme is not a new idea—even the Freudians must be getting tired of it by now.

SOS The Rope was rather thin—the anti-civilization message was trite, to say the least. As for the execution—well, when even Lin Carter can tear a book to shreds, you know it's bad. But again, hardly New Wave.

Omnivore, however, I half liked. For a change, it was really science fiction, and it had some original thinking in it. True, there were conformist touches (psychedelic crud) and the characterization was rather wooden. But here Anthony showed that he can, indeed, turn out respectable science fiction when he puts his mind to it.

The Ring, his collaboration with Margroff, I found quite readable, even if it was full of cliches. Nothing profound (I think the basic idea of the Ring is similar to that of the masks in Philip Jose Farmer's "Rastignac the Devil"), but it won't hurt anyone.

Anthony's a man who could turn out to be a very good writer once he hits his stride; I just think he hasn't quite found himself yet.

I suppose I should thank Charles Platt for confirming most of my diagnosis of 2001, which I ran in RAEAISSANCE 2. But his article is so full of Platt-itudes it almost makes me want to throw up.

Really, most of it's even sillier than that article by Cyril M. Kornbluth once had printed in "The Science Fiction Novel" for Advent. But Kornbluth, at least, had the saving grace of being a talented writer—all Platt can do is write parodies (like Garbage World) of the "old wave" stuff he feels himself so far above,

I see he talks a lot about "real life" Most science fiction readers I meet are people who do very well in real life—scientists, engineers, doctors, lawyers, teachers, etc. But to Platt, I suppose, "real life" consists of writing articles for SFR explaining what a hack a guy like Roger Zelazny is. (I was amused to read about one New Wave'ds background in "real life:"—"security guard at the Tottenham Pig Farm and Sewage Works.")

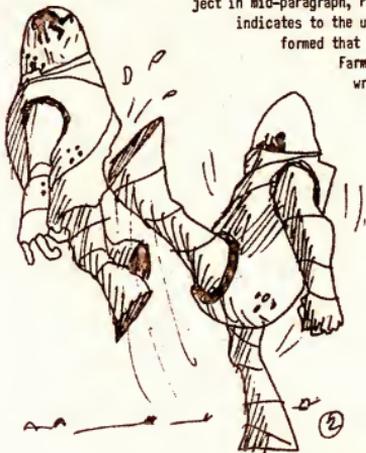
((Steady, Pierce. These non sequiturs are evidence of a disintegrating mind...))

Talk about "dream" worlds—I don't think Platt is ever going to come out of his.

Nor is Andrew J. Offutt, who is really off-it in his article. Lester tells me he made his debut in the SFWA Forum with a stupid piece about "cliches" in sf, in which he couldn't even get his facts straight (attributing the idea of "inertialless drive" to George O., instead of Edward E. Smith, for instance).

He's right about one thing — Farmer's latest books are for Big Kids, not adults. I'm surprised Offutt was indiscreet enough to admit this. But, to his credit, it doesn't occur to him how it can be "realistic" for a character as stupid as Brad Fraten to find "love and happiness" in The Men in the Jungle (Ghod—he can't even get the title right)—quite aside from the issue of Fraten being a bastard.

((With schizophrenic change of subject in mid-paragraph, Pierce indicates to the uninformed that Phil Farmer wrote



The Men in the Jungle. Not so. Norman Spinrad wrote it.))

(I mean, here's Fraden, arriving on a planet where 3000 sadists operating out of a single city lord it over 15,000,000 serfs. Just one bombing run over the capital, and he could take over the whole thing. But no, he's got to waste a whole year on a guerrilla war—and ends up bungling even that.)

Of course, he has to make up stories about how I've labeled the New Wave "obscene" (funny, there sure isn't much sex in Ballard's novels, obscene or otherwise, and damn little in Disch's) —but how else can he justify dragging in quotes from psychotherapists exposing the hidden meaning of my non-statements?

Interesting to learn that Offutt used to tear the covers off PLANET STORIES. I never bothered picking up the magazine — guess I was corrupted as a youth by "Destination Moon," Heinlein juveniles, Wells' books (ordered through the Teen-Age Book Club at school) and re-runs of "Things To Come" on TV.

Since then, I've become even more corrupted by the "male bovine defecation" of Asimov, Weinbaum, Clarke, Bradbury, del Rey, Wyndham and other "typists." Why even now, I'm being corrupted by "shit" from more "typists" like Zelazny, LeGuin, Shaw, Filer, Tiptree, Niven and Saberhagen.

Offutt seems to have escaped this corruption. Perhaps it's just as well; judging from his total misunderstanding of what the Second Foundation stands for, he's certainly escaped from reality.

What makes Harlan run? I don't know. But he must be worried about something catching up to him if he feels it necessary to blast me in introductions to his paperbacks (a lot of readers must wonder what the hell he's talking about).

But I understand we'll be seeing less of him after that fiasco of trying to divert funds collected for replacing a movie screen at the St. Louiscon to subsidize his New Wave writing course. Let him simply slouch toward Bethlehem and be born!

Barry Malzberg should stick to spreading unfounded rumors about GALAXY's word rates. Last I knew, my father wasn't particularly upset by my activities (in which I've tried never to involve him in even the slightest way) — but he might be upset to find Malzberg making an issue of him.

((Can't let this pass, Pierce. It's amazing how your mind filters and warps information. Malzberg made the informational point that your name and your father's name are similar—and that some people might confuse the two. I believe Harlan had made that mis-

take, and it seems Andy Offutt did, too. Malzberg was afraid embarrassing situations might result from possible confusion.

So you start out with a snide sneer of Malzberg and completely misrepresent his letter which appeared in SFR 32. You are clinically interesting, JJ, but no one should take your statements as accurate without checking them out thoroughly. Sometimes, in this letter, you make a bit of sense and are coherent. But then you drift into arguments that are mostly low propagandistic tricks and irrational assertions which may or may not be deliberate. Keep writing. The more you do the more you reveal yourself.))



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APOLOGETIC ADDENDUM TO PAPER TIGER,  
BURRING BRIGHT: I said I didn't know where Hal Clement was. I still don't—but he was alive and handsome and well in St. Louis, and it was a real pleasure shaking his

hand.

I also said "...Slodmak who stopped writing in favor of being the Critics' Tamo SF Writer." That was a real goof. Obviously I meant Vonnegut, not Slodmak, and I certainly do apologize, over and over.

((It's still a questionable statement without some documentation.))



GRAHAM HALL  
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ENGLAND

Charles Platt has just flown in from the States bearing a copy of SFR 32. Since I'm staying at his place at the present, it's given me a chance to read his "New Worlds and After." I've seen SFR around a lot, and there's usually something in it that makes me all but mad enough to actually write a letter. This time Platt's piece went the whole way...

Platt's piece made me madder than anything since George Locke's notoriously idiotic appraisal of the New Wave in HABBANUK. And we all know what side that illiterate was on. But it seems to me that Charles, by leaping into that fantasy arena created by psychotic self-doubters on the lunatic fringe, is bringing himself down to the level of the people he is trying to denigrate. It's all very well for him to go huffing and puffing and waving his shiny new chromium-and-plastic laser pistol for the cause of Right (or Left, I suppose). But he cuts a figure just as ludicrous as that, say, of J.J. Pierce, wielding his rusty old sabre for the cause of the Second Foundation — not to mention that setting himself up as someone who does understand



what the real essence of New Wave is is as arrogant as Pierce's liaison officering... Thank God this twee and misguided survey was offset by Offutt's piece of rare sanity.

((You typed 'twee' so I stenciled twee...but what is it?))



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"That's one thing that's very strange," I said to Don Fitch at the recent Westercon, "I've never had a run-in with Ted White."

Or so I thought. Yes, it was that very night, at the LA bidding party, that Dan Goodman came up to me and said, "Did you see what Ted White said about you in SFR?" Of course, I hadn't, so I walked down a floor to my room and read it. I think Ted deserves a reply, so here it is.

I knew when I wrote "Push-Pull: Clique-Clique" that someone out there in fandom would misunderstand it. When Dick suggested the article I think he meant something serious, but what I sent him (for better or for worse) was a humorous piece. You understand, don't you, Ted? Something I wrote just for grins. I explained this in APA L and at the LASFS a couple of times, and as such, nobody (except maybe Len Bailes and Bjo Trimble) got very disturbed by it. Don't worry, Ted, when I attack something I don't do it in a joking manner.

So, I proudly shake off the cloak of "weaseling invective," "squirms" and "whining" that Ted has placed upon my shoulders. His suggestion that I'm saying "they wouldn't let me play their game; so I hate their game," doesn't hold water. I make fun of fandom and fans every chance I get. But this doesn't mean that I hate the game that fans play. People at the LASFS will tell you, I never really went out of my way to join any of the many in-groups that they themselves admit exist. Maybe someday I'll get around to playing the LASFS scene, but not for a while yet.

Ted's discussion of the Washington affair and INNUENDO reminds me of another such instance, where we find smiling Ted as the villain. I only wish my fanzine collection were here instead of in Rhode Island so that I could offer documentation, but for now we'll all just have to rely on our memories.

Ted did some butter humor about Claude Beck, some kind of person mixed up with monster mags or something, I forget. Anyway, several people in fandom looked upon this as cruel, mean, nasty and full of the same weaseling invective that Ted accuses me of using.

But, I can hear Ted's reply now. "Oh, I was just trying to poke a little fun at Claude. I didn't hate him." Yeah, I understand. Just because you poke fun at him doesn't mean you actually dislike the person. Okay, then I suggest you not give me a rough time. Don't let your mean streak run away with your head...something I do a little too often.

After all, it's just a little metal rocket, Ted, not a ticket to Godhood.

((Al is referring to Ted's Hugo, won last year for Best Fan Writer.

The article, "Push-Pull: Clique-Clique" appeared in SFR 29.))

I'd comment on a lot more, Dick, but I'm not really much of a serious type. Delany, Koontz and Anthony are all talking about heavy and interesting stuff. I would tend to agree that SFR is heading away from the fanzine classification. To me that's a shame. SFR should be a great fanzine...which means you should talk about SF as much as you do, but throw in a little meat for the fans every so often.



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I followed your suggestion and bought the latest issue of KNIGHT (vol.7, #4) which contains Harlan Ellison's "A Boy and His Dog" and an article on fandom by Norman Spinrad entitled "FIATOL." It is the latter which prompts this letter but first I would like to say a few words about Harlan's story.

During Westercon XXII I watched Harlan and Bob Silverberg discuss this story as a case in point on the "Sexually Explicit Novels in SF" panel. It was an entertaining spectacle and they both made good points. As a result I was eager to read it. I must say that even though it is a good story I don't think I can see what all the fuss was about. Whether Harlan should have used contemporary four-letter words (his opinion) or whether he should have made up futuristic ones (Silver-



HAI'S FANS  
ILLETERATE DOLT  
FOOL  
TASTELESS ASS

PINKO  
LONG HAIRD  
FAG  
PINKO  
COMMIE  
HACK

berg's opinion) seems to me somewhat irrelevant to the story. Personally, I prefer his other story, "Shattered Like a Glass Goblin" currently in the July issue of AUM magazine. It's that sheer horror piece that Harlan read so well during the light show at Baycon.

On the cover of KNIGHT there is a blurb that reads: "The Weird Cult of Science Fiction Fandom." This supposedly prepares the uninitiated reader for Spinrad's "FIANOL." This is perhaps not surprising for a "Magazine for the Adult Male" (translate: sex magazine) but even though this blurb is not Norman's doing it is part of my complaint which I shall analyze later.

The illustration which precedes the article is hardly better than the blurb. The three "fen" shown marching in the foreground look like something out of the '40s (Harry Warner please note) and bear little resemblance to today's fans. Worst of all, in the background, there are flying saucers! Non-fan readers who might choose to skip the article could get the impression that fandom consists of flying saucer nuts! Again, the illustration is not Norman's but he must've had some idea of how his article would be handled in this magazine.

The blurb, over the title, is: "For Truefen, Science Fiction fandom is not a genuine consciousness-expanding experience." ((There appeared to be a line of type missing between not and a, and in any case I doubt Norman is responsible for it.—REG)) I trust Norman didn't mean an LSD-type experience but one in which you consciously and sincerely become aware of the world around you. In that case I disagree with him, from my experience. If I had any doubts about being a Truefan he swept them away by stating that a Truefan is any fan to whom Fandom Is A Way Of Life (FIANOL). Until about a year ago I couldn't have said I believed it was a way of life but now I do, so that makes me a Truefan and I still disagree with his statement. In meeting fans and pros at conventions, in corresponding with them and reading their opinions in fanzines I feel I have learned about people, and that expands my consciousness.

After an introduction which consists of a capsule history of fandom, from First Fandom to Head Fandom, with terminology, Norman states that fans are devotees of a narrow area of esthetic experience. Sadly I have often

noted myself that fans are limited in their interest of other arts, but how many of our mundane friends are well-rounded individuals?

Spinrad depicts the development of fans from book and magazine to group experiences of fanzines, clubs and cons. He also tells of the origins of sf in magazines such as AMAZING STORIES and says that it became a field in which hack writers turned out escape literature for readers who hardly understood science to begin with. He feels that a field of literature which had the capability to be consciousness-expanding was inhibited by the microcosm of fandom. As an example of this he describes the close relationship between the writers, the editors and the fans. Norman thinks of this situation as inhibiting and negative but I think it is a positive thing. I know of no other field in which there is so much communication and exchange of ideas between writers and their readers. I know of no other publications, not even the underground press, where there is as much freedom of expression as in fanzines. Perhaps at one time the areas of interest discussed in our "Inhibiting microcosm" were narrower but now almost any current topic will find its way into fanzines. Norman evidently realizes this because at the end of his article he mentions the changes that are now invading fandom. However his viewpoint is still different from mine. In adopting the New Wave as a force which will change fandom and liberate sf writers from fandom's demands he links establishment fans (such as John J. Pierce no doubt) with what he calls the ideology of FIANOL. He compares this to the White American way of life. Doesn't he realize that it is from a way of life such as fandom that changes come? My reading sf and my participation in fandom has helped tear down whatever narrowmindedness I was brought up with. Norman says that younger fans...undoubtedly he means hippie fans, head fans... reject FIANOL. And yet when they participate in clubs and cons they are right in the middle of it. Fans such as myself can accept them as they are and communicate with them because of fandom!

No, I doubt that fandom has stopped sf from receiving acclaim. Literary critics are as fickle as art critics anyway. I also doubt that New Wave and its four-letter words are the only salvation for sf writers.

As a matter of fact what really annoys me about Spinrad's article is not so much the contents as the packaging. If you're going to analyze sf, and the bad image its association with pulps and fandom has created, why have your article printed in the back of a sex magazine next to all the lurid and titillating advertisements?

Before anyone accuses me of being a Puritan, or another member of the Second Foundation, let me explain...

Last year Harlan Ellison wrote an article about



YOU HAVE THE TASTE OF A FAN.

LONG HAIR ED . . . . .

Fanon, fandom and Harlan (not necessarily in that order) which was published in FM & FINE ARTS. His article was less critical of fandom but that is not the point. That article I could show to any relative or friends without risking their criticism because it was in a general circulation magazine. If anyone answers with the proposition that those who object to sex magazines have psychological hang-ups let me point out that those puritanical people have as much right to their opinion as the editors of KNIGHT. My complaint is this...by selling his article to a sex magazine Norman Spinrad has made it much harder for me to communicate his ideas to others...perhaps potential sf readers...who would not enjoy seeing his article surrounded by sex-for-sale ads. ((But surrounded by cigaret and liquor ads in a "general circulation" magazine is fine ...respectable? Sex is still a bad thing, isn't it, Bernie?))

Is that what the New Wave is all about? If in the past sf was sneered at by the critics because it came from pulps does it look any better now in the pages of KNIGHT? Sure it's a shame that there has been too much censorship in sf prozines and it's true that there is currently a re-evaluation of our moral standards but must the sf writer jump on the bandwagon? "Hooray! We can use four-letter words now!" If Ellison, Farmer, Spinrad, Stine, etc. want to write good stories that include sex, fine, but do they have to make a three-ring circus out of it? Why not let the sex market become saturated with pornography by its own writers (hack or otherwise) and let sf continue to move into limitless worlds far beyond the commercialization of a sex craze?

Could it be that by selling to KNIGHT instead of to a magazine like FM & FINE ARTS Spinrad intended a low blow at fandom...more of a blow than the contents of the article? I don't think Norman ever enjoyed fandom. I seldom have seen him smile. Too bad he couldn't get fun schticks out of it like Harlan.

((I wrote the editor of KNIGHT and asked for reprint rights...and was told that all rights revert to the author upon publication; so I wrote Norman at his last known address in England but have not received an answer yet—he's probably on-the-road somewhere in Europe, seeing the sights...although the editor mentioned that Norman will be back in the States this fall. "FIAWOL" deserves publication in a fanzine eventually, and I hope to print it in SFR.))



HARRY WARNER, JR.  
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Lots of the book reviews reminded me irresistibly of something this issue. Far back in the era when time was young and Buck Rogers was in the 25th century, Wilma Deering suddenly acquired a new hairdo. It was upswept in back, and even fans who normally didn't acknowledge the existence of a female in that comic strip had to notice this change, be-

cause this was around 1937 perhaps when Paris decreed that all American girls should wear their hair this way. The intrusion of a current fashion in what was supposed to be the year 2437 c. bothered a lot of people. I feel a modified form of the same reaction when I encounter a series of reviews of books which deal with increased population, extreme powers for big industry, air pollution, violence in the streets, and all the other fifty leading problems of today. I don't doubt that most of these things are more likely than not to continue to be problems for the next century or longer, but I'm not sure that I can feel comfortable when I come across an almost uninterrupted succession of these themes in books about the future. The suspicion that I'm reading about the future and undergoing the author's suggestions as to how to solve today's problems detracts my attention from the story. I couldn't enjoy Advise and Consent for exactly this same reason. It would be nice if someone wrote some good books about dwindling population, the mess created by lack of supermarkets and Detroit auto factories in a nation where unwieldiness of big business had caused the return of backyard factories and corner groceries, and the question of how to retain pride in a nation's reputation and progress in a world where war had been eliminated leaving no military reasons for whipping up patriotism.



FLORENCE JENKINS  
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I have bought practically every paperback you have reviewed in SFR since #28, and have an order in to Ballantine for 9 books now. I don't think I will EVER order any more from Ace, as I had to write three times to get an order of five books and then they sent two wrong ones.

((SFR...the ombudsman-zine! Can you ask your mail order people to be a bit more careful, Mr. Wollheim & Mr. Carr?))



JUSTIN ST. JOHN  
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Mr. Asimov has written over 100 books and innumerable articles and short stories: one would have to assume that he knows how to read.



One would be wrong.

"I ask whether it is really essential to have explicit sex scenes in science fiction and he responds by questioning my masculinity."

Out of several paragraphs of involved explanation, Mr. Asimov chose one-half of a sentence, misread it, and proceeded to say that that was the whole of my argument. I pointed out the relationship between sexuality and values, and between values and literature, and then said: 'I do not know the specifics of your life, Mr. Asimov, but for man the issue of sex is central to his existence.' That statement was meant to be taken literally: it was not an epithet, it was a statement of fact—I do not know the specifics of Mr. Asimov's life, nor do I care to.

My letter ((in SFR #30)) did not address itself primarily to the issue of allegedly "obscene" language in literature: I made no mention of it concerning Mr. Asimov's view, because I do not consider that view within the realm of rational discussion. How he construed my statements (which were, in context, a condemnation of such language) to mean that I was defending gutter talk as a stylistic substitute is, I presume, Classified Information. In my last letter to SFR, I referred Mr. Asimov to an Elementary Sex Education course—this issue, permit me to recommend Remedial Reading.

((Your letter in #30 was in the area of "personal" in certain areas of attack, Justin, and also, as is this one, abrasively contemptuous, in spots. Isaac still his cool a bit and slammed back.

I could recommend to you a course in Spelling.))

The rest of his letter is a personal attack. Ho Hum.

Rather than throw around pre-adolescent epithets, perhaps Mr. Asimov will address himself to the issue—the issue of sex, and of values, in sf literature—in his next letter. The fact that he did not defend his ideas is my proof that no defense is possible.

And the fact that Mr. Asimov has publicly endorsed John Pierce and the Second Foundation by giving both the use of his literary properties (without remuneration) should convince the skeptical that no defense is necessary: because

that endorsement tells the whole story. (See the first issue of Pierce's RENAISSANCE)

((You indulge in Pierce-ian overkill with the above bit. Pierce asked if he could use the name 'Second Foundation.' Asimov agreed. Stating it as 'use of his literary properties (without remuneration)' is ridiculous...and casts a suspicion of ridiculousness over everything else you say previous.))



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Here I am squeezing my paint tubes in a rapid defense. After eluding Harlan's fangs at St. Louis I feel I should do so to one and all in print. The whole Billon

business was an attempt to widen the category so that fandom, as it goes, would be aware of more than just plain ol' SF artists, maybe next year the slate will be filled with more "new" names. Be aware, you have eyes. Anywho, I didn't know the Billons did any work for GALAXY until I stumbled across them in an old GALAXY. I wonder how many fans were aware of this at all? Besides, I didn't criticise the Billons, darn, but everyone seems to think so— Either you missed my point or I didn't make it clear enough!

All artists have hang-ups that run in parallel to that of a writer. It's all in the way you like to see things, shape, form, sound, all that jazz. One of my hang-ups is that I like tall thin things— this shows up when I draw people—they turn up tall and thin and sometimes get elongated.

Here's a question for all you dirty pros out there: How do you feel about what appears on the covers of your books?— not that you have much say— but a horrible cover can play havoc with sales.

PS. Got to meet, if not talk to long enough, darn, all my favorite fan artists at St. Louis—

GOOD PEOPLE: Ha! Tim Kirk's older than me and feels it! Maybe that's a bad omen!  
Geo. Barr is a nest person.  
Bill Rotsler in person is Wow! If he fell into a swimming pool they'd have to skim off "fantastic" every 10 seconds for 2 wks.

P.P.S. Or what the new wave means to me.

I was just drying out my car when I started to think— I remembered watching Alexei and Larry Niven battle on a panel. They are both good writers and both at times write a story that I dislike—

Anywho, for a long time I've known something about Alexei bothered me and I remembered what he said on the war (opps) panel. So here is the true story of the secret of Alexei—

Are you ready fandom? Alexei can you take it? YOU DON'T LIKE MACHINES!!!! That's it!!! WHY DON'T YOU LIKE MACHINES, ALEXEI? Alexei, ol' buddy, somewhere you've gotten an overdose of humanitarianism along the way. Hippie!



Part the Second: And this brings me to the thing I don't like about new wave writing!

Item the first: Some new wavers are getting so slick in their writing - I think at times they think they are a straight Gore Vidal:

Item the two: Anti science (or faulty) and anti machine:

I dislike the use of unbelievable science or more so, science that is too primitive. I didn't believe in Alexei's universe, the science seemed a little backward, (but it still was a good story) sort of like a souped up Heinlein... Don't any Authors read Profiles of the Future or Kahn's 2000 study or even watch 21st Century?

Maybe it's just my old body but I've been carrying on a love affair with machines for years and anti machinists bug me, I never could understand the kind of person that would hiss or bo or feel slightly resentful of HAL 9000. I've been in love with those 2001 machines for ever since I saw them! One of my private desires is to take a couple of crates of southern comfort a few gallons of glucose and lock myself in the Discovery or one of those pods for a year - wow!

Too many people refuse to see the beauty in a machine, they're scared of them. Take a good look at the sexyness of a questar telescope or a tensor lamp, control boards on stereos, blenders, comp sets, wow! Too many people also are afraid of sexiness in machines. Perhaps with good reason, there was a study that said the major cause for divorce at IBM, data places and computer joints and space facilities is that the men become more and more involved with their sexy machines. Stick that in your ears, fem-fans!

The future is written in Binary (until as a book by Sagan on E-I life mentioned, i.e., that the machines that take care of us will contact alien machines and they'll leave us) so take that into consideration writers of ye new wave.

And my advice to the general audience out there: (You too Alexei) Warm and tender is the love of a machine.

Love a machine today. You love it, it loves you. Play it safe - yo!

((I get the impression, Mike, that you had three stiff ones a half an hour before you wrote that letter.))



JOHN BOARDMAN  
592 16th St.  
Brooklyn, NY  
11218

I would greatly appreciate it if you could pass on to your readers three questions to which I cannot find the answer in local science fiction circles.

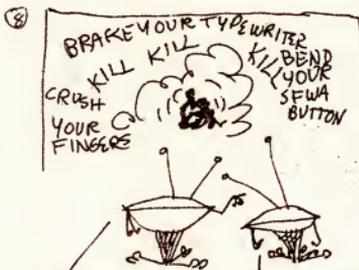
1. About 15 years ago I read a purportedly medieval Arab story about a man who was despondent because of his son's death. A friend tries to console him by telling him that it was in accordance with kismet - fate, and thus the

immutable will of god. The man replies that if this is what fate means, he would rather live in a world ruled by chance. That night he dreams that he is in a wild, formless world in which the sun seems to rise and set at irregular intervals. He asks where he is and an inhabitant with an unlikely number of eyes, arms and legs tells him that he is in a world ruled entirely by chance. Everything is assembled not by god's will but according to the rules of chance. After a tour through this chaos, the man returns to waking reality and rejoices that he lives in a stable universe.

If this story is indeed of medieval origin, it must rank as the oldest "parallel universe" story. Can anyone tell me where this story may be found?

2. Before World War II, in Poland, there was a writer named Feliks Burdecki (pronounced "Boordetski"), who wrote speculations on interplanetary travel - whether fiction or non-fiction deponent knoweth not. He was also a member of the right-wing National Democratic Party, and a pronounced anti-semitic. According to William Woods' Poland, Eagle in the East (Hill & Wang, 1968) Burdecki was one of the few Poles who openly collaborated with the German occupation. I would like to know what eventually became of him, and whether any of his writings are available in either English, German, or French.

3. Karl Radek, one of the victims of the Stalinist purge of some 35 years ago, is said to have written an article entitled "Socialism and the Stars." This article speculates about the kinds of social order that may be discovered among other intelligent beings when interstellar travel is achieved. I would like to know something more about this article, where it was originally published, and where any translation into English, German or French may be found.



WHAT WE REALLY  
NEED IS  
SOMEONE WHO  
CAN WRITE HARD  
SCIENCE LIKE  
BOVA OR NIVIN  
SIGH!  
+  
WHERE'S GOD  
WHEN WE NEED  
HIM?

AND CAN HANDLE  
A STORY LIKE  
THAT LONG HAIR  
PANGHIN KID  
+  
SIGH!  
+  
LET'S CALL  
HIM



JAY KAY KLEIN  
302 Sandra Dr.  
North Syracuse, NY  
13212

There seems to be considerable wonderment over John Pierce. Really oughtn't to be - you can see him anytime at a worldcon or con in the New York City area. I can't imagine anyone poking him in the nose - he's just not the type. I mean grown men don't go around poking kids in the snoot. John looks barely three-quarters of the way through adolescence, but really is some 25 years old.

He's a reporter on a Newark paper, and from what I understand, does a competent job. His factual stories are straightforward, just like you'd expect from a newspaperman. If his "call to arms, legs, and other extremities" about the new "ripple" or "tsunami" (depending on whose phraseology you prefer) is shrill and overbearing, I must assume it's because John wanted to state his case that way.

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JOHN BERRY  
31, Campbell Park Ave.,  
Belmont, Belfast BT4 3FL,  
Northern Ireland

I must write a few well-chosen words of comment on "The Polemicist" by Arthur Jean Cox. It is a very interesting article, written with a beautiful turn of phrase, and with considerable wit and insight. Unfortunately, my impression is that Cox is doing exactly what he is attacking Tertius Quimby for allegedly doing. And Cox has performed a much better execution than Quimby could ever do, seeing that Cox is extremely literate and intellectual. If any one of us do see ourselves as Quimby, or even a facet of him, it shows that Cox's perceptive comments have struck home, albeit conceding that we do at least have human and fannish frailties, whereas Cox has intimated that he has none, he is, in fact, a paragon of fannishness. Where would we all be in fandom without Quimby? Surely we don't want fandom to become inhabited with saintly types, with no eccentricities or faults at all.

And Cox has performed a much better execution than Quimby could ever do, seeing that Cox is extremely literate and intellectual. If any one of us do see ourselves as Quimby, or even a facet of him, it shows that Cox's perceptive comments have struck home, albeit conceding that we do at least have human and fannish frailties, whereas Cox has intimated that he has none, he is, in fact, a paragon of fannishness. Where would we all be in fandom without Quimby? Surely we don't want fandom to become inhabited with saintly types, with no eccentricities or faults at all.

((After you've read this issue's final segment of "The Polemicist" you'll think differently...perhaps.))

I have to confess I chuckled like mad when I read Ted White's letter on page 62 (of SFR #30). Whilst I like my namesake's (John Berry's) work, it is rather presumptuous

of Ted to assert that Johnny's THE CLUB HOUSE column is 'the best fanzine review column ever published in a prozine.' Come, Ted, I'm all for a person with something to sell extolling his wares, but please allow us readers to decide things like this....Bob Bloch, about ten years ago, churned out the most compelling and humorous fanzine review columns and I don't think anyone will ever compete in that respect....if Johnny can do it he's ready for much bigger things than a fanzine review column in AMAZING. All the same, I am pleased to see Ted White editing AMAZING and FANTASTIC; I have followed his career with considerable interest, and under no circumstance could it be said that his path has been prepared by buttering up to the Big Names who are supposed to have all the Influence. He has always been independent, and has named names even when they hurt. His talent has borne him triumphantly to the top. Just so long as he doesn't publish any of his own stories in AMAZING or FANTASTIC....

The Stephen Fabian cover is superb, and in fact all the artwork in this issue (but particularly, Fabian's) is worthy of favorable comment.

((I thank you, Fabian thanks you, and Ted....))



JERRY KAUFMAN  
1596 1/2 N. High St., #16  
Columbus, Ohio 43201

You mention the loss of John D. Berry's column...from SFR...and you wonder if fannishness is dying in fandom. Not hardly. But you certainly didn't help with your change of title and format. The first couple of issues of the reborn PSYCHOTIC had lots of fannishness, side-by-side with the serconist talk. You remember the arguments over the Baycon which were as vicious as anything Harlan called John J. Getting all excited over conventions is very fannish. But you changed the name of the zine to SFR, you changed the department names, you changed, for a while, to half-sized offset, you advertised as "Uninhibited! Controversial!" The quality of the zine hasn't declined, but the whole emphasis on fannishness was removed by your own actions. You yourself killed the fannishness in SFR.

(("Geis, aren't you ashamed of yourself?"))

No. Get—

"I know, I know. 'Get out of the lettercolumn, alter ego.'")

As for fannishness in fandom, the popularity of Harry Warner, Jr's history of the forties, and the arising of a new bunch of fannish fans like Berry himself indicates that fannish fandom is about to rise again. Maybe. And the first halfdozen issues of PSY may have helped to kick a new



WUMP

trend off by rekindling embers that now need a little more heat to burst out. To overuse a metaphor

((A resurgence of fannishness will require a fannish focal point which will require an energetic, madcap fanned with money, an odd personality, talent as a writer and a lot of free time. A combination very rare. You may wait a long while for the magic spark to appear.))



DICK ELLINGTON I'll probably never read more than 6448 Irwin Court a tenth of the books you review but I am Oakland, Calif. beginning to take an interest in the reviews and find that they do stick in my mind when it comes time to pick something off the shelf to read...

I'm tempted to comment on the artwork argument but sheer ineptness on my part—and I'm sure you're right that this is the case with most fan—stops me cold. Actually I wish I was a bit more in touch personally with a few of the better fan artists. I've been procrastinating for years about putting out a small limited edition of a Jack London story/essay ((Goofed—skipped an extra line. Sorrrrrreeee.)) called "Golliah" and would like to get the albatross off my neck but I need someone to do a cover illo for it and when I started looking around I found I simply don't know anyone that does that kind of thing anymore.

I had read the Delany thing in Foyster's mag...and it was well worth the rereading I gave it. Basically I can't quibble much with anything he says except that I find his admitted submission of crumbly manuscripts pretty dumb frankly. I'd be the first to admit that a reading of a work in galley, and even page proofs, brings to light nuances which might require a little changing but basically if he had the energy to submit a clean manuscript when he is sending it to a market he knows is not going to permit galley reading, he wouldn't have nearly as much room for complaint. But of course this is where a good editor comes into his own. If everybody submitted nice clean manuscripts they could lay off most of the editors as there would really be very little sandbox work for them to do.

((I've an idea most pro editors would disagree with you.))



RICHARD DELAP  
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Wichita, Kans.  
67202

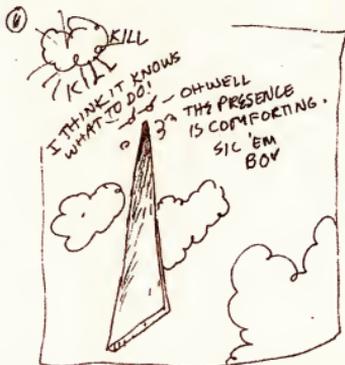
The Delany/Foyster article in #31 was excellent, and though I don't agree completely with Delany, I do think he has brought up several subjects deserving of intensive thought. His defense of Merrill as a critic is

almost as good as his badly rationalized condemnation of other critics is poor. Merrill (and I consider her at least one of the best critics in sf today) is not, simply because of her wide-ranging definition of speculative fiction, "unlimited." She has a tendency to get caught up in side issues that some-

times take up more time than their tentative connection with the book under discussion deserves. Almost as often, though, she is positively brilliant in uncovering trends (emotional or technological or stylistic) that might otherwise go completely unnoticed. Also, Foyster spots the major flaw in Delany's discussion, that no reader can ever "claim genuine familiarity" with all that is happening in both literature and science. I think this article provoked me to do more serious thinking on the subject than anything I have recently encountered. I mean just look around and you'll see that we're living right in the middle of the greatest sf novel of all times!

I don't like Jim Saunders' remark that "characters" like Ted White, Harlan Ellison, et al., are "a lot fuller than any pictured in the New Wave or Disaster schools." Well, that's a silly comparison in the first place, and other than simply saying Disch's characters are "gray," he doesn't really give much evidence to back up his statement. It will be interesting to see how he fits his aliens-disguised-as-lawyers into the universe of his own book. (I imagine he will have to create a very different universe to keep them from being "gray" as lawyers are often considered to be.)

As for Robert Tommey's advice to go to the bookstore and "sniff at the sf racks," I tried it but didn't smell anything but books. But then the bookstore I shop at is rather clean; I wonder where Toomey shops? And if he thinks I was saying experimentation for its own sake is bad, he didn't read me any more clearly than he thinks I read him. I'm not about to call the "awkwardness of puberty" anything better than what it is. If the New Wave is ugly at times, I'm not about to ignore this ugliness in favor of something presently more appealing, hoping that "the loveliest flowers" will grow out of the manure. When it becomes pretty, I'll call it pretty, and not one damn second before. If Toomey wants to passionately study the manure, that's his privilege, and if he wants to call it pretty, that's ok too; but I calls 'em as I sees 'em, and do not condemn the New Wave "out of hand," as he so mistakenly puts it. I really don't condemn it at all, just portions of it.



((Wouldn't it be nice if we could agree on who is in the "New Wave"? Can we make a little list? Moorcock... Disc...Ballard...Platt...Sallis...Sladek...and who else? Naming Zelazny, Anthony, Ellison is risky, unless they agree, and I doubt Anthony and Ellison would. Mr. Zelazny? "New Wave" is so vague and unpecific...as is "Old Wave," too. Come on, all you writers; who will admit to thinking himself New Wave? Let's settle this, so we'll know what and who we're talking about.))



PERRY CHAPDELAINÉ  
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Franklin, Tenn.  
37064

Criticism by Robert Toomey, Jr. of A. E. van Vogt's The Silkie was rather interesting. I though I like most of van's works, I didn't particularly care for The Silkie. However, much criticism

I've heard over the past year of van's works leaves me cold.

van Vogt is one of the SF giants because he pioneered a new form of writing with way-out ideas. General semantics, for example, doesn't seem new to the younger generation; after all Korzybski with John Taine's help (Eric Temple Bell, California Institute of Technology) invented it years ago. van's stories based on semantics were "wildman" stuff at that time.

I don't propose to defend van's knowledge of Symbolic Logic in The Silkie series, though. There is another characteristic of van's writing which seems to have been grossly overlooked by many reviewers. Fred Pohl said it simply — "You've got to read van's writing like looking at a Rohrsach ink-blot test."

This points up a major characteristic: van writes from the mind about the mind. He promotes the illusion of action outwardly while dealing specifically with internal mental motivations. This sort of turns the tables on "normal" style, doesn't it?

His sentence structures are built in rhythms and patt-



erns which defy editorial corrections. Even at the loss of correct grammatical structure, he will stoutly maintain his right to these rhythms.

Ask Toomey to look again, just for fun.

((Look again, Bob.))



DAVE BURTON  
5422 Kenyon Dr.  
Indianapolis, Ind.  
46226

Re: art. Somebody that I haven't heard anybody mention is George Foster. He reminds me of Bode on occasion, not so much because of what he draws, but because of the mechanics. He has the same style of drawing very straight-forward and clean-cut pictures. I don't know anything about George, but (I think) I saw him at St. Louis and he's (I think) young. He doesn't do much in the way of volume, but what he does do is enjoyable, and he does have his own style.

I might make mention of a new sf-fantasy-sercon-fannish zine, WAVES (IN SPECULATION AND FANTASY). We already have a Gilbert folio and an article (possibly developing into a series) about sf art. We have solicited material from Harry Warner, Jr., Richard Delap, and J.J. Pierce, plus we have the usual fan material. Dean Koontz may (doubtful) come through with something, but he will definitely appear within the pages of #2. Should be out by mid-October.

((In our conformist society, Dave, you are not supposed to be making WAVES.))



BARRY GILLAM  
4283 Katonah Av.  
Bronx, NY 10470

Regarding Novas: how many of you out there saw the parallels in it to Wallace Stevens' "The Man With the Blue Guitar"? Hands? Hands? I don't see any hands.

((My hand is up...but I have to go to the bathroom, teach-er.))

Card carrying Delany fans would do well to reread both Novas and Stens' poem in short order. Also interesting is a reading of Conrad Aiken's "House of Dust" with The Fall of the Towers in mind. By the way, if you're out there, Chip, any comment? Were the novels written with the poems in mind? Or did you realize this at all?



MIKE DECKINGER  
25 Manor Dr., #12-J  
Newark, N.J. 07106

Steve Fabian's cover on #31 is beautiful. One of your letter writers compares him to George Barr which is a close approximation of content more than style. Like Barr, Fabian prefers human characters that have plausible proportions, instead of the grotesqueries that Jack Gaughan prefers, for instance. His (Fabian's) backgrounds are often rich in detail (I'm now refering to the foldout, which I felt

was inferior to the cover. The diverse assemblage tends to weaken the overall composition). But certain aspects of the cover bear traces of Hannes Bok, who would never stoop to depicting such humanistic figures, but would, I'm sure, make an effort to work in traces of the flame, smoke and energy flashes that partially rim the picture. Bok would probably also be inclined to congratulate the artist, if he could have seen this Fabian cover before his death.

Piers Anthony may be interested to learn that Evan Hunter's (or Ed McBain's, or Sal Lombino's) Malice in Wonderland from an early IF was reprinted in an expanded version by Pyramid a goodly number of years ago under the title Tomorrow and Tomorrow by Hunt Collins. It was a fine story, true. It may jolt the "87th Precinct" fans to learn that McBain could do this as well as he could straight detection.

After reading the dissimilar reviews of The Jagged Orbit I'm surprised that neither critic brought up the astonishing fact that Brunner seems to be one of the few writers who has anything to say about the racial situation. It recently occurred to me that this fertile facet of speculation, namely the racial situation in near future times, has been almost totally ignored by the writers, and yet it occupies prime attention today. I wonder if this may be because writers feel it will commercially stigmatize a book, or if the extrapolation is too complex to develop. I'm also surprised that Fred Pohl's short story in Dangerous Visions, "The Day After the Martians Came", which offers a penetrating whip-lash response to bigotry has been overlooked by all the reviewers. Sure it's a minor story with little else to recommend it, but it offers a powerful commentary on the disquieting trend towards vesting racism as a fashionable trait.



LELAND SAPIRO  
Box 40, Univ. Sta.  
Regina, Canada

Moon rocket doesn't make up for  
U.S. murders in Viet Nam. You may  
be proud of being from the U.S. but  
I'm not.

An writing complete True Confessions—about letters of "prominent Canadian fan" in next RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY. Meantime would appreciate a little less of that Lovella Parsons stuff.



ALICIA AUSTIN  
#212 - 1192 Meadowlands Dr.  
Ottawa 5, Ontario, Canada

If that "prominent Canadian fan who is writing some weird, inexplicable letters lately" is a reference to weird, inexplicable Leland Sapiro — please don't call him Canadian. He is an American who just publishes from Canada. To the best of my knowledge, his connections with "Canadian fandom" are tenuous at the moment. I would not like to see his actions reflecting on those sane, intelligent, not to mention charming individuals who are now advancing a

bid for Montreal in 1974. Aside from this complaint—SFR 32 was the best thing I've seen since the convention in St. Lou.



CARL J. BRANDON, JR.  
Norrskogsvägen 8  
S-112 64 Stockholm  
Sweden

Of course, what the Objectivists in fandom such as Justin St. John object to is not the stylistic "innovations" of the new wave, but rather this leaning towards the naturalistic school of literature. I can agree with him to some extent: much naturalist writings bore me, but to denounce them sight unseen is only stupid. Good literature as well as bad has and will come from any school, and to damn exclusively the writers—good and bad—of one school will only lead to enmity, not to better fiction.

Especially I don't believe that science fiction will ever become a purely naturalist "genre" (actually, of course, sf is not a literary genre at all, by any accepted definition of the term, but I use it for simplicity). Nor will sf ever again become purely romantic in outlook, if indeed it ever were. Sf has and will attract the dreamers, the romantics, the utopians, and they will continue to write sf. What the "new wave" has done is to add room for the realists, the naturalists, the gloomy writers of the dark side of the human mind to work in. Sf will, I hope, become a much more diverse, fast-changing and exciting literature once the howling is over and the writers have stopped cursing each other and started to write their own minds on their own terms.

I give my sincere admiration and respect to Harlan Ellison who has written one of the most moving and to me attractive manifestos of the writer I've ever seen. There's nothing I wish to add to what Harlan is saying, but his essay in SFR 30 is one of the very few things I've ever read in a fanzine that I would like to see everybody read.

I think Richard Delap is right in stating that the "public" is not for experimental writing of any kind, whether "new wave" science fiction or Joycean mainstream. You don't have

(13)



to be a prophet or a fake literature to side this, all you have to do is check sales figures. In Sweden, Mickey Spillane translations and the like sell roughly 50,000 copies or so; translations of Camus, Boris Vian, William Burroughs, Joyce and that crowd only rarely exceed 5000 copies even in paperback editions. The question of whether this might be because the "average reader" has a superior taste or is just too stupid to understand the writers using more than one level of telling their stories is however unanswered. Richard Delap might consider the facts that a) very few people read books at all and b) everybody is not equally able to grasp abstractions since intelligence varies and since according to official figures college education in Sweden is too difficult to be within the reach of about three fourths of the population. This doesn't mean that people who read Joyce are "better," only that they have a higher education and intelligence than those unable to appreciate him.

As a matter of fact, the general public has little understanding or use for any kind of literature. Does this mean we should all sit back and watch LUCY SHOW instead of reading even Captain Future?

In closing...a committee has been formed in Stockholm to bid for the 1980 World Convention. The committee consists of John-Henri Holmberg, chairman; Ulf Westblom, co-chairman; Per Insulander, secretary; Lars-Olov Strandberg, treasurer; and Bertil Martensson, Mats Linder, Leif Andersson, Annika Johnson, committee members. The address is: 38th World Science Fiction Convention: Bidding Committee, P.O. Box 3273, 105 65 Stockholm, Sweden.

The committee will begin shortly to publish a monthly fanzine called ASGARD, intended to function as a link between Scandinavian and foreign fandoms. The first issues will be sent out free to anybody on the committee's mailing list, and fans who want to receive them are invited to drop a card to the above address. There's a great deal of enthusiasm about this notion of a Swedish Worldcon, and chances are that the committee will do an excellent job of bringing it about. They're very much interested in any comments,



FIN IS

questions, ideas and support from foreign fans.



I ALSO GOT LETTERS FROM:

JEFFREY D. SMITH who reviewed the Charles Platt edited issue of NEW WORLDS (#193) and concluded that Platt didn't measure up to his words in his article "NEW WORLDS...and after" in SFR #32.

You assume, Jeff, that an editor always has all of the material he would like.

DOUG LOVENSTEIN who discussed his art and that of Jack Gaughan, Mike Gilbert, Rotsler, Bode, Steve Fabian and Tim Kirk.

I'll cut up the letter and send the pieces to those discussed as soon as possible.

BILL GLASS who liked Terry Carr's article last issue, appreciates D.G. Compton, loved the title of Mechasm, commented on The Warlock in Spite of Himself (which I am extracting as a review) and, in another letter, reviews the all-star 20th Anniversary issue of F&SF. His opinion: a fine issue and you should all get a copy. There's more of Glass, but I haven't room to even list topics. Write sooner next issue, Bill.

JOHN FOYSTER who looked up David Lindsay (A Voyage to Arcturus) and found that the men did not in fact 'die young' as supposed; Lindsay was around 69 at death and Arcturus was published when he was around 44.

H. HOWARD COLEMAIL bemoaned the lack of sf fans in Louisiana and asks: "Is anyone there?" If anyone does, Howard lives at 3412 Crestaire Dr., Baton Rouge, La. 70814. Tell him Geis sent you. Watch him flinch.

JEFFREY MAY has a great big "THANKS, YOU FUGGED!" for J.J. Pierce whose "rantings have made it difficult at best for anyone who dislikes both the New Wave and personal invective..." Jeff also loved Tim Kirk's full-page cartoon in SFR #31.

TED SERRELL wondered at John Brunner's capacity for work and cursed the cretins who work in pocketbook mail-order companies.

DAN GOODMAN said, among other things, "I have a theory that the only way to comment on a work of art is in the same or a related medium. Poetry can be commented on in prose; a painting can be answered by a sculpture. But prose is no medium for comment upon the painting, nor sculpture for comment on the poem."

ETHEL LINDSAY took violent exception to Charles Platt's "notion" that the reading of sf by fans can "reduce one's ability to face up to and operate under the conditions of real life."

C. JOHN FITZSIMMONS said my illustrations could sell telephone directories. He also said ANALOG had been his favorite sf mag...until he found SFR.

Peggy Svenson loves you, John. Her box is open to you anytime.

MRS. ESTELLE SANDENS thinks my Dialogs are superb. I do, too.

# MONOLOG

by the editor

+ First let me say that the Samuel R. Delany article in this issue is a heavy piece; it requires slow reading and concentrated attention. But it's worth it; you'll look at words differently afterward, and likely write differently, too.

+ Vic Ghidalia wants me to mention that The Little Monsters, an anthology subtitled Children of Wonder and Dread, will be published in December by Macfadden-Bartell.

+ EXCLUSIVE!! Essex House will publish in January Theodore Sturgeon's new novel, Godbox. Price: \$1.95.

+ My own Essex House sf novel, Raw Meat is now available. \$1.95. Adults only. You can order from Regent House, Box 9506, North Hollywood, Calif. 91609.

+ Piers Anthony suggests: "And it occurs to me that you could set up a regular service: have your reviewers look at other unpubbed mss, as Delap did for Hasan, and thus expose them similarly to market. You could keep running score how many sales SFR thus enabled, and do the field tangible good."

Yeah, and keep score on the knives in my back from enraged authors who got BAD reviews....

+ Ethel Lindsay writes that: "NEW WORLDS is still very rocky. I hear that Mike (Moorcock) was in New York last month trying to sell it." 8/29/69

+ Mary Jane Higgins, Associate Editor at Pocket Books writes that Pocket Books and its hard cover division, Trident Press, are on the look-out for good original science fiction novels. Submissions should be sent to Pocket Books, Rockefeller Center, 650 Fifth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10020.

+ Robert E. Toomey, Jr. wrote joyously that he had just sold his first novel. It is sf, titled A World of Trouble and will be published by Macdonald in England.

+ In SFR #32 I wrote in the Monolog: "Pros and fans should be aware that unless they have changed their policies, Greenleaf Classics, Inc., which has had mention in the SFMA Bulletin as a market for sf and off-beat material with neither verbal or thematic taboos, is (a) paying approx. .500 for a book-length ms; (b) buying ALL RIGHTS; (c) not willing to send authors ANY complimentary copies of their books when published; (d) not willing to tell an author if his book will be retitled or what the new title will be or when the author's book will appear; (e) not paying royalties or any kind of bonus if the book sells well or is reprinted.

"Be warned."

Earl Kemp, an executive of Greenleaf, wrote in response:

"Noticed your little squib in SFR #32, and would appreciate your correcting some erroneous information. If you would, please tell your readers that the (a) through (e) existing in your concept in no way pertains to science fiction, as you explicitly imply, but only to poorly executed hack sex fiction. It wouldn't do for more than one person to confuse the two; one has already done enough malicious harm for reasons unknown.

"Thanks for all the help. We'll be looking forward to your next submission."

Aha. Okay, let's let it all hang out: a couple of years ago I was hurting for money and wrote you two sex novels. I was aware beforehand your company bought all rights and the going rate was \$500. But I didn't know until after I had sold the books that you and your staff had (c) and (d) as a hard policy.

It bugged me. It still bugs me. I am glad you are not pursuing this policy of editorial contempt for authors with respect to your science fiction, at least.

But I wonder why the double standard? Why, if you find a ms good enough to buy and publish (even "poorly executed hack sex fiction"...and what if it's well-executed hack sex fiction?) do you not have the common editorial courtesy to send a couple complimentary copies to an author?

Your policy is obviously short-sighted. How many authors have you alienated this way? How many other authors have been warned away from submitting to you by those authors?

I'm not saying I'll never submit to you again, Earl, but I would like to know (and I'm sure the 75-100 other pros who read SFR would like to know) if you now pay royalties for sf or other types, if any; if you have a base advance of \$1,000...or...??

In short, Earl, if you care to detail and specify your basic sf contract in this department of SFR, I'll be glad to print it. If it's attractive, I'm sure you'll get submissions. Fair?

+ Elaine Landis, Editor of the Science Fiction Book Club, writes that the Club selections for Feb. '70 are I Sing The Body Electric, a collection of short stories by Ray Bradbury, at \$1.98—and Three For Tomorrow, stories by Silverberg, Zelazny and Blish, at \$1.49.

Club selections for March, '70 are a short story collection by Harlan Ellison titled The Beast That Shouted Love at the Heart of the World, at \$1.49—and Satan's World by Poul Anderson, at \$1.49.

+ Richard Bergeron writes that he is not in a publishing slump; WARHOOD is alive and well, he is working on the special Harp issue which will run very close to 200 pages!

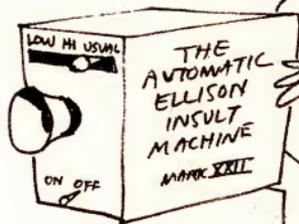
+ Hank Stine is in Berkeley and will be looking for a house soon and moved by Christmas. Important mail can reach him c/o Essex House, 7315 Fulton Av., N. Hollywood, Cal. 91605.

+ Larry Shaw is now living at 7221 Allet Ave., Apt. 2, Van Nuys, Calif. 91405.

MONOLOG continued on page 24

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